REDEMPTIVE, SELF-REVEALING NAMES OF GOD

We have been doing a study on the names of God, and we have found that there are numerous redemptive and self-revealing names that are used to describe our God. They are redemptive because they all point to something accomplished at Calvary, and self-revealing because each draws back a curtain and shows us an aspect or a quality of God’s never-changing nature.

We have looked at some of the names like Jehovah Shalom, the Lord our Peace, and found that God’s nature is peace; and He wants to impart peace to our people. Also, peace is something that Christ purchased for us through His redemptive work on Calvary. We looked at Jehovah Tsidkenu, the Lord our Righteousness. We looked at Jehovah Jireh, the Lord our Provider, and a number of other compound names. We are going to examine another one here in Exodus 15:26. It says this,

> “If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.”

“I am” is a revelation of His nature. Anytime He says I am something, He is speaking of what He is by nature, and that is unchanging. That does not change with the dispensation. Whatever God is, He is not dispensational. He was, He is, and He always will be whatever it is that He is talking about. Translated in our English Bible it says, “I am the Lord who heals you.” It is actually another one of God’s names. It is Jehovah Rapha. The word “rapha” is translated throughout our Bibles as healed and physician. I am the Lord your Healer, or the Lord your Physician. He is, by nature, a healer. God’s nature is health.

GOD HEALS WATERS OF MARAH AND REVEALS HE IS JEHOVAH RAPHA

I want to just look at some important lessons in connection with this verse that we have just read. Back up with me to verse 22, and let’s get the context. Exodus 15:22,

> So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.
> Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.

Marah is the word for bitterness. Verse 24,

> And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?”
> So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them. And there He tested them,
> “If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I
will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am Jehovah Rapha, I am the Lord, your Physician, the Lord, your Healer."

Lesson Number 1:

It is important to see how early this experience came in Israel’s history. It immediately followed their deliverance from the land of Egypt. In fact, this is the very first thing that happened after the crossing of the Red Sea. Like a loving mother who first cares for her baby’s body and then attends to that child’s education, so God first provides for Israel’s physical needs and a little later puts His infant people to school at Mount Sinai and gives them His laws to govern them. This came before the Ten Commandments. This came before any of God’s laws were revealed to them.

This whole incident of deliverance from Egypt is a type of our redemption; Pharaoh being a type of the devil; Israel being a type of the world, and Moses a type of Christ who came as their deliverer and took them through the waters of the Red Sea, and they came out on the other side. We know that Pharaoh and his chariots were following, and Moses stretched out his rod, the waters closed, and Pharaoh’s army was destroyed. Friend, I want to tell you that the devil has no more authority over you than Pharaoh and his drowned army had over Moses and the Israelites after they had crossed the Red Sea. So it is a type and shadow of our redemption: passing from death to life; passing from the world into God’s family and into God’s kingdom. The first lesson that God brought to them before any other laws or anything else, He said, “I’m your Healer. I want to take care of you physically.”

I believe once we have come out of our bondage and enter God’s kingdom, we should immediately be taught to look to God for healing. Yet sometimes it tends to be the last lesson that we hear, if we hear it at all.

Lesson Number 2:

I want you to notice that in connection with this whole incident, God chose a tree for Moses, which is a type of Calvary. It says in Galatians 3:13 that Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.” It is not a coincidence that God revealed Himself in this part of His character in connection with this tree. The waters of some people’s lives have turned bitter through sickness, but the good news is there is a tree that can turn the bitter waters sweet: The tree on Calvary’s hill that Christ died upon, a tree that was turned red with His blood, a tree that our sins were nailed to.

Lesson Number 3:

The ordinance of healing is much older than that law of Sinai. Therefore it has not even been superseded by the passing away of the law, even as Paul tells the Galatians that the covenant with Abraham could not be annulled by the later law of Moses. So the ordinance of healing stands even after the passing away of the Mosaic institutions, because it came before them just like the covenant with Abraham came before them. The very terms that we read here, “statute” and “ordinance,” express the permanency of this divine provision of God.

