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Churches of Christ Salute You with a Herald of Truth: Miraculous Healing

James Willeford

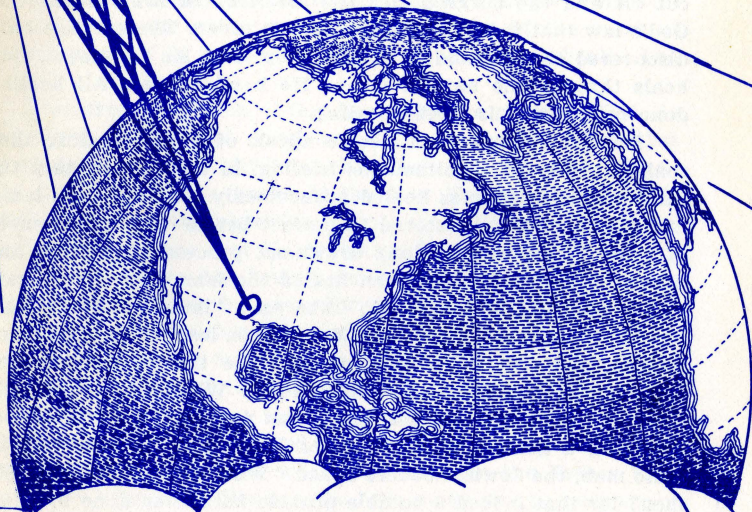
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Churches of Christ
Salute You
with a



Miraculous Healing

By James D. Willeford
November 30, 1952

Herald of Truth

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An inscription over the gateway of the French College of Surgeons reads, "I dressed his wounds, God healed him." This inscription expresses a great amount of faith for it ascribes to God the power to heal. God made the herbs that assist the process of healing, and He made the cells in the body which combat disease. He spoke into existence the physical laws of healing, and He sustains those laws. If a person gets his arm cut off and the surgeon ties the arteries the arm heals. It is God's law that it heal if proper care is given. The surgeon only discovered the law and is governed by it in his treatment. God heals through the natural means He has provided. All healing done in this way is divine healing.

However, when most people speak of divine healing they really have in mind miraculous healing. In the first century the Lord and His disciples healed miraculously. The sick, the lame, and the leper were restored to perfect health within a moment of time. There was no long drawn-out process of waiting and prayer. When Peter and John healed the lame man at the gate called beautiful in Jerusalem, Luke said, "immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he, leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple walking and leaping and praising God." Acts 3:7, 8. When Christ and His apostles healed miraculously there was never any question about its being a genuine miracle. After Peter and John healed the lame man, the Jewish leaders asked, "What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it." Acts 4:16.

There is a vast difference between the genuine miraculous healing done by Christ and His disciples, and that which men claim to do now. The great difference establishes the fact that modern day healing so called is not miraculous at all. As we observe these contrasts we are impressed by the fact that Jesus did not heal for notoriety. It was not His desire to attract great attention to Himself by His miracles. In several instances He commanded the one healed to "tell on man" of the miracle. What a contrast between the Lord's humble ministry of healing and the gaudy, extravagant fanfare of modern healing campaigns! We are impressed by another contrast. When Christ healed no appeal was made for money. But some "healers" in America

today are sending out "Blest healing clothes" and the statement is made that there is no charge, but the subtle appeal for money is couched in the words "We must have money to continue this work." It is a well-known fact that several collections are taken at most healing services today.

Another interesting feature of Christ's healing is that He did not make faith on the part of the afflicted a uniform condition of healing, while modern healers greatly emphasize faith. One religious leader who advocates miraculous healing said, "Take notice first that without faith no one can be healed." (Divine Healing, Murray, p. 25.) Christ required no man to believe Him to be God's Son before He would heal him. He sometimes employed faith but it was a belief that He could heal—that He had the power to heal. But in many of the cases of healing recorded in the New Testament the persons healed had no faith in Christ at all!

Even though the Son of God healed by the power of God He recognized the need of physicians. The Lord said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Matt. 9:12. Luke wrote two books of the New Testament and he is called "the beloved physician." Col. 4:14. Christ thought so highly of physicians that He compared Himself to one. But the majority of modern day healers denounce physicians. There are many other contrasts between Christ and modern day healers.

