

Alternative Therapies: Making a Difference through Spiritual Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

With the increased interest in alternative and complimentary therapies because of the government funding for alternative medical research through the Office for Alternative Medicine in the past couple of years, it is important for Christian doctors of all professions to evaluate objectively the spiritual undercurrent involved in many of these therapies. With everything from witch doctors, medicine men and yoga to homeopathy, acupuncture and chiropractic, the field is as diverse as any study could be.

The object of this paper is to show that (1) according to Scripture, there are many different avenues of healing, some done by Christ and His apostles and some done by Satan and his followers; (2) in classical philosophy there are philosophical constructs which explain the difference between vitalism — naive and critical — and biological mechanism; and (3) there are at least four tests which we can apply to try to discern the fraudulent spirits which may be involved in some aspects of alternative healing.

This paper will be of help to the medical physician as well as the alternative practitioner in evaluating the various alternative therapies from a Biblical viewpoint. Having practiced chiropractic for over 40 years and being a Christian for over 50 years, the author has broad experience in the field.

The Origin of Life

In Genesis 2:7 we read that “*God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.*” There is much to think about in this verse. Man is composed of the same chemicals as the soil or earth upon which he stands. But God took those chemicals and brought them together in the form He wanted and placed within that figure a soul, a life, a spirit. These are nonphysical and immaterial. The chemical/physical make up is inanimate material, not unlike the soil upon which we stand. Our human structure is both animate and inanimate. In the Hebrew the word “*nepes*” or “*nephash*” which has been translated “*soul*” literally means “*the essence of life, the act of breathing, taking breathe.*” In Genesis 1:20, the living creatures created by God are also said to have “*nepes,*” the same as the word in 2:7 where man is called a living soul. It is translated some 400 times in the Old Testament as “*soul.*” Vine goes on to explain that in the Greek and Latin “*soul*” is contrasted with body but in the Hebrew, as used in Genesis, the contrast is between the inner self and the outer appearance.

In the Greek the word translated “*soul*” is the word, “*psuche*” and the word “*pneuma*” is being translated “*spirit.*” The difficulty in differentiating these words is evident by Hebrews 4:12, “*For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit...*” Vine says generally speaking the spirit is of the higher nature and soul of the lower element. The spirit is that special nature bestowed on man by God,

and the soul, like that of animals and other living creatures, is that which is inherited from parents. Both are a result of a special creative act of God, immaterial aspects of living creatures, which when combined with the inanimate, form all living beings, the spirit being in man only and the soul in humans and animals alike. The creation of life was a one time creative act of God. It was accomplished in the first chapter of Genesis and the command to all living beings was to go forth and multiply. Procreation was the gift which God gave to living things. But nothing which is dead, (*does not have that which God placed in it, the soul, spirit, or life*), can bring forth another life. This is a principle which God established. Man cannot bring to life from that which is inanimate, any form of living creature. Neither can that which is inanimate create that which is animate. We must accept the fact that the immaterial aspect of living creatures is given directly by God, created by Him, but reproduced in succeeding generations. It is not created in a laboratory, or even dissected and studied by scientists on a laboratory bench.

It is important for the Christian to have a basic understanding of how this immaterial nature gives life and healing to the physico/chemical nature.

The Recuperative Power of Cells

We have heard it said, “*the body healed itself.*” What do we mean when we say this? The body by itself has no ability to heal! The physical body is just a glob of dust — chemicals — from the earth. There is no life or healing power in these chemicals and by them-

selves there is no life there.

If it could heal itself, the dead body would raise itself from the death bed and restore itself. This it cannot do. There is, however, a natural recuperative power in the physical body. This recuperative power fights off disease, develops immune response and is capable of spontaneous healing of many conditions. In fact if we really want to admit it, this is the same dynamic power that must be activated if any healing is going to take place in the body. But this power is not a physical part of the body. It is part of the power of the immaterial nature which gives the physical body “*life*”.