Lesson Number 4:

The fourth thing I believe is worth noting: Experiencing it is conditional. In Exodus 15:26, God said “if.” It is the biggest little word in the Bible. “If you diligently heed the voice of the
Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep His statutes.” Now God is not requiring perfection; but if we are living for God and not consciously and willfully disobeying Him, then we have access to this. However, if you are living in known sin, the Bible says, “If I regard sin in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” It creates a barrier between us and God. Now look at Exodus 15:27,

27 Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

Picture it: Twelve wells of sparkling waters of Elim, the palm trees; there is shade, and there is rest. It is the perfect picture of completeness and rest. The word “Elim” comes from a root meaning to be strong. They came to a place of strength. **Once we get the revelation of God’s healing nature, we can come to a place of strength and rest, as well.**

**JEHOVAH RAPHA**

Let’s talk about Jehovah Rapha, this name of God. Again, “rapha” is translated as healed and as physician throughout the Bible. Look at Psalm 103. Rapha is the word that God chooses to connect to His very nature, to His very name. Psalm 103:1, it says,

1 Blessed be the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!
2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:
3 Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,

The word “heal” here in verse 3 is “rapha.” Notice that David also connects healing with the name of God. “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!” Now how many believe the first part of verse 3? He forgives all your iniquities. Some of you think this is a trick question, and I know you will not raise your hand. It is sort of a trick question, but not really. Well, if the first half of that verse is true, the second half must also be true. If the first half is true, the second half must be true. If the second half is not true, we cannot be confident that the first half is true. “Bless His holy name! He forgives all my iniquities, He heals all my diseases.” Jehovah Rapha… heals… rapha… all my diseases.

Look in Psalm 107, and we find out God’s main method of doing that. This is incredibly important. Psalm 107:20. It says, speaking of God,

20 He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions.

The word “healed” here, again, is “rapha.” All right, Jehovah Rapha, how is it that You heal us? **He sent His word and healed them. That is God’s main method for bringing healing to His people.** In Proverbs 4:20-22, when it talks about giving heed to the word of God and keeping it in the midst of your heart and inclining your ear and keeping it before your eyes, verse 22 says, “For they (His word) are life to those who find them, and health (or medicine) to all their flesh.” This is God’s medicine. It is God’s method of bringing healing to His people. “All right, God, You are our Physician. What is Your medicine?”

“It is My word.”
PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Here is the key: When God sends His word to us, He always sends it in seed form. It always comes like a seed. Look with me in Mark’s gospel, the fourth chapter. Jesus talked about this. This is this wonderful parable of the sower. In this parable Jesus talked about a sower who has his bag of seed, and he is scattering seed on the ground. The birds come and devour some of the seeds. Some fall on shallow earth, and it springs and grows up, but it does not have any depth. The roots do not go down. It hits the stone underneath. The sun rises, and it shrivels the plant. Some fall among thorns, and the thorns grow up with it and choke the plant, and it never produces fruit. Some fall on good ground and produce thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold. When He got with His disciples afterwards, He began to explain this parable to them. Look at verse 11, first of all, because this is important. Mark 4:11,

11 And He said to them, “To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables,”

What we are about to read, according to Jesus, is the mystery of the kingdom of God. I really want to over-emphasize this. What I am about to share with you is the way the whole kingdom works. In fact, Jesus is about to say something that is incredibly profound in connection with this teaching He is about to give us. Mark 4:13,

13 And He said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?”

In other words, “If you don’t get this, you will not get anything else!” This is the building block; this is the mystery of the kingdom. If you don’t understand the operation of the seed and this parable, you will not understand anything else. This is the key principle of the kingdom. Mark 4:14,

14 “The sower sows the word.”

So when the word comes, it comes like a seed. Do you know what I am doing right now? I am scattering seed, and it is falling on the soil of people’s hearts. How you respond to it determines the kind of harvest that you are going to get in your life. This is the way the whole kingdom works. This is the mystery of the kingdom. The sower sows the word.

15 “And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, (Satan comes when?) Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.”