But the question that concerns us most is this: Is miraculous healing done in our day? We can answer this question if we know the purpose of the miracles performed by Christ. They were done to prove that He was God's Son. He first asserted His identity, and then proved it by miracles. Jesus said, "The very works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." John 5:37. The apostle John sums up the purpose of miracles in these words, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." John 20:30, 31. In Matthew 9 is given the record of Christ forgiving a man of his sins. When Jesus said "I forgive you" the Jews thought He was blaspheming God, and they asked, "Who can forgive sins, but God?" Jesus replied "Which is easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sin, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take thy bed, and go into thine house." Matt. 9:6.

Why did Jesus heal this man? To prove that He had the power to forgive sins. All the miracles Christ performed were God's stamp of divinity upon His Son.

YOU MAY HEAR THE HERALD OF TRUTH OVER THESE STATIONS

Alabama, Anniston	WHMA	1450	1:00 p.m.	New Orleans	WDSU	1280	1:00 p.m.	Philadelphia	WFIL	560	2:00 p.m.
Auburn	WAUD	1230	1:00 p.m.	Shreveport	KRMD	1340	1:00 p.m.	Pittsburg	WCAE	1250	3:00 p.m.
Birmingham	WSGN	610	8:00 a.m.	Maine, Bangor	WABI	910	1:00 p.m.	Wilkes-Barre	WILK	980	5:00 p.m.
Florence	WJOI	1340	9:30 a.m.	Portland	WPOR	1450	9:00 a.m.	R. Island, Providence	WPJB	1420	1:00 p.m.
Gadsden	WGAD	1350	1:00 p.m.	Maryland, Baltimore	WFBR	1300	3:00 p.m.	S. Carolina, Columbia	WCOS	1400	1:00 p.m.
Greenville	WGVV		4:00 p.m.	Cumberland	WDYK	1230	8:00 a.m.	Florence	WJMX	970	10:30 a.m.
Huntsville	WHBS	1490	1:00 p.m.	Mass., Gardner	WHOB	1490	1:00 p.m.	Orangeburg	WRNO	1450	7:00 a.m.
Marion	WJAM	1310	9:30 a.m.	Lawrence	WLAW	680	1:00 p.m.	S. Dakota, Aberdeen	KSDN	930	10:30 a.m.
Mobile	WABB	1480	6:30 a.m.	Springfield	WSPR	1270	2:00 p.m.	Huron	KIJV	1340	9:00 a.m.
Montgomery	WAPX	1600	1:00 p.m.	Worcester	WAAB	1440	2:00 p.m.	Tenn., Chattanooga	WDEF	1370	1:00 p.m.
Selma	WGWC	1340	1:30 p.m.	Michigan, Battle Creek	WELL	1400	1:00 p.m.	Jackson	WTJS	1390	1:00 p.m.
Tuscaloosa	WJRD	1150	9:00 p.m.	Bay City	WBCM	1440	1:00 p.m.	Johnson City	WJHL	910	10:30 p.m.
Arizona, Phoenix	KOY	550	7:00 a.m.	Detroit	WKYZ	1270	1:00 p.m.	Knoxville	WBIR	1240	1:30 p.m.
Tucson	KCNA	580	3:00 p.m.	Flint	WFDF	910	10:00 p.m.	Memphis	WMPB	680	9:30 p.m.
Arkansas, Eldorado	KDMS	1290	1:00 p.m.	Lansing	WILS	1320	1:00 p.m.	Morristown	WCRK	1450	check sta.
Ft. Smith	KFSA	950	1:00 p.m.	Ludington	WKLA	1450	1:00 p.m.	Nashville	WSIX	980	4:00 p.m.
Hot Springs	KTHS	1090	1:00 p.m.	Mt. Pleasant	WCEN	1150	2:00 p.m.	Texas, Abilene	KRBC	1470	1:00 p.m.