If this natural recuperative healing power is not physical, what is it? Is it mental? We have heard of patients willing themselves well, thereby using mental ability to affect the healing process. We also know that if a patient does not wish to be well, nothing that a physician can do is going to help. Conversely, the patient with the most determination to get well will have the greatest ability to overcome illness. Therefore we know that the patient’s mental condition does play a definite role in the healing process. But is healing strictly a mental function? If so, how do we explain mental illness if it were the mind that is the source of healing power?

Since healing does not seem to be simply a function of the mind, we must admit that the healing process is controlled by the spirit, the soul, the vital nature, the essence of life itself. It is part of the immaterial nature which God breathed into man when He called man a living soul. (Gen. 2:7; Acts 17:25; Ps. 36:9; Job 33:4) This nature gives life to the inanimate physico/chemical material from which man was formed. This nature distinguishes the live body from the dead one. This nature is transient within the physico/chemical substance which is here today and gone tomorrow, giving life, health, and mental function (*e.g., thinking and reasoning*) to that physical body, without which the body is dead. The definition of life then must involve that immaterial nature which God placed into the body which He formed from the dust of the earth, when He called that form a living soul.

Many characteristics distinguish a living body,— warmth, breath, pulse, reflexes, conscious and unconscious brain activity — from a dead body. More elaborate laboratory equipment, such as the electroencephalogram, reveal activity in the brain of a living body even when all other responses are in doubt. But when these responses are all absent, the body is dead and nothing is going to change that or bring life back. Severe physical changes and deterioration are soon going to follow and the physical substance of the

body will return to the dust of the earth. It is obvious to all who witness this process of death and dying that something has happened to the once vital living body — something has left it and that something is not a visible, tangible property but rather an intangible, immaterial nature.

The Healing Principle

Because of our training as physicians in a particular discipline, many of us may feel that only our method of healing, our procedure, our discipline will work in the healing process. This obviously is not true. The spirit of the sick patient may accept any of several stimuli to do its work in the patient. Of course there are times when the wrong method or substance is used and the spirit is hindered in the healing process. We have all seen this happen. But the physician needs to know what he can do to help and not hinder the healing process. The best physician is the one who does the least to interfere with the patient’s ability to heal himself. Many times the habits of the patient have harmful effects on the physical body and make it more difficult for the spirit within man to accomplish this healing process. Substances such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, impure air, water and food, and other toxic substances hinder the healing processes because of the damage they do to the physical body.

Christ’s Healing Ministry

We know that much of the ministry of our Lord Jesus on earth was that of healing the sick. This He did by the power of His Spirit affecting the spirit of the sick person. We also know that much of His healing was not just physical but was also spiritual, bringing about salvation to the individual as well as physical healing. By this we can assume that the same nature which is involved with giving life to the person, the “*natural man,*” the soul, is that which is subject to sin, and it is also the nature which brings about healing and recuperation to the physical body. Therefore, we can say that the process of healing, the nature of life itself, and the sin nature, are all phenomena under the control of the soul/spirit of man.

While Christ was on earth, we find that His healing ministry and His saving ministry many times were simultaneous acts. This is an example of what we are trying to show, that it is the soul/spirit which is that aspect of the triune nature of man which is involved in both healing and salvation. The Greek word, *iaomai*, is translated as “*to heal*” or “*make whole*”. In Luke 5:17 this word is used regarding those who were coming to Christ to be healed and in the twentieth verse we

are told that He healed the man with palsy by saying, *“Thy sins be forgiven thee.”* In Luke 6:18, 19 this word is used to describe the acts of Jesus relative to the demon possessed and then the multitudes who sought His virtue. In quoting Isaiah in Matt. 13:15, Luke 4:18, and John 12:40 we find this same word is translated healing. In I Peter 2:24, Peter tells us that *“by His stripes we are healed (iaomai).”* All of these references are about healing of the body, soul and spirit (*not the physical only*) and all are using the Greek word, iaomai.

