

The Gospel in Practice 2

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Study Given by W.D. Frazee—April 11,

Every book of the Bible is focused in the book of Revelation. In Revelation 14:6-12 we have a picture of three angels flying in the midst of heaven. And John, by inspiration, was inspired to write down the message, and he called it the everlasting Gospel. It is to be preached to every nation and kindred and tongue and people. Seventh-day Adventist see their particular work in this generation as being pictured in this particular passage. Seventh-day Adventist in repeating these Scriptures say as Jesus did nearly two thousand years ago, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.

It is a wonderful thing to find in the Scripture those passages that bear on the problems of this generation, and to see yourself a fulfillment of prophecy.

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” Revelation 14:6-12.

We see the Savior coming in the clouds of heaven to reap the harvest of the earth, to gather His people home, to put an end to sin and usher in the reign of everlasting peace. It is a wonderful prospect.

We focus then on this message, the everlasting Gospel. Inspiration tells us that medical missionary work is the Gospel in practice, the compassion of Christ revealed. What is the Gospel which the angel messenger proclaims? What is the Gospel which is to be practiced in medical ministry? This word Gospel means good news, glad tidings. And there are glad tidings available to those who will listen to the Word of God in this hour.

When Christ came He began His ministry by saying:

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” Mark 1:15.

The Gospel is said to be everlasting, or eternal. God's message of hope and comfort is the same for all ages. It is the good news of deliverance.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” Romans 1:16-17.

The Gospel then is the power through which heaven brings deliverance to every slave of sin, to every victim of disease and sickness, every discouraged, dispirited ones. The Gospel is the glad tidings to every one who can deliver the captive, set free the slave, and bring victory in the life.

There are two phases of medical missionary work to this wonderful Gospel message. In our previous study we focused on the love of God in the Gospel, and this is to be made practical by ministry to the sick and needy. This is why Christ spent so much of His time in the healing of the sick. When a person is sick there is nothing that appeals to him more than some kind of relief. And Jesus went through the towns and villages and cities of His time, and wherever He went the healing power of His love reached the sick and suffering and brought relief. But before He began that ministry in Capernaum and Jerusalem He spent years growing up in Nazareth. Although He did not work miracles as He did in His public ministry, yet the healing power of love was revealed through Him, and many a sad heart and sick body was blessed by that ministry of love.

Most of us are now following Christ's example in that period where He worked through the healing power of love without the power to work instantaneous miracles. Probably if any of you would go to a blind man and put your hands upon his eyes and say receive your sight, it doesn't mean that God's power is limited. It means that God is now teaching us as He used Jesus during those years at Nazareth to relieve the sorrows and woes of a distraught world through kindly ministry. Jesus is our example in this, and He has committed to His people this ministry of mercy. That's why we have physicians and nurses who love God and their fellow men enough to try to relieve their suffering, using all the means that science has made available, and using the remedies that God has provided. What for? In order to reveal the love of heaven to a sick and sad world.

I am so thankful that, like the Good Samaritan that Jesus told about, it is our privilege to minister to those who have been beaten and left by the roadside, suffering through the attacks of the great enemy. It is a privilege for you and I to watch for the privilege to help suffering humanity. And the world is filling up with cases of need all about us.

I call your attention to the fact that if all that is done simply to relieve suffering, if that suffering must continue then that story does not have a happy ending. There must come an experience in which man is not only relieved of suffering, but cured of the transgression which made the suffering.

One of my dentist friends told me an experience that impressed me very much. Being a medical missionary, this dentist not only seeks to relieve suffering through filling teeth or pulling those that can't be treated, but he seeks to educate.

A little boy about eight years old was brought in by his mother. As the dentist examined this little fellow he found several teeth that needed attention, and said to the mother, I want to tell you some things that you can do to keep this little fellow from needing so many fillings in the years to come. So he began to tell this mother about the harmful effects of sugar solutions that people get by eating candy and drinking soda pop, especially between meals. He told the mother to bring him back in six months, and in the meantime help him to eat good food and keep away from sugar things. So the mother went home.