Little Rock	KGHI	1250	1:00 p.m.	Muskegon	WKGB	850	2:00 p.m.	Amarillo	KFDA	1440	1:00 p.m.
Springdale	KBRS	1340	6:00 p.m.	Minn., Minn.-St. Paul	WTCN	1280	7:30 a.m.	Austin	KNOW	1490	2:00 p.m.
Calif., Bakersfield	KPMC	1560	10:00 a.m.	Mankato	KFOE	1420	2:00 p.m.	Beaumont	KFDM	560	1:00 p.m.
Blythe	KYOR	1450	3:30 p.m.	Miss., Centerville	WABC	1580	8:00 a.m.	Big Spring	KBST	1490	1:00 p.m.
Brawley	KROP	1300	3:30 p.m.	Aberdeen	WMTA	1240	1:00 p.m.	Brownfield	KTFY	1300	4:30 p.m.
Eureka	KIEM	1480	8:00 a.m.	Columbus	WJBI	1340	6:00 p.m.	Brownwood	KBWD	1380	6:30 p.m.
Fresno	KARM	1430	3:30 p.m.	Greenwood	WJGG	960	1:00 p.m.	Corpus Christi	KEYS	1440	9:00 a.m.
Indio	KREO	1400	3:30 p.m.	Jackson	WJL	930	2:00 p.m.	El Paso	KEPO	690	3:00 p.m.
Los Angeles	KECA	790	3:30 p.m.	Kosciusko	KKZ	1340	1:00 p.m.	Ft. Worth	WBAP	570	1:00 p.m.
Modesto	KTRB	860	3:00 p.m.	Laurel	WLAB	1490	1:00 p.m.	Graham	KSWA	1330	4:30 p.m.
San Francisco	KGO	810	3:30 p.m.	McComb	WCKB	1250	9:30 a.m.	Houston	KXYZ	1320	8:00 a.m.
San Luis Obispo	KATY	1340	3:30 p.m.	Missouri, Kansas City	KCMO	810	12:30 p.m.	Longview	KFRZ	1370	1:00 p.m.
Colorado, Craig	KRAI	1230	5:30 p.m.	Rolla	KTRK	1490	8:45 a.m.	Lubbock	KFYO	1340	4:00 p.m.
Denver	KVOD	630	3:00 p.m.	St. Louis	KXOK	630	2:00 p.m.	Midland	KCRS	550	1:30 p.m.
Conn., Bridgeport	WNAB	1450	2:00 p.m.	Springfield	KWTO	560	1:00 p.m.	Nacogdoches	KOSF	1230	1:00 p.m.
Hartford	WTHT	1230	2:30 p.m.	Montana, Butte	KOPR	580	9:15 a.m.	Paris	KPLT	1490	4:00 p.m.
Delaware, Wilmington	WILM	1450	2:00 p.m.	Great Falls	KMON	560	7:30 a.m.	San Angelo	KGKL	960	1:00 p.m.
Florida, Gainesville	WGGG	1230	1:00 p.m.	Nebraska, Lincoln	KFOR	1240	10:30 a.m.	San Antonio	KMAC	630	9:00 p.m.
Jacksonville	WPDQ	600	8:30 a.m.	N. Platt	KNBR	970	9:00 a.m.	Texarkana	KCMC	1230	1:00 p.m.
Leesburg	WLBE	790	check sta.	Omaha	KOIL	1290	5:30 p.m.	Wichita Falls	KFDX	990	2:00 p.m.
Miami	WQAM	560	1:00 p.m.	Sidney	KSID	1540	9:30 a.m.	Utah, Provo	KCSU	1490	3:00 p.m.
Panama City	WPCF	1400	1:00 p.m.	N. Hamp., Claremont	WTSV	1230	1:00 p.m.	Salt Lake City	KUTA	570	7:30 a.m.
Pensacola	WEAR	1230	11:00 p.m.	Lebanon	WTSL	1400	1:00 p.m.	Vermont, Brattleboro	WTSJ	1450	1:00 p.m.
Tallahassee	WTNT	1450	5:00 p.m.	Manchester	WMUR	610	3:00 p.m.	Burlington	WJOY	1230	1:00 p.m.
Tampa, St. Pete	WSUN	620	1:00 p.m.	N. Mexico, Albuquerque	KOAT	1450	3:00 p.m.	Montpelier-Barre	WSKI	1240	1:00 p.m.
Georgia, Atlanta	WGST	920	1:00 p.m.	Carlsbad	KPBM	740	check sta.	Virginia, Charlottesville	WINA	1280	9:15 a.m.
Augusta	WGAC	580	2:00 p.m.	Clovis	KCLV	1240	1:00 p.m.	Fredericksburg	WFVA	1230	check sta.
Brunswick	WGIG	1440	1:00 p.m.	Los Alamos	KRSN	1490	3:00 p.m.	Marion	WMEV	1010	2:00 p.m.
Cairo	WGRA	1300	3:00 p.m.	Santa Fe	KTRC	1400	3:00 p.m.	Norfolk	WGH	1310	6:30 p.m.
Columbus	WGBA	1460	7:30 a.m.	New York, Albany	WXXW	850	2:00 p.m.	Richmond	WRNL	910	1:30 p.m.