Another Greek word sometimes used for healing is the word sozo, which is generally translated *“to save”*. In Luke 8:36 the man possessed of demons was healed (sozo) and in Luke 8:48 and Matt. 9:22 Jarius daughter was raised from the dead, made whole (sozo). In James 5:15 we read that *“the prayer of faith will heal (sozo) the sick.”* This word has very definite usage in a spiritual sense and the few times it is used for healing it involves raising the dead or casting out demons, a spiritual healing.

A third Greek word to consider is hugiaino which is best translated *“health”* but is used when Jesus healed the man with the withered hand in Mark 3:5, and the woman with the hemorrhage in Mark 5:34. In this verse we read that Christ said to her, *“Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole (sozo); go in peace and be whole (hugiaino) of thy plague”*. In Acts 27:34 the word hugiaino is translated *“health”* when food was necessary to sustain health and strength. In John 5 we have the account of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. In verses 6, 9, 11, and 14 we find hugiaino regarding his healing (made whole) and in the 14th verse Christ admonishes him to *“sin no more lest a worse thing come upon thee”* which again brings the act of healing the body together with the spiritual cleansing of the soul.

The important point to notice is that none of these words are used in the New Testament to describe the work of Satan or his demons. These words are used only of Christ and His apostles and involve the healing of the whole man: body, soul and spirit. If then we do not have an example in Scripture of Satan healing the whole man even though he does various acts of physical healing and other miracles, there must be a difference between those words which involve the spirit and those which involve only the body.

Physical Healing Without Healing the Spirit

In the Authorized King James Version, the word *“heal, healed, healing”* referring to the physical body, is mentioned 74 times in the New Testament, *“miracles”* is used 32 times, *“sign”* 30 times, 20 times the word *“wonders”* is used and 13 times *“mighty*

works”. Each of these references is describing a miracle, many of which were acts of healing of the physical body. Most of these are describing miracles done by the Lord Jesus or His apostles. But it is noteworthy that Satan also is in the business of performing miracles. Let us now look at some of the words describing the work done by Christ and His apostles which are also used to describe the acts done by Satan and his followers and the miracles which they are capable of performing.

Basically, four Greek words are used in the description of miracles. They are dunamis, semeion, teras, and therapeuo. Dunamis is most often translated as power, mighty and sometimes as miracle. Semeion is usually translated as sign but may also be translated to miracle and wonder. Teras is translated as wonders. Therapeuo is the base for the English word therapy and is translated as heal, but only when it is used in reference to the physical.

Space limits us from quoting every one of the verses where these words are used. However, an example is found in Acts 2:22 where, on the day of Pentecost, Peter says, *“Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles (dunamis) and wonders (teras) and signs (semeion) which God did by Him in the midst of you as ye yourselves also know.”* All three of these words refer to His healing ministry and His other miracles. In Acts 2:43 we see that the apostles did the same things, *“And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders (teras) and signs (semeion) were done by the apostles.”* In Acts 4:22 the word *“semeion”* is translated miracle and is describing a healing: *“...for the man was above 40 years old on whom the miracle (semeion) of healing was showed.”* Again in Heb. 2:4 the apostles are reported doing miracles. *“God also bearing them (the apostles) witness both with signs (semeion) and wonders (teras) and with diverse miracles (dunamis).”* It is abundantly clear that Christ and the apostle performed many miracles including those of healing. Let us look at some examples of these acts being accomplished by the enemies of God.

In Matt 7:21-23, Christ warns that in the last days false prophets would come doing miracles. He says, *“Not everyone that saith unto me ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works (dunamis)?’ And then will I profess unto them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity’”* Christ

again warns us in Matt 24:24 by saying, *“There shall arise false christs and false prophets and shall show great signs (semeion) and wonders (teras); inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”* In II Thess. 2:8, 9, Paul said, *“Then shall that wicked one (the Antichrist) be revealed...even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power (dunamis) and signs (semeion) and lying wonders (teras).”*

Satan and his followers can perform healing miracles according to Rev. 13:13, 14, *“and he (the false prophet) doeth great wonders (semeion) ... and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by means of those miracles (semeion) which he had power to do...”* In Rev. 16:14 we are told that *“they are spirits of devils working miracles (semeion) which go forth unto the kings of the earth.”* Also in Rev. 13:3, 12 we read, *“...one of his (antichrist) heads as it were wounded to death and his deadly wound was healed (therapeuo).”* Satan and his false spirits have the power to do many miracles including healing of the physical body!