We have to stop there. I don’t think Jesus was exaggerating when He said, “When the word is sown, Satan comes.” How fast? Immediately. He has already been here. The devil comes to church? I guess he does. Where the word is sown, Satan comes immediately. What is he after? The word! Because if he can get the word of God out of you, you will be unfruitful. Some people are going, “I don’t like him.” But, see, he already has you. He has already just reached right in and snatched the word right out. Somebody else is going, “I wonder if he is going to go long tonight. I’m hungry! Is that Movie-of-the-Week on tonight?” Some of you think I am kidding, but it’s true. He uses every distraction in the world. Why? He is after that word. He does not care if you are pretty, and he does not care if you have a nice singing voice. He is after the word. That is the one thing that makes you dangerous to the kingdom of darkness. Satan comes immediately to steal the word out of people’s hearts.
Mark 4:16,

16 “These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness...
17 “…and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word’s sake, immediately they stumble.”

So here Jesus reveals a couple of tools that Satan would use to dig the word of God out of a person’s heart: Tribulation, trouble, pressure, and persecution arise for the word’s sake. Pressure comes. Somebody is real happy, and then bang! They get hit with pressure, so they back off of the word of God.

I remember a young guy whom I took with me to these meetings. We were just new Christians. We were learning the word like we never had before. He had been a Christian longer than I had, and he said, “Bayless, this is changing my life! It has never been so alive to me; it’s never been so real to me.” When the meeting came around the next week, I went to pick him up, and he didn’t come to the door. He didn’t answer the door. I stood there and knocked and knocked. Finally, he came to the door. He said, “I’m not going.” I said, “What do you mean you are not going? You were talking about how it’s transforming your life.” He said, “Yeah, but my whole world has fallen apart. Since I went to that meeting last week, everything that I can imagine has gone wrong. I have never been under so much pressure. My wife and I have been fighting like cats and dogs. And this has happened, and that has happened.” He says, “Man, I can’t take it! I’m not going, anymore.”

And I couldn’t convince him to go to the meeting. Well, it’s exactly what Jesus said would happen: persecution, pressures arise for the word’s sake, and they stumble. Mark 4:18,

18 “Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word,
19 “and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”

If the devil cannot get you through the other things, he will just try to get your life full of worries and cares, and get you running after money where that becomes the main focus of your life; or just the desire for other things that grow up with it and choke. See, the object of these things, they choke the word. They do not come from God. God is not sending stuff into your life to choke His own word out. Jesus said, “Satan comes immediately to take the word of God out of your life.” Then I love the end of this. Mark 4:20,

20 “But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

Say, “I’m good ground!” Well, that is what we want.

Now, again, this is how the kingdom works. Psalm 107:20 is talking about Jehovah Rapha. Jehovah Rapha, how do You heal us? He sent His word and healed them and delivered them from their destructions.

How does the word come? It comes like a seed. Who is after the seed? Satan. If he can get the seed, there is no fruit.
I think some believers are like the old farmer. A salesman is coming through this rural community, decides to try to sell his wares to this farmer, and sees him sitting up on his porch. He strikes up a conversation. He is going to segue into the business deal in a minute, but he says, “Hey, how are you doing?”

“He’s been nice weather.”

“You don’t have any cotton?”

He says, “No.”

“Why? A lot of folks around here are planting cotton.”

“Nothing. I just played it safe.”

I think some believers are just playing it safe. They are like people standing in front of a field where no seed is planted at all and saying, “God, I’m just believing for corn! God, I’m just believing for cotton; I’m believing for a great potato crop. Oh, God, give me potatoes! I believe I have potatoes, in Jesus’ name.” Yet they have not planted a single seed! It’s a mystery to some people, the mystery of the kingdom! **No seed planted, no crop comes. He sent His word and healed them.** Those who produced fruit were those who accepted that word, who did not let it get choked out, who did not get offended and stumble, and did not get distracted and let the devil get it.

Seeds take time to grow. In fact, in First Corinthians 3:6 Paul said, “I planted…” speaking about ministering the word: “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.” Then in verse 9 he said, “You are God’s field.” Another translation says, “You are God’s field to be planted.”