Dawson	WDWD	990	2:00 p.m.	New York	WJZ	770	12:30 p.m.	Washington, Aberdeen	KBKW	1450	10:30 p.m.
Macon	WNEK	1400	1:00 p.m.	Olean	WHDL	1450	1:00 p.m.	Omak	KOMW	680	9:15 a.m.
Rome	WLAQ	670	1:00 p.m.	Rochester	WARC	950	3:00 p.m.	Pasco	PKPW	1340	3:30 p.m.
Savannah	WDAR	1400	1:00 p.m.	Saranac Lake	WBAV	960	2:00 p.m.	Seattle	KJR	950	3:30 p.m.
Valdosta	WGAF	910	1:00 p.m.	Syracuse	WAGE	620	12:00 n.	Spokane	KGA	1510	3:30 p.m.
Idaho, Boise	KGEM	1140	3:00 p.m.	N. Carolina, Asheville	WLOS	1380	1:00 p.m.	Washington, D. C.	WMAL	630	1:00 p.m.
Pocatello	KEIO	1440	9:30 a.m.	Charlotte	WJAY	610	1:00 p.m.	W. Virginia, Beckley	WVNR	620	1:30 p.m.
Twin Falls	KTFI	1270	7:30 a.m.	Durham	WTK	1310	2:00 p.m.	Huntington	WHTN	800	8:00 a.m.
Illinois, Chicago	WENR-WLS	890	2:30 p.m.	Fayetteville(Sat.)	WFLB	1490	1:00 p.m.	Parkersburg, Sat.	WCOM	1230	5:30 p.m.
Quincy	WGEM	1440	8:00 a.m.	Salisbury	WSAT	1280	1:00 p.m.	Wheeling	WKWK	1400	1:00 p.m.
Indiana, Anderson	WHBU	1240	1:30 p.m.	Wilmington	WGNL	1340	8:30 a.m.	Wisconsin, Green Bay	WDUZ	1400	5:30 p.m.
Bloomington	WTTS	1370	1:00 p.m.	Winston-Salem	WAIK	1340	1:00 p.m.	LaCrosse	WKTY	580	4:00 p.m.
Evansville	WJPS	1330	10:15 p.m.	N. Dakota, Fargo	KFGO	790	1:00 p.m.	Madison	WIBA	1320	8:00 a.m.
Ft. Wayne	WGL	1250	1:00 p.m.	Ohio, Cleveland	WJW	850	1:00 p.m.	Milwaukee	WCAN	1250	2:00 p.m.
Iowa, Cedar Rapids	WMT	600	7:30 a.m.	Columbus	WHKC	610	1:00 p.m.	Nenah	WVAM	1280	8:00 a.m.
Davenport	WOC	1420	check sta.	Lima	WIMA	1150	9:00 a.m.	Wasau	WSAU	1400	9:30 a.m.
Des Moines	KSO	1460	1:00 p.m.	Youngstown	WBBW	1240	8:30 a.m.	Wyoming, Casper	KSPR	1470	9:15 p.m.
Sioux City	KSCJ	1360	10:30 p.m.	Oklahoma, Ada	KADA	1230	1:00 p.m.	Cheyenne	KFBC	710	12:00 p.m.
Waterloo	KXEL	1540	5:30 p.m.	Enid	KCRC	1390	1:00 p.m.	Cody	KODI	1400	12:00 p.m.
Kansas, Coffeyville	KGGF	690	2:00 p.m.	McAlester	KTMK	1400	1:00 p.m.	Laramie	KOWB	1340	12:00 p.m.
Topeka	WREN	1250	1:00 p.m.	Muskogee	KBIX	1490	2:00 p.m.	Rawlins	KRAL	1240	12:00 p.m.
Wichita	KWBB	1410	3:30 p.m.	Oklahoma City	KTOG	1000	9:30 a.m.	Riverton	KWRL	1450	12:00 p.m.
Ken., Bowling Green	WKCT	930	1:00 p.m.	Tulsa	KRMG	740	2:00 p.m.	Torrington	KGOS	1490	12:00 p.m.
Harlan	WHLN	1230	3:00 p.m.	Oregon, Eugene	KASH	1600	1:00 p.m.	Worldand	KWOR	1490	12:00 p.m.
Louisville	WKLO	1080	1:00 p.m.	Medford	KMED	1440	7:30 a.m.	Alaska, Juneau (Sat.)	KJNO	630	1:00 p.m.
Mayfield	WKTM	1050	4:15 p.m.	Portland	KEX	1190	3:30 p.m.	Canada, Trail, B.C.	CJAT	610	9:30 a.m.
Newport	WNOP	740	2:00 p.m.	Redmond	KSGA	1240	3:30 p.m.	Toronto, Ont.	CKEY	580	9:15 a.m.
Paducah	WKYC	570	check sta.	The Dalles	KODL	1230	1:00 p.m.	Winnipeg, Man.	CKY	580	6:45 a.m.
Louisiana, Baton Rouge	WLCS	910	1:00 p.m.	Penn., Johnstown	WCRO	1230	1:00 p.m.				
Monroe	KMLB	1440	2:00 p.m.								