How Does Spiritual Activity Affect the Physical Body?

There is ample warning that we should expect to see miracles, signs and healings by forces and powers which are not of God in the last days. The problem is how do we as believers recognize that which is of God and distinguish those from that which is not from God. The common criteria is that if it is good and if it helps people and if it relieves pain and suffering, it must be from God. This just is not true.

Several years ago I had the opportunity to visit a psychic surgeon in the Philippines, named Marcelo Juliare. Marcelo was pastor of a little church in the village of Carman on the island of Luzon. After his church service was over, Marcelo asked if any were sick today and if they wish to be healed to come to the front of the church. One by one they would lay out on the altar at the front of the church and, depending on the problem, Marcelo would move his hands over their body. If the problem were of an internal origin he would move his fingers across the abdomen and push his hand through the skin, work it around for a few minutes, remove some small bloody mass, place a ball of cotton between his fingers and thrust it into the opening in the abdomen, remove his fingers and the opening instantly would close up. Some questions obviously come to mind for the casual observer:— did I really see what I thought I saw? Was it just a magic show? Could any possible good come out of this type of procedure? If it was for real, was it of God or was it of Satan?

Obviously I do not have all of the answers and I must admit that I was very confused for a long time after witnessing this act. However, after viewing my films a hundred times and reviewing in my mind what transpired, I have come to some conclusions. (1) It was not a magic show. (2) Marcelo did not do this for money and was very seriously concerned that he was doing the will of God and healing his parishioners. (3) Yet if it were a true act of spiritual healing according to our God of Heaven, why did he have to open the body up to perform the healing? Christ spoke the word and He healed. The apostles laid hands on the believers and prayed but never do we have a report of them opening the body up and removing an offending substance. (4) If it was not according to biblical pattern and did not follow healing as practiced in scripture, it most likely was not of God. Therefore it must have been another spirit that I witnessed in that church which had the power to perform a supernatural act. Whether it was successful and beneficial or not, I could not be sure. I did have opportunity to examine a twenty year old woman who had had her appendix removed by a psychic surgeon when she was about thirteen. There was a stretch mark of sorts in the area of the appendix and the patient had had no further symptoms of appendicitis. Whether the appendix had actually been removed was impossible to know without actually opening up her abdomen. The psychic surgeons of the Philippines have a world wide following and claim miraculous results with thousands of cases. Can this apparent act of kindness and benevolence, which harms no one and may indeed do much good, all in the Name of Christ, still be the work of Satan? If we believe Matt 7:21-23, then it indeed very well may be.

How can we know if a miracle of healing is the work of God or the work of a false spirit or false prophet? If the healing process of the physical body is controlled by the soul/spirit of man then it stands to reason that anything which can effect the soul/spirit will have the greatest opportunity to cause change. The natural spirit of man is influenced by outside spirits, both the Holy Spirit of God and false spirits. Christians are too ready to give credit to God for all spiritual activity, especially if it appears to be good or helpful. Satan is the great deceiver and is in the world to deceive God's people at every opportunity and how better to do this than through healing of the physical body. Therefore, we must admit that his spirits are capable of interacting with our spirit to do that which may at first appear to be good.

If the healing process is one of the works of the spirit of man and it is influenced by outside spirits then

logically spiritual means should be one of the first methods of healing for the Christian to consider. For this reason the Bible tells us to pray for healing. *“If there be any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”* (James 5:14.)

