

01 – PLANTING THE SEED

The Place the Word Holds in Healing

- ✓ I think it's safe to say that, when people think about being healed, the Word isn't *usually* the first thing that comes to mind. ("Oh my goodness, I need a healing! I'd better run and get my Bible!") That's not usually how people think. Usually, they think of prayer.
- ✓ I can't tell you how many times, when people come for prayer, that the Lord will give me a verse for them. Sometimes, when I try to share it with them, they resist. (I've had people say, "I didn't ask you to preach! I asked you to pray!") What they don't understand is, the Word plays a major role in receiving healing. (You see that *all over* the Bible.)

Psalm 107:20 – "He sent his Word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."

- ✓ The people in this verse were desperate. (They were literally at "death's door".) So, what did God do? He sent His Word. You're going to find that's a common theme in Scripture. Even the people who came to Jesus for healing, were met with the Word.

Luke 5:15 – "*But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed ..."*

Luke 6:17 – "*... a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed ..."*

- ✓ Notice the connection between "hearing" and "being healed". If you think about it, that makes sense. Romans 10:17 says, "Faith comes by hearing the Word." If faith has *anything* to do with healing, (which in most cases, it does), then the Word would be a necessary part of the process, since that's how faith comes.
- ✓ Let Me Clarify: I said, "in most cases" you need faith. When

healing comes through Gifts of Spirit; faith isn't required. God is just sovereignly healing people. (He's God, who's going to tell Him He can't?) When the Gifts are in manifestation, people *don't* need to have faith. But when the Gifts *aren't* in manifestation, they do. (Matt. 8:13, 9:2, 9:28; Mark 5:34,36, 10:52, Luke 17:19, John 4:50.)

God's Medicine

Prov. 4:20-22 – "*My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they (my words) are life unto those that find them, and health (margin – "medicine") to all their flesh."*

- ✓ Notice, it didn't say the Word was medicine to our *souls*. Or our *spirits*. It said God's Word is medicine to our *flesh*. Now, if you go to the doctor and he gives you medicine, it'll have directions on the bottle. ("Take 3 times daily, with food. May cause drowsiness. Do not operate heavy machinery.") Just like natural medicine, God's medicine comes with instructions.

i.) Attend to My Words – ("Give my words your attention!")

- ✓ Suppose you're walking downtown. You see me across the street, and you call out to me, hoping to start a conversation. If I was in a hurry, I might say, "I'd love to stop and talk to you. But I have some business that I have to *attend to*."
- ✓ What do I mean by that? "I'd love to talk, but this has to come first. Everything else gets set aside, until I attend to this." Well, God said, "Attend to my words." That's the first instruction. The Word has to come first! (The word I'll give you to remember for this point is: "PRIORITY". The Word needs to be your top priority.)

ii.) Incline Thine Ear Unto My Sayings

- ✓ Some translations say: "Bend your ear to my sayings". In other words: "Give my Word your deliberate, focused, respectful attention, with a heart set on hearing and doing what was said." (Here the word to remember is "ATTITUDE".)

iii.) Let Them Not Depart From Thine Eyes

- ✓ He means this quite literally. If you hope to draw on the power that's in the Word to heal your body, it's going to take a significant amount of time in the Word. (There's no way around this. There aren't any shortcuts.) Just this week I saw a devotional called, "One Minute with God". My first thought was, "I hope you're giving God more than a minute! If not, you won't get *much* from the Word!"
- ✓ If you need healing, you need to give the same attention to the Word that the children of Israel gave to the brazen serpent. (You remember the story. Fiery serpents had come into the camp. A lot of folks had been bitten, and essentially, it was a death sentence. Look at the instructions God gave them.)