All times are Sunday unless otherwise indicated.

The Lord enabled the apostles to work miracles to confirm the word they preached. Mark says the apostles "went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." Mark 16:20. When our ambassador goes to Great Britain he must present proof to His Majesty's Government that he represents the United States. And when Christ and the apostles came with a new message they had to have proof that it came from God. The writer of the Hebrew letter said God gave this proof "both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." Heb. 2:4. Paul said, "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds." 2 Cor. 12:12. After God confirmed the word which the apostles preached it did not need to be reconfirmed, and so the miracles ceased. Miracles were never intended to be a part of the permanent plan of God. They may be compared to the scaffolding used in erecting a building. When the structure is completed the scaffolding is removed.

The purpose of the healing done by Christ and the apostles was not primarily to relieve human suffering. He said, "Trophimus I left at Miletus sick." II Tim. 4:20. This same apostle told Timothy to "use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." I Tim. 5:23. Timothy was a Christian with deep and abiding faith, and yet he was not miraculously healed of an infirmity that came upon him frequently. These facts make it clear that miracles existed in the first century for a specific purpose and that purpose was to confirm the word preached. They were not given to Christians for all time to come.

In I Cor. 13 Paul used a child as an illustration of the short time miraculous gifts would continue. He says that a child speaks and thinks as a child, but when he becomes a man he puts away childish things. Paul was here speaking of the infant and mature stages of Christianity. While Christianity was in its infancy it needed special helps. During this period the Lord endowed the church with inspired apostles, prophets, teachers and miraculous gifts. Paul said these special offices were to last "Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine." Eph. 4:13, 14. Christians ceased to be children and became full-grown men when the faith was given as a unit. When the full knowledge of God's word was given in the completed New Testament the special helps ceased. Before the New Testament was completed in the first century the word

of God dwelt in the inspired man. Since that time it is to be found in the inspired Book!