The Philosophy of Healing

In philosophical terms the inborn spiritual nature which God has placed into man which seems to be in control of the healing process in addition to giving life to the physical body is called the vitalistic nature. In his Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Paul Edwards approaches this subject from a secular view point but he does shed much light on our understanding of the nature of man which is involved in the healing process. From a secular standpoint, Paul Edwards describes two types of vitalism, critical vitalism and naive vitalism.

What we have been describing in the previous paragraphs could well be defined as theistic or critical vitalism. Paul Edwards defines critical vitalism as, *“primarily a metaphysical doctrine concerning the nature of living organism...it is that which distinguishes living from non-living things...it is the presence in living systems of a substantial entity that imparts to the system power possessed by no inanimate body...it holds, first, that in every living organism there is an entity that is not exhaustively composed of inanimate parts and, second, that the activities characteristic of living organisms are due, in some sense, to the activities of this entity.”* This is not to be confused with naive vitalism which, as a philosophy, is far more common in today’s world of New Age medicine, and which Edwards describes as, *“life is regarded as a material substance, usually a fluid body...life is flatly identified with a material fluid, the breathe or the blood...the doctrine of spirits, as occurs in Galen and his successors, is an example of this sort of vitalism. The process of etherealizing the life culminates in the view that it is a fluid but one that is assigned no properties other than its power of animating an organism.”* In the philosophy of naive vitalism we find that the essence of life is given to some real or imagined anatomical or biological part which controls all bodily functions. Life is a fluid or an energy in naive vitalism. Today we find the New Age holistic healers are balancing life energies, unblocking the flow of life’s impingements, stimulating meridians, reading auras, ingesting life energy from nature, calling upon spirits, and using methods which have little or no empirical value, methods which do not conform to God’s created order of anatomical circuitry or system physiology, in their healing practices.

By this we mean that the naive vitalist works with systems which are not a part of God’s created order, not anatomical, not visible in the laboratory, not measurable on instrumentation, but which work because of the faith or spirit of the healer doing the work. The Bible says to *“try the spirits to see if they are of God.”* (I John 4:1)

Critical vitalism was first proclaimed by Aristotle in his treatises On the Soul and On the Generation of Animals. *“Aristotle takes the soul as the model of life and attributes to life the power of achieving and maintaining organic form,”* according to Edwards. Although Edwards offers no explanation for the origin of life, as Christians we know that this entity has been placed in matter by none other than the Creator Himself at the origin of the creation and it is passed on to succeeding generations by the process of procreation. This entity which in Scripture is called *“soul/spirit,”* is responsible for all living processes, for thinking, memory, self preservation, reproduction and also for healing of physical and mental dysfunctions. The critical (or Theistic) vitalist must accept the fact that the Creator works within His model, through His created order, by His anatomical circuitry, using the plan which He established when He created and organized the body for its proper function and self preservation. The process of separation of the *“soul/spirit”* from the body is called death.

Christ tells us in John 6:63 that *“It is the spirit that quickeneth (makes alive); the flesh profiteth nothing.”* Christ was talking about the new birth and the Holy Spirit who comes to give new life to the sinning soul. But is it not also true that it is the natural spirit which gives physical life to the flesh and the flesh (physico/chemical body) is of no profit by itself, as it pertains to the life giving, healing, and recuperative powers of the individual?

In contrast to the vitalistic hypothesis is the secular scientific model which is one of reductionistic or mechanistic philosophy. Webster defines this as *“a doctrine that holds natural processes (as of life) to be mechanically determined and capable of complete explanation by the laws of physics and chemistry.”*... *“it is a procedure which reduces complex data or phenomena to simple terms.”* Paul Edwards defines mechanism in biology as a *“philosophical theory about the nature of biological systems...mechanism is sometimes said to be the theory that living organisms and all of their living parts are machines...stated less formally, mechanism is the view that every biological event is a pattern of non-biological occurrences.”* Edwards asks the rhetorical question, *“What distinguishes living from*

non living things?” He answers for the mechanist it is, “*a complex pattern of organization in which each element of the pattern is itself a non living entity.*” This is a philosophy which is more acceptable to the scientific mind and it effectively removes the spirit from the world of empirical science. This may be necessary as far as non-biological empiricism is concerned, but is the medical scientist ready to call “*life*” a material substance? Is life, as the mechanistic philosopher believes, a combination of inorganic ingredients? The examination of the living cell can not be reduced small enough to find life under a microscope. Even though the chromosomes and genes can be studied, separated, split, dissected, transferred, replaced, altered, or whatever, nothing happens in their function if there is no life in the cell! But, the element “*life*” cannot be found in the cell! Life cannot be created in a laboratory. No combination of ingredients will ever duplicate the function of a thinking, living, reproducing organism without the living vitalistic nature. The mechanistic philosophy just does not have the answers necessary to satisfy the Christian believer.

It is not difficult to understand why the secular scientific mind of man in the days of Nazi Medicine and also in the modern research laboratories, the abortion clinics, the fetal tissue research centers, the genetic engineering and cloning laboratories, can proceed endlessly along their path of inhuman research when they refuse to recognize the spiritual entity in the living being. If their philosophy of life is materialistic, mechanistic and reductionist, they have no knowledge of the presence of God or appreciation of His work.

The Vitalistic Affect on the Body

Much has been written about the effects of that which we have been discussing but little is said or written about the controlling power itself. As the healing professions move farther and farther from their vitalistic base, we hear more about homeostasis, recuperative powers, natural healing power and immune response. Are these not the effect, the results of the active working immaterial nature, the spirit/soul? Is this not what we reported earlier in this paper, that many are saying, “the body healed itself”? Does this not describe what is happening without explaining how the body does it? Is homeostasis, for example, the basis of it all, the source from which all healing emanates? Or what is it that controls homeostasis? Strang says, “*It is this marvelous, innate (inborn), purposeful nature which is the predominant, practical reality behind the mechanisms of homeostasis.*”

Dorland defines homeostasis as “*a tendency to*

uniformity or stability in the normal body states of the organism”. Webster says it is “*a relatively stable state of equilibrium or a tendency toward such a state between the different but interdependent elements or groups of elements of an organism or group.*” Neither of these definitions give any hint as to what, if anything, controls homeostasis. Janse says, “*normal integrated neurological conduct equals homeostasis and health, and disturbed neurological conduct results in pathophysiology, disintegration of homeostasis and eventually the intrusion of disease.*” Strang says, “*homeostasis enables the body to stay alive in an ever changing environment. The nervous system is the prime controller of homeostasis.*” We would have to disagree with Strang and Janse at this point because there still is something controlling the nervous system as it regulates and controls the the homeostasis for the entire body, which it cannot and does not create by itself. If the above hypothesis were true, how do we explain diseases of the nervous system such as multiple sclerosis and poliomyelitis? These diseases also are a breakdown of homeostasis and these diseases effect the nervous system which they say controls homeostasis. This, of course, cannot happen unless something else remains in control of the nervous system. This is where we return to the immaterial nature and the concept of theistic vitalism.

At this point we must be careful not to deify the vitalistic nature as D.D. and B.J. Palmer did with their concept of Innate Intelligence. To them Innate was God and it had all of the attributes of God and dwelled in all living organisms. This is pantheism. What we are talking about is not pantheism, e.g., God is in everything, but we are suggesting that the breath of life which God originally placed within man, has been passed to every succeeding generation from the beginning. This breath (*nepes or nephesh,..Heb.*) is that immaterial nature which is passed to each new generation at the moment of conception, gives totipotency to the reproductive cells, and then develops, controls, gives life to, heals, and maintains homeostasis of the individual until the moment of death when it departs the body and the physical body returns to the dust of the earth and that immaterial nature, soul/spirit, moves on to its eternal reward.

Empiricism and the Vitalistic Concept

The issue of vitalism and its lack of scientific empiricism is used to devalue and debase the Christian who holds to a philosophy which places God at the center of his thinking. According to scientific empiricism, any scientific theory must be observable, verifiable, reproducible, irrefutable and unfalsifiable before

it can be accepted by empirical science. Obviously the concept of theistic or critical vitalism cannot do this and therefore it can not be considered empirical. However, is evolution, which is so widely accepted in the scientific community, observable, reproducible, unfalsifiable? Scientific debate, even though coming from divergent viewpoints, must be rooted in fact and be rational to the thinking man. Is this not a phenomena — the immaterial nature, which is so obvious, which is unfalsifiable — that it must be accepted in all philosophical constructs? Paul Edwards states, “*In short, vitalism is irrefutable.*”

Much of medicine and science today is not empirical science. Illich, in his *Medical Nemesis*, calls technological medicine a religion, a gnostic cult, that ritualizes and celebrates the nineteenth century ideal of progress. Mendelsohn characterizes the organizational behavior of the medical profession as an allopathic religion, with respect to those who dissent from its doctrines as not that of scientific debate, but as that of a powerful and dogmatic church ruthlessly and aggressively suppressing heresy or waging a holy war on a competing religion. In using these quotes, the author, Peter Borregard, D.C. of Albany, CA says much of the same thing we have been discussing, e.g., “There are two opposed understandings of nature, reductionism (mechanism) and a vitalist understanding of nature.” Borregard goes on to say that, “we have increasingly come to interpret biology in the reductionist manner. It takes a great deal of courage to step aside and question this world view, even after we know from our clinical experience, that the allopathic model is inadequate.”

In conclusion, we must then accept the fact that there is a spiritual side to the healing process. It is an unfalsifiable concept and as Edwards says, “*In short, vitalism is irrefutable.*” Understanding the concept of the spirit in man and how it works within the physical body, to give and sustain life, heal disease and injury, and adapt to environmental changes, is the challenge of the Christian physician. How do we best impact the soul/spirit? What can we do to aid the spirit in the healing process?

Spiritual Healing

We have already stated that it is possible that the false spirits are at work in the healing process. Just as is true for the Holy Spirit, the avenue of entrance into the personality for the false spiritual beings is through the natural spirit of man. By this avenue of entrance they can affect both the physical body and the mental or emotional state of the person. For this reason we need to be particularly careful that nothing in our pro-

cedure, our technique and our therapy has any connection to the fraudulent spirit world. On the other hand, when this is understood and the Christian physician approaches it properly, it is through this same avenue that the Spirit of God can bring complete healing through the natural spirit of man, to his body, mind and spirit by the work of His Holy Spirit.

How does this change our approach and our relationship? Are there methods, procedures and remedies which the Christian patient, possessing the Spirit of God in his spirit, cannot and should not receive? Is it not possible that the Holy Spirit residing in the Christian gives warning to the patient when fraudulent spirits are trying to seek entrance through some healing process? Is it proper that the spiritual act of prayer should be included in our protocol for the benefit of the sick? These are questions which each Christian physician must answer for himself.

False Healing

How can we know that the method, procedure, remedy, or technique which we choose to use is right, good and proper for the Christian physician and his Christian patient? If the spirit of man must accept the healing procedure and use it to aid in the healing process, it must be understood that what is practiced by the physician is (1) accepted by the natural spirit of man and (2) that it follows God’s created order (Natural Law). There are practices which are from the fraudulent spirits, which may blur, distort, or counterfeit God’s Natural Law. The natural spirit of man cannot discern the spiritual source of that which is presented. But the spirit of man which has been born from above by the Spirit of God may find real conflict in that which is from the fraudulent spirits. This is the reason that even though many shamanistic techniques and procedures have been found to be effective in healing, many of God’s people have a very disturbed spirit when they find themselves involved in these processes. Is it then acceptable for the Christian to say that if it works, if it gets people well, it must be all right? The spirit of the natural man may accept many different approaches without discernment as to spiritual source. If this is true, it is even more imperative that the Christian physician be very discerning as to any spiritual association implied or involved in his practice or procedure.

The four tests below can help discern practices which may be effective in bringing about healing but which may not be acceptable to the created order of God.

1. If the healing is of a supernatural nature, employing procedures which transcend the laws of nature, involving some miracle or miraculous event, and

not performed in the same manner as healing which has been described in Scripture, it is probably not of God. (*Examples:— psychic surgery and Edgar Cayce’s psychic diagnosis.*)

2. If the healing is associated with, or derived from, a pagan religion which is not biblical Christianity, it may be a fraudulent spirit doing the healing. (*Example:— acupuncture, yoga.*)

3. If the healing is apparently neutral as far as spiritual or religious connections are concerned but it uses methods which are not utilizing God’s created order, e.g., it is not according to the natural law of anatomical or physiological circuitry, it is probably the work of a fraudulent spirit. (*Example:— applied kinesiology, iridology, reflexology, acupuncture, surrogate testing.*)

(*It should be noted that prayer to the Living God can be used in healing, even though it is not a method following God’s created order of anatomical circuitry. The important thing to ask is, to whom are we praying? God can and will heal through prayer, but so does Satan through his false spirits if prayers are directly or indirectly focused away from God.*)

4. If the healing utilizes occult energy fields and forces which are associated with astrology, occult practices, animal magnetism, energy balancing, hypnotism, mind control, etc. it may be working with a fraudulent spirit. (*Example:— healing touch, non-contact massage, some aspects of psychotherapy, acupuncture, positive thinking.*)

There are many examples in Scripture of healing performed by Satan and his false spirits and prophecies of that which he will do in the last days. (Rev. 13:3, 12, 13, 14; Rev. 16:4; II Thess. 2:8, 9; Matt. 24:24.) In Matt. 7:21-23, Christ warns us that many shall come in the last days, preaching, casting out devils and performing many miracles (acts of healing and others) and He shall tell them, “*Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you.*” Some of these are today “*doing good,*” preaching powerful messages in pulpits around the world, drawing huge followings, performing miracles of healing, casting out devils, (*slaying in the spirit*) and telling the people that it is all in the name of the Lord. But Christ knows those that are His and they shall be known and judged by His Word. “*Beloved, believe not every spirit but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*” (I John 4:1.)

Likewise, anyone who claims to be holistic and who claims to perform acts of healing on the whole man — body, mind, soul and spirit — is claiming something which only the Spirit of God is able to do. Acts of healing of the body only, are within the power of Satan

and his followers but Christ’s healing was more spiritual than it was physical and involved the spirit of man as well as the body. This, man, in his natural state, just cannot do and neither can Satan.

Conclusion

It is the task of every Christian physician to understand the philosophy of healing to the best of his ability and to conform, as much possible, his treatment protocol to his patient’s needs, that his procedure, remedy, and advice, will best help the patient’s spirit bring about healing to his physical body. May we learn how to better relate on a spiritual basis with those around us. Only then can we become true Godly holistic healers, body (*helping the physical body*), mind (*giving comfort to the troubled soul*), and spirit (*leading some to know the Lord Jesus Christ and our God, the Creator of all mankind.*)

References

- ¹ Vine, Unger, White, *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, Sect. I, p.237
- ² *ibid.*, p. 238
- ³ Vine: Sect. II p.589
- ⁴ Paul Edwards, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. VII, p. 254
- ⁵ *ibid*
- ⁶ *ibid*
- ⁷ *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, p. 707
- ⁸ Edwards, Vol. IV, pp 250-251
- ⁹ *ibid*
- ¹⁰ Virgil V. Strang, *Essential Principles of Chiropractic*, p. 166
- ¹¹ Newman Dorland, *American Illustrated Medical Dictionary*, 22nd Edition, p. 686
- ¹² Webster, p. 542
- ¹³ Strang., pp. 52,53
- ¹⁴ Edwards, Vol. VII, p. 254
- ¹⁵ *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, Feb. 1991, p. 150
- ¹⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹⁷ Edwards, Vol. VII p. 254