Six months later they came back, and he found some more work that needed to be done. The mother told him, "Doctor, I tried to do what you said. But when the man comes around our neighborhood ringing the little bell, and all the children in the neighborhood run out to get the popcicles, it is pretty hard on my little fellow. We have a chain-link fence around our yard. He is kept in there. I went out and found a boy who had gotten a popcicle and poked it through the fence. My boy was taking it. Doctor, I think you will just have to prepare to fill his teeth from time to time."

It is something to weep about, because you multiply that by millions of people in hundreds of transgressions, and have the attitude in many a heart that they cannot reach the standard of health. So fill my teeth. Give me some medicine. Do something so I can keep on doing the way I am doing, and still not suffer too much.

Medical missionary work is the Gospel in practice. I want you to notice what Jesus did in preaching the Gospel and practicing it:

"Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" John 5:14.

You are made well. You are not sick anymore. But I have something to tell you. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

In these words Jesus showed what the real cause of sickness is. It is sin. It isn't always the fault of the one who is sick. It may be his parents, or someone else. But all suffering is the result directly or indirectly of sin.

Most of us find most of our sickness through our own transgressions. And this relates to the physical law as well as to the spiritual law. It relates to how people get sick as well as how they get sad. So Jesus is saying to this man He has healed, I have something for you to do. Avoid the thing that made you sick.

Obviously, the only way anyone can carry on such a ministry is to help people find out what is causing sickness. That is why we have the five-day plan to help people get away from smoking. That is why we have cooking classes to help people to cook without so much cholesterol and heavy fat. That is why we have a hundred and one methods through which to help people to learn the laws of health.

Back of these things is a firm conviction that the laws of nature are the laws of God as truly as the Ten Commandments. The same divine hand that wrote the ten precepts upon the stone, that same hand wrote the laws of our being upon every nerve and muscle and fiber of our bodies. And as we are to find in the Ten Commandments the revelation of God's will for man morally, so in our study of physiology we are to find the revelation of His will as it relates to the care of our bodies.

Suppose some friend of yours should decide to take a trip, and be gone for some years. Suppose that friend should say, I want you to take care of my house while I am away. Suppose it is a beautiful mansion. You are honored by the request of your friend to be the custodian of that house.

Suppose after you have accepted the responsibility you should find out that the home is really worth ten times as much as you thought it was. Again, your appreciation of the honor shown to you has been increased. And probably your own response would be sharpened. You would say, This house is worth a lot. I must be careful how I take care of it.

But you and I have been entrusted with a building worth infinitely more than any home, not matter how expensive. Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. You are bought with a price. And God intends that every nurse, dietitian, and every other person who is acquainted with these laws of health should be an educator, teaching others the great laws of life written in the body, and that every one of them is meant for our happiness.

I was visiting with a friend of mine. As we were talking together he told me of a decision he had come to quit smoking. How glad he was. He said he wouldn't for a thousand dollars go back to the smoking habit.

Meanwhile, his partner was sitting across the table puffing one cigarette after the other. I told the young man that we were having a five-day plan down at the YMCA, and perhaps he would like to get in on it and get the same help his partner had gotten.

He said, "I think that if anybody is going to quit smoking he has to want to very much."

I began to talk to him about the value of the human body. I told him about a boy who had been kidnapped. His father had to pay nearly a million dollars to get him back. I asked him if he knew that a ransom was paid for him?

When a man begins to understand that, and begins to see how valuable he is to the One who created him, he sees that his lungs are too valuable to be blackened with tobacco tar, his brain is too valuable to be interfered with by whiskey or beer or wine. His whole system is too precious to the One who created him to be in any way hampered or hindered or made more prone to disease.

This is the Gospel in practice. We are to be not merely those who relieve suffering. We are to echo the words of Jesus, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."

This includes health education. And God intends that every physician and nurse and layman, to the extent of his ability, should be someone to spread the light and knowledge of health principles. Why? Because human beings are too valuable to be polluted with disease and the habits that bring disease.

Your heart, your liver, your lungs are valuable. They cannot be replaced. And Jesus thought your body, as well as your eternal life, was so important that He gave His life for redemption. This is the Gospel.

