

Prosper and Be in Health

Sermon #0893

Study given by W. D. Frazee—June 22, 1962

"The elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" 3 John 1, 2.

What a wonderful message is packed in these two verses. You and I believe that the Spirit of Prophecy is a great magnifying glass, not to add anything to the Bible, but to help us to see more of what God put into the Bible for us. Notice how the following comment magnifies the verse I have just read:

"The desire of God for every human being is expressed in the words, `Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.'" *Ministry of Healing*, page 113.

Quite a magnification, isn't it? The casual reader would read that and say John wrote a letter to Gaius and told him he hoped he was getting along well, and that he wished him good health and prosperity, along with the spiritual experience. And that is correct. There would be nothing wrong with that.

Let's put the magnifying glass on. Who is back of John? God is. This isn't just a personal letter. This is an inspired communication.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" 2 Timothy 3:16.

"The prophecy came not at in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" 2 Peter 1:21.

God was inspiring John to write what we have just read, so it wasn't just John's personal wish. He was the secretary for the King of the universe.

Now let's magnify the other end of it. Back of John is God. But as you look at Gaius, who is beyond Gaius? Everyone. I think it is wonderful for God to pack so much into one verse. Don't you?

Can you put your name in there? If your name is Harry or Alice or Mary or Jenny or George or Richard, is your name in there? Absolutely.

This is the kind of thing that makes the Bible live for us. It would be too bad if we had to think as we read the Bible that this was written for Philemon, and this was

written for the people over in Ephesus, and this was written for the ones in Corinth, and I don't see anything written for the people in Georgia or Tennessee. I guess there is nothing there for me.

"These things were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come" 1 Corinthians 10:11.

So we can rejoice as by faith we see our names individually written here. To each one of us God is saying, "Beloved." Oh, yes.

Isn't it nice to be the beloved of God? You and I are privileged through faith in our Lord to hear Him say to each of us, Beloved. He has a wish for us. What is that wish? He wants us to prosper, and be in health, even as our soul prospers.

God wants us to prosper in material things. He wants us to prosper in physical things. He wants us to prosper in spiritual matters. All three. Why? Because He loves us. That's why. And He wants us to be happy.

As I have been studying our text there has come to me more than ever before the greatest reason why I should seek for health, the very best of health, and why I should learn and follow those habits which will bring health. It is to gratify His wish, to satisfy His longing. He says, I want so much for you to prosper and be in health.

The least I can say is, Well dear Lord, if it is Your great wish for me to be in health, the least I can do is to help You get your wish.

Wouldn't that be a better reason than to just selfishly want to avoid some pain or suffering ourselves? Now there is nothing wrong with wanting to be healthy for health sake. But what a more wonderful reason it is to seek health for the sake of the One who made us, and the One who redeemed us; the One who made us in His image and who gave His life to restore that image.

He says, Would you like to do something to make Me happy? Well, I will tell you what will make