



# *Developing Long-term Relationships with your Patients*

A few weeks ago, a 50-year-old Christian lady came to my office complaining of an ache and pain in her lower back. She indicated that she had been to another chiropractor who had examined and x-rayed her and told her she had osteoporosis, scoliosis, arthritis, degenerated discs and a number of other problems. He told her it would take three treatments per week for 18 months to correct her problem at a cost of several thousand dollars.

I did my examination and took my own x-rays and did not find any of the problems he had told her. I located a sacroiliac strain and an anatomical short leg. I gave her a few adjustments and a heel lift. In six weeks, she had had eight adjustments and was well on her road to recovery.

I believe strongly that God has called me to this profession to take care of His people particularly, and to do so ethically, honestly, for as long as necessary and to help them have the best possible health for their entire life. The first doctor is following a trend which we are seeing more of in our profession these days. It is not honest or ethical and certainly not a practice for Christian chiropractors.

There is a way to examine and treat a patient ethically for their acute problem and still develop a life-long relationship with that patient. I have been in practice for over 50 years and have many patients whom I have been taking care of for over 45 years, many on a once-a-month basis. They know that they have better overall health with their monthly chiropractic adjustments.

My procedure is, first of all, to examine the area of chief complaint. Then I trace that problem to the spine and point out that nerves coming from the spine are probably pinched by misaligned vertebrae at that point, causing the problem. Next, in palpating the rest of the spine, I will look for other areas of tenderness and say something like, *"You have a tender spot here at your 7th thoracic area. Do you have any problem with acid reflux, indigestion or stomach problems? Nerves from this area of your back can affect your stomach if they are being pinched by misaligned vertebrae."* Going up the spine, I will notice tenderness

at the base of the skull and say, *"Is this tender in this area? Do you have any problem with headaches, dizziness, or light headedness? Misalignments at the top of the neck cause pressure on the brain stem, resulting in many problems in that area."*

I want to relate current problems to the spine and relate the spine and nerves to general health and disease conditions. Generally, if you find tender areas along the spine, you know the patient is going to respond affirmatively about problems in that area. After doing whatever else I feel is necessary by way of orthopedic, neurological, and physical examination, I will say, *"Come with me. I am going to take some pictures of your spine and see if I can find just how those vertebrae are subluxated and just how I can go about correcting the problem. It is time you started to feel better."*

## **REPORT OF FINDINGS**

In my report, after I have finished the examination and x-ray series, I will first go over all the things that are good and normal in their examination. Then I will point out some of the problems I found, relating them to the symptoms they reported and also pointing out the misaligned vertebrae on the x-rays in the area related to their problem. After explaining how I intend to correct the problem, I will tell them I want to see them three times per week for two weeks to give them relief, then once a week for a month or two to correct the problem. After I feel the problem is corrected, I will extend the time between visits to once a month to make sure the problem does not return and to correct anything that happens in the meantime.

Obviously, this plan does not fit all cases. In the situation of the 50-year-old lady I first mentioned and the majority of all new patients, it is a good approach. I have found over the years that my best patients have followed this plan. I have been able to render good continuing health care of many of God's people in this way. We both have been enriched by it over the years. They have the best of on-going health care, and I have a steady flow of patients after 50 years of practice.