In *Ministry of Healing*, which is a wonderful presentation of these wonderful themes, I read:

"When Christ healed disease, He warned many of the afflicted ones, 'Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.' Thus He taught that they had brought disease upon themselves by transgressing the laws of God, and that health could be preserved only by obedience.

"The physician should teach his patients that they are to cooperate with God in the work of restoration....He knows that the laws of nature, as truly as the precepts of the Decalogue, are divine, and that only in obedience to them can health be recovered or preserved"

Ministry of Healing, page 113.

Notice that the focus is not on something in a bottle or in a syringe that will do away with the effects of transgression. That is not where the focus is. The focus is on bringing man back into harmony with the laws which have been transgressed. This requires education and motivation. Either one without the other is not sufficient. We must be educated that we may know what it is that needs changing in our lifestyle. But we must be motivated or else it falls on deaf ears.

Not long ago a survey was conducted in Chicago. Hundreds of people were interviewed on the streets and in the homes. The effort was to find out how widespread the knowledge of nutrition and other health sciences might be in a practical way.

How many people, for instance, knew that smoking rendered people likely to have lung cancer? How many people knew that high fat diet rendered people more likely to have heart attacks? How many people knew that exercise was more important to avoid heart attacks and other conditions? So they went down the list and found that the mass majority of the people who were interviewed knew these facts that science has brought to view. But the sad thing was that those who knew it were not doing very much about it.

But some men who ought to know better set the example. The man who announced a few years ago the findings of science of the effect of tobacco on lungs was puffing his cigar as he gave his announcement to the press. So it takes more than education. It takes more than research. It takes more than teaching. It takes motivation. And thank God, the Gospel provides this. Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which ye have of God.

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

Oh, I am so glad that as we reach out to relieve the suffering of men and women. We can also reach up to the throne of God and lay hold of divine power to help the sufferer not only to find relief from pain and sickness, but find release from the bondage and slavery of habits that have brought these sicknesses on. There is victory through Christ. There is deliverance through Christ. Whatever the habit which holds the person captive, there is deliverance.

And it isn't just the drug habits, like tobacco and alcohol. Some people have found by experience that to break the hold of inordinate appetite may be as difficult as breaking the whisky or tobacco habit. Appetite was the point on which our first parents failed. Adam and Eve brought transgression into this world by starting to eat something that God said not to eat.

Christ understood the salvation of men by beginning where Adam and Eve had failed. He resisted the clamors of appetite, and overcame that you and I might have victory in our lives. So our problem is in the eating rather in the drug scene. There is deliverance and victory to us. And if we are to reach out the helping hand to those who have gotten sick, we must have in our own experience the assurance that there is health in the Gospel. Every nurse and every physician should be an example in these things. I read:

“The Lord has given instruction that the gospel is to be carried forward; and the gospel includes health reform in all its phases....

“Under the influence of the gospel, great reforms will be made by medical missionary work. But separate medical missionary work from the gospel, and the work will be crippled” *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, page 75.

The work of preaching the message will be crippled if it lacks the right arm of the medical missionary work. But medical missionary work will be crippled if it is divorced from the Gospel, because it lacks the motivation and the power that helps people to do what they are taught to do.

But put together the gospel message of salvation and the sweet message of deliverance from evil habits through a understanding of physiology, and you have the answer for universal disorganization. That is the three-fold message.

So I thank God for the message that is going all over this world with the wonderful truth of restoration, telling people that no matter how great their sins have been there is deliverance. That no matter how great their guilt is, there is forgiveness. That no matter how vicious the habit that holds them, there is release.

Thank God, medical missionaries have been going down now for decades to the South Sea Islands. And where people have been cannibals for generations, where every named and unnamed vice is practiced, where people have sunk so low that government officials thought that nothing could be done to reach them, medical missionaries have gone down there with the three-fold message, and have helped the people physically, mentally, and spiritually, and whole islands have become cleaned up.

The pigs are gone. The tobacco is gone. The liquor is gone. Every vice is gone. And people are living happy lives under the influence of the Gospel. This work is known as the clean church. It cleans them out.

Thank God, it can be done all over the world.

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