Paul also uses the mirror as an illustration to show the brevity of miraculous gifts. While the word of God was being revealed the apostle said, "For we know in part and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." I Cor. 13:9, 10. During this period of partial knowledge the apostle said, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." I Cor. 13:12. When the New Testament was completed in A. D. 96 there was a perfect mirror into which people could look and see themselves and their full duty. James speaks of our "looking into the perfect law of liberty." Jas. 1:25. Christ had promised that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into all the truth. John 16:13. When this was done the mirror was silvered so that it reflected man's true image and his needs. Man could then see fully, and so tongues, prophecy, and miraculous knowledge ceased.

When one reads the New Testament he is impressed with this fact; that all miraculous gifts were bestowed on Christians by the laying on of the apostles' hands. This is evident from several New Testament passages. The apostles laid their hands on Philip, one of the seven deacons in Jerusalem. Acts 6:6. Luke said, "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did." Acts 8:6. Luke further said of the people in Samaria that "when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women." Acts 8:12. Philip was able to heal, and perform other miracles, but he could not impart this gift to a soul in Samaria, for the writer of Acts said, "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost; (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Acts 8:14-17. When the last apostle died about the end of the first century all supernatural gifts necessarily ceased.

Men who claim that miraculous healing is still being done rely upon several passages of scripture to prove their claim. The 53rd chapter of Isaiah is sometimes used as proof that Christ died for physical healing as well as spiritual cleansing. Isaiah mentions physical healing in verse 4 and the atonement for our sins in verse 5. In the New Testament Matthew quoted the verse from Isaiah which mentions physical healing and he said it was fulfilled during Christ's personal ministry when he healed the sick. Matt. 8:16, 17. A multitude of passages state that Christ died to atone for our sins, but not one says He died to atone for our diseases. If miraculous healing of the body were

one of the benefits of Christ's blood, every person who is washed in His blood would at the same time be given perfect health.

Some quote a passage in Mark where Christ says, "And these signs shall follow them that believe," to prove that miraculous healing would be done for all time. But this promise of Christ was fulfilled in the first century. Signs did follow believers, but the Lord did not promise that they would follow all believers for all time. They were given to believers in the first century to confirm their message. When this message was confirmed they ceased.

When we point out what the Bible teaches about miracles ceasing, some think we are limiting God's power. It is not a question of what God can do, but what does He do? He once created man out of the dust of the earth. Does He do that today? He once made woman from man's rib. Does He do that today? He had the power yesterday to destroy the earth, but He did not use it. The man who says God must use His power today just as He used it in the first century is the one who is limiting God!

Satan has always had a way of counterfeiting the genuine. The things that appear miraculous today are explained by Paul in his letter to the church at Thessalonica. He said that Satan would work through the man of sin "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." II Thess. 2:9. Many of the things done today that appear miraculous are mere counterfeits of the genuine miracles performed only in the first century.

The healing done in modern healing revivals is mental healing. Many diseases are mental and these can be cured through suggestion. But no organic disease was ever cured in these revivals. No faith healer ever restored a lost limb, or healed a broken bone. If the Lord still heals miraculously He would do that kind of healing today.

Friends, Christ healed the sick and raised the dead to prove His divine Sonship and His power. One day He will use that same power to raise all the dead and to banish all illness and human woe. While Christ was among men He raised an only brother, an only daughter and a widow's only son. He did that as a guarantee that we shall be raised one day from the lonely hall of death.

The gospel is the power of God, not to heal our physical diseases, but to save our souls. The blood of Christ was shed, not to heal our infirmities, but to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

In the gospel is revealed the will of Christ. He asks that you believe in Him as the Son of God. He asks you to give up sin, which is an enemy to your soul, and He asks that you be buried with Him in baptism, that you may rise to walk a new life. Rom. 6:3, 4. Throughout the book of Acts the Lord gave us examples of how to obey Him. We cannot make a mistake if we follow these examples. The Jews on Pentecost, the Samaritans, the people of Corinth, and all others heard God's word, believed in the only begotten Son of God, genuinely repented of their sins, and were buried with Christ in baptism for the remission of past sins. After coming into Christ, they continued as faithful Christians. The Lord expects the same of every responsible person on earth today. Friends, you will never know what joys you are missing until you have the Lord on your side.