**IS THERE SEED IN YOUR FIELD?**

Is there seed in your field? When it comes to this area of healing that we are specifically talking about, is there seed in your field? What about other arenas of life? When it comes to peace; when it comes to marriage; when it comes to whatever, is there seed in your field? Listen, I know God is God, and He is sovereign, and sometimes God makes potatoes grow. He just does it. He can make something out of nothing. He is God. He did it with the universe, didn’t He? He just spoke it, boom! There it was. So sometimes God sovereignly intervenes and just does stuff, and it’s always cool when He does. Yet, the method of living in the kingdom is one of sowing that seed, guarding that seed, watering that seed, and it springing up and creating a harvest in our lives.
My wife’s daddy was a farmer, and several of her brothers were farmers. They grew their own corn; they grew their own wheat; and they grew a lot of other things. Every time they planted a field, every time they sowed a field, even though it looked like nothing, they were confident that it would grow a crop. They knew there would be a harvest because they put the seed in the field. I will guarantee you that not one of her brothers nor her father ever stood over a field that had no seed sown in it and planned to get a harvest. They knew they had to plant the field before they would receive a harvest.

There was a couple in our church, and they are still very, very dear friends. They have moved. I didn’t know them that well at the time, and the husband had called me. His wife had been diagnosed with some illness, and the doctor said that she was not likely to live. They didn’t give her a very long time. I think it might have been less than a year. He believed in healing, and he asked me if I would come and pray for his wife. I was talking to him on the telephone, and as I was talking to him, I had the distinct impression that the Holy Spirit was talking to me, telling me that she was not ready to be prayed for. I think sometimes people are prayed for before they are ready. They are prayed for, but there is no seed in the ground. I said, “Brother, look, I can come down and pray for your wife, but I just feel like the Holy Spirit is telling me that she is not ready yet. What I’d like to do is to send you a book on the subject of healing, and I’d like you to go through the book with her. Have her read it, and then give me a ring when she is done with the book, and I’ll come and pray for her.” So I actually sent him the book, “Christ the Healer” by F. F. Bosworth, a marvelous book on healing. There were so many things happening with the church, and I sort of forgot about it. Quite a few weeks went by, and then I remembered, “Oh, man!” I never heard anything from them. The thought that jumped in my mind was, “I bet I offended him.” You know, they got offended when pastor would not come and just thought that I was not really interested. So I rang them up and I said, “You know, when I sent you that book, I honestly felt the Holy Spirit was talking to me. I didn’t mean to offend you,” and I started into this whole sort of a rehearsed little thing I had. He stopped me in mid-sentence and said, “Pastor, my wife is healed!”

I said, “Well, what do you mean?”
He said, “Well, she read that book and started reading the Scriptures in the Bible, and she just prayed, and she got healed reading the book.”
I said, “Really?”
He said, “Yeah.”
Now that was years and years ago. She is still healed. She actually went on to be one of our instructors in our Bible school for several years, and guess what subject she taught? Divine healing! She is still doing great and is very, very healthy today.

Look in Mark 4:26,

26 And He said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground,”

All right, let’s stop again. What is the seed? It is the word of God. If a man should scatter seed on the ground,

27 “and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how.
28 “For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head.
But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.

The most important thing is just to get the seed in the ground. You have to get it in the ground. Look what Jesus said. Verse 27, “He should sleep by night and rise by day; the seed sprouts and grows, and he does not know how.” It works independent of your understanding. You may be saying, “Man, I don’t get it! He is just saying, ‘Put the word of God, what it has to say about healing, in my heart, and that is going to bring healing?’ That just doesn’t make sense to me!” Friend, if you will just get it in your heart and keep it there, and water it and protect it, it will spring and grow up independent of your understanding. He knows not how. Frankly, I don’t know why it works. I just know it does.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED

Again, Jesus said, “This is how the kingdom works.” Friend, the earth yields crops by itself. If you will just get the seed in the soil of your heart, it works. It works for marriage; it works for healing; it works for peace. That is how God does what He does in our lives. He sends His word, but we have to get it in the soil of our hearts. Then the blade comes up, the head comes out, then the full grain in the head, and then it is time to thrust in the sickle. Then comes the manifestation; then comes to the answer to the thing that we have been trusting God for, that we have been sowing into our lives. However, again, no seed, no harvest. Mark 4:30,

Then He said, “To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater... (everyone say greater) ...greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.”

When the word of God is sown, it is like a mustard seed that Jesus said is smaller than all seeds on earth. Have you ever seen a mustard seed? A lot of people have seen them these days. I actually should have thought of it. I have a pack of them up in my office. There must be 500 seeds in this packet, and I can fit it easily in the palm of my hand. In fact, I could say right now: “I have a mustard seed in my hand,” and it would be the same thing: you could not see it. I don’t care if your vision is 10/10, you could not see it! They are tiny! Sometimes I know you have some major deals going on in your life. It may be in this area of healing, and you are thinking, “Oh, come on, Pastor! Can you please give me something more substantial than that? That seems so puny compared to my problem! This is puny compared to my aches and my pains and compared to the genetics I inherited from my father, my grandfather or compared to my marriage problem. You are giving me a mustard seed? I have to go somewhere else where I can get something bigger than that.” All I have to offer is mustard seeds. I love what Jesus said: “It is smaller than all the seeds of the earth, but when it is sown, it grows and becomes greater.”

When it is sown, it grows. Not when it is admired. When it is sown. Get it into the soil of your heart.

I am amazed sometimes just at the power of the natural seed, and I understand why Jesus used this illustration. You get some little seed, and it grows and breaks the concrete. It says, “You are not holding me down! I have life in me, and I am coming up!” Boom! And it breaks through rocks; it breaks through concrete. You can pack the soil down, and the little seed says, “I don’t care what you do, I have life in me, and I’m coming up!”
Friend, we have the incorruptible seed of the word of God that has divine life in it. It says, “I don’t care what kind of problems you put on top of me; I don’t care what kind of obstacles. I have life in me, and I am coming up! I am coming up! You put me in the soil. You better get out of the way. I am going to be greater than everything else in your life: greater than every problem, greater than every obstacle, and greater than every attack of the enemy. I am coming up!” There is divine life in that seed when it is sown.

STICK WITH THE WORD AND IT WILL PREVAIL

Look in Acts, chapter 19. Here Paul comes into Ephesus, this pagan city. They have one of the wonders of the ancient world there, this huge statue of the goddess Diana. The town is full of witchcraft and idolatry, evil spirits, etc. It is really quite a chapter, if you read it. Acts 19:8, speaking of Paul, it says,

8 And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months…
(Everyone say three months) …reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.

So Paul was in there sowing the word for three months.

9 But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.
10 And this continued for two years…

Paul was there for two years and three months, or he may just be speaking about two years, and the three months was part of it. Still he was not just there on a Wednesday afternoon. He was sowing the word for quite a while. So all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks, and a lot of things happened. People got saved by the truckloads. They burned all their magic books and confessed their deeds, and a lot of things happened. It is all summed up in verse 20 (Acts 19:20),

20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

It grew mightily and prevailed. Well, Paul was sowing the word and watering it for at least two years, or two years and three months. He stayed at it, and he stayed at it, and he stayed at it, and it prevailed over idolatry; it prevailed over witchcraft; it prevailed over evil spirits; it prevailed over public opposition; it prevailed over error; it prevailed over hostile and unholy mindsets. It grew mightily and prevailed, but they had to stick with it.

I just want to tell you tonight: Stick with it. The word will grow if you will get it in the soil of your heart, and it will prevail. It absolutely will. There is a beautiful story in Second Kings, the eleventh chapter.

Athaliah was the daughter of Jezebel. She was just as wicked as her mother. She had this opportunity, and it says that she went and slew all the royal seed. She killed all of the heirs, all of the young boys who were heir to the kingdom. Athaliah is a type of the devil, and that is what the devil is after: the royal seed.
Athaliah reigned for six years with an iron fist. She didn’t know it, but they had taken one of the royal seeds, this little boy, and they hid him away inside the temple. Friend, we are the temple of God. They hid him away for six years. Athaliah did not know it, but all the while this royal seed is in the temple growing and growing and growing. After six years, on the seventh year, Jehoiada the priest brings him out into the temple, and they put the testimony in his hand and put a crown on his head, and everyone yells, “Long live the king!” Athaliah cried, “Treason!” But it did not last too long, because they killed her. It is a picture of what happens when we plant the royal seed in our heart. It may seem like the devil is ruling and reigning in our life, that there are circumstances that are ruling and reigning in our life… it may have to be with sickness or some other thing… and it just seems like we are under the enemy’s thumb. Yet if you will get that royal seed in your life, even though the devil wants to kill it and get it out of your life, but you keep it in the temple and guard it and let it grow and grow, friend, it will come out. In fact, it’s interesting: It said on the seventh year. Seven is the number of perfection, the number of completeness, the number of fullness. When it reaches the full grain in the head, when harvest time comes, Athaliah is going to be overthrown. It becomes greater, and it prevails over everything in our life. Again, the key is getting that word in our hearts. It prevails over sickness, sin, lack, and depression and every work of the devil.

There was a girl who was going to our Bible school. I was teaching the course on divine healing at that time in the Bible school. She was raised in a denomination that believed in salvation through the blood and forgiveness of sins. I guess they basically believed Psalm 103, verse 3-A, but did not believe Psalm 103, verse 3, part B, that He heals all of our diseases. She loved the Lord but had never heard that, and would just say, “Well, God used to heal, but He doesn’t do it, anymore. It’s just not part of today.” She came into the class, and here I was teaching on Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever. God never changes. He is the Lord that changes not. It is His nature to be a Healer. What He is by nature is not dispensational. Healing is available to the church today. She thought, “What in the world have I gotten myself into?” But instead of dropping out of the Bible school and finding another church, she went home and read all the Scriptures and cross-referenced them. She thought, “Well, that’s there. I never knew that was there! Yeah, well, I guess that makes sense.” She had lots of questions, but she came week after week and would go home and study those verses and go from verse to verse and cross-reference them. She did that week after week after week. It was a 13-week class. About three-fourths of the way through the class, she came to the conclusion, “You know what? I was never taught this. This is for me!” She has been putting that word in her heart for about ten or eleven weeks and studying it every night, staying up until the wee hours of the morning and studying and studying and studying. She just said, “God, I accept this. These promises are for me. I accept them. It’s for me.” Now it was really important to her, because she had a large tumor in her throat. She came to that conclusion, to that acceptance, and after just mulling it over and praying about it and studying and reading and studying and reading for 10 or 11 weeks, she was on her way to service Wednesday night and got a tickle in her throat and started to cough. She coughed the tumor up in her hand. She said, “I rolled the window down and chucked it in somebody’s front yard, I guess.” What did that? Well, the word did that.

**BY HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED**

Look in Isaiah 53, another place that we find Rapha. Isaiah 53, a great redemptive chapter of the Old Testament. Isaiah, looking hundreds of years into the future, saw the purpose of Christ’s crucifixion and suffering. It says in verse 5, speaking of Jesus *(Isaiah 53:4)*,

4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows…
The word there for “griefs” is actually the Hebrew word for sicknesses or diseases. It is translated that way when it is quoted in the New Testament. That is the way Matthew quotes it by the Holy Spirit. So that is what the Hebrew word means, as well: “Surely He has borne our sicknesses and carried our pains,”

Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. Verse 5:

5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

The word “healed” there is “rapha.” Whose stripes purchased healing for us? Well, it was Jesus’ stripes.

First Peter 2:24 in the New Testament talks about Christ, who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, might live unto righteousness. In other words, the potential is there for us to live righteous and holy lives before God. Because He bore my sin in His own body, the power of sin is broken. I therefore have the potential to live unto righteousness. “That we might live unto righteousness.” The rest of that verse says, “by whose stripes we were healed.” Looking back at the finished work of Calvary: “By His stripes we were healed.”

Here is the truth of the matter. Scripture says the wages of sin is death. Jesus could have died a relatively quick and painless death and paid for our sins. Why did He suffer so? Why did He allow His back to be opened by the whip? Why wear the crown of thorns? Why the repeated beatings? Well, the Scripture says it was for the chastisement of our peace, and He took the stripes on His back for our healing. The name Jehovah Rapha points to the finished work of Calvary. The price has been paid, but you still have to get the seed in your heart because that is the way God brings it about in our lives.

“Lord Jesus, we just determine that we are going to be good ground. We are not going to let cares and worries and anxieties and pressures choke the word of God out of our life or steal it out of our life; but we are going to plant that word, water it, and guard it knowing that it springs and grows up by itself. We are going to do what the psalmist said: Meditate in Your word. We will bear fruit in our season. We will be like that tree planted by the rivers of water as we ponder Your word and make sure it stays in the soil.

Lord, I pray for those who have come tonight who have made decisions already to begin to plant toward their future. This truth flows over into every arena of life. It can bring peace to a troubled mind. It can bring harmony to a troubled marriage. It can bring health to a broken body. You sent Your word and healed us and delivered us from our destruction. Lord, we accept the seed into our lives. We are saying “no” to the devil.”

Maybe you have a desperate situation in your home, and you feel a bit of panic like, “I’m willing to do this, but I don’t know that I have time to wait for that harvest!” I just feel like telling you this: You do what you are supposed to do. You get that seed in. You be diligent about it, as diligent as a farmer whose life and livelihood is dependent on that harvest. You be as diligent as the person who realizes the future of their family and their own future rests on getting that seed in the ground and making sure it gets watered. If you will do that, God’s grace will cover you. I feel from the Holy Spirit to tell you that. Don’t panic. God’s grace will cover you; but you get busy doing what you need to do.
I think perhaps some people get frustrated and say, “Why should I even try? Why should I even begin? My little castle is falling down around me right now.” God is a very gracious God. Father, we bless You, we bless You.

Lord, we pray for those who are here tonight who have wayward children. They are not serving You, but maybe they have had the seeds of Your truth sown into their heart at a young age. Lord, we believe Your word that declares that our children will be nursed at our side and they will return to our borders. Great will be the peace of our children. Father, we thank you for that promise. Nothing will tear it out of our hearts. It does not matter what things look like; it doesn’t matter how big the stone of opposition lays upon that seed in our heart, we believe it will sprout and grow and produce a harvest. Our children will be saved. We and our household will be saved. Even as you told that Philippian jailer through the Apostle Paul by the Spirit, Lord, we believe it can be so for our families and households. God, I just pray You would send laborers across the pathway of children, sons and daughters, wherever they are on the planet. If there are children of people here who are serving in the armed forces, wherever they are, send a laborer to them, O God! If they are messed up in drugs or tangled up in a terrible lifestyle of sin, send a laborer to them, God. If they are in prison, send a laborer to them, O God, wherever they are. God, we thank you for drawing them by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

Lord, we thank you tonight for the power of Your word. Our confidence is in Your word. We believe that it will not return to you void, but it will prosper in the things where it is sent. For as the rain comes down from heaven and waters the earth and causes that seed to bring forth, we believe it is even so in our lives.

If you have come to the point that you know some things need to change for you, you have hungered after God, after a relationship with God, maybe you have been doing your own thing for a while. You have thought, “Man, this has got to stop.” You need something deeper; you need something more significant; you need God in your life. I want to invite you to pray with me. The Bible says if you believe in your heart God raised Jesus from the dead and confess Him with your mouth as Lord, you will be saved. I know there are probably a few people here tonight who have heard it for a while. That word has come to you in various means; God has used various vessels, different people, to sow that word into your life. There may be a point where you even watched some Christian television thing to mock, and you laughed at it, and the seed reached your heart. It has been springing up and growing; you found yourself convicted and convinced and drawn toward God and pulled. I mean, why are you here tonight? The fact that you are here says that God has been doing something. There has been a work of God going on in your life, and I want to pray with you.

If you are a prodigal son or a prodigal daughter, you are away from God. You know the truth, but you are not living for Him right now, listen: God loves you, and you need to know it. He is utterly committed to you; but as long as you are outside the circle of His blessing, doing your own thing, the storm will continue to do its work in your life even as it did in the story of the prodigal son. He finally had to come to himself, the Bible says. He said, “I’m going home. What am I doing?” It is time for you to come home, and we are going to pray together.

If you are here tonight, and you would say, “Bayless, I’m going to make this commitment to God tonight. I know I need to. I am away, and I need to come home. I have never made a commitment like this, but I’m willing to pray this prayer because I want to meet God. I want a relationship with Him in my life,” then let’s pray. God is looking at our hearts right now. That is
the important thing. But letting your heart and your mouth agree is equally as important. Say these words after me. Say,

Dear Jesus, I believe in You. I know You are more than just a figure of history. You are the Son of God. You live eternally, and You died for me. You paid for my sins on the cross and were raised from the dead on the third day. I ask You right now to come into my life. Be my Lord and be my Savior. I commit my all to You. I choose to follow You all of my days. In Your name I pray. Amen.

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