Numbers 21:8 – "And the Lord said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent [of bronze] and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten, **when he looks at it, shall live.**" (John 3:14)

- ✓ When the people who were bitten **looked at the serpent**, God said they'd live. Now, here's the revelation. God wasn't talking about people giving it a passing glance, as they walked by. The Hebrew word that's translated "look" means "sit down here and **fix your gaze** on it". Keep your eyes on it. That's what we're told to do with the Word. Don't let it depart from your eyes. ("**PERSISTENCE**".)

iv.) Keep Them in the Midst of Thine Heart

- ✓ The word to remember here is "**VALUE**". Value the Word! In the rest of this series, you're going to see the importance of planting the Word in your heart and holding onto it.

The Parable of the Sower – (Mark 4)

- ✓ When most people teach this parable, they read verses 14-20 (seven verses), and from that, they preach their sermon. The problem with that is: This particular teaching from Jesus covers the entire chapter – 41 verses. (He tells the parable, then the disciples come and say,

"We don't get it!" So, Jesus explains the parable, He tells at least three "supporting" parables, then gives a real-life example. (If we're looking for Jesus' main point, it doesn't even come out until verse 26. So, if we only look at verses 14-20, like many sermons do, we'll get 17% of Jesus' teaching, and we'll miss His main point entirely!)

The Purpose of This Parable

- ✓ It might seem counter-intuitive, but we're going to start in v. 26, with Jesus' main point. What's the main thing He's trying to teach us? He's showing us how to get the Word off the page, and into our lives.
- ✓ We've all experienced this. We've seen a promise on the page. We know it's true, and we believe it. But when we compare it to our lives, our lives come up short. Let me give you a few examples: "My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in Glory", "Sin shall not have dominion over you", "By His stripes, you were healed".
- ✓ We know the Word is true, but sometimes our lives don't seem to reflect it. The truth is, I don't just want a *verse* on peace. I'd like to *experience* peace in my life. I don't just want to *read* about how I'm free from sin, I want to *walk in* that freedom. This parable is about how to get the Word off the page, and into our lives. (Are you interested? He shows us how, beginning in verse 26.)

Mark 4:26-29 – "And he said, so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

"So Is the Kingdom of God" – (Luke 8:11)

- ✓ In other words, "the whole Kingdom works like this. It's just like a man planting a seed in the ground." (Jesus telling us that **the Word works just like a seed**. How does a seed work? Let me give you 3 points.)

- a.) In Order For a Seed to Produce Anything, It Has to Be Planted – Isn't that true? You couldn't go over to IGA after church, buy some corn seed, set it on your bedtable, and expect to grow corn. In order for a seed to produce, it has to be planted. The Word is no different. A Bible sitting on your shelf produces nothing. **In order for the Word to start working for you, you have to take that Word and plant it in your heart** – (v 15)
- b.) Seeds Produce After Their Kind – In the natural, seeds produce after their own kind. If you plant corn, you reap corn. If you plant beans, you reap beans. Everything produces after it's kind. The same is true with the Word. Whatever kind of Scriptures you plant in your heart, that's what will be produced in your life. (If you want peace, plant verses on peace – Isa. 26:3, John 14:27. Reading Leviticus probably won't help.)
- c.) A Seed, Once Its Planted, Will Grow – In the natural, you don't plant corn seed one day, and harvest a corn crop the next. There's a growing time! The same is true with the Word! There's a time when the seed (the Word) grows up and matures in your heart.

Mk. 4:26-29 – “And he said, so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should take the seed of the Word, and put it in the ground of his heart; And should sleep, and rise night and day (indicates the passage of time), and the seed (the Word) should spring and grow up, he knows not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; (but it doesn't happen all at once) first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.”

- ✓ This is what it's saying. You take the Word and plant it in your heart. Keep doing it day after day, after day. As you keep putting the Word in, the Word gets stronger on the inside. And **when the Word on the inside gets stronger than the problem on the outside, the Word overwhelms the problem**. (True with peace, healing, whatever ...)
- ✓ Last Thought: Satan's not going to be content to sit back and watch you produce a harvest. According to the rest of this parable, there are five things he can use to uproot the seed. If he steals the Word from your heart, there can be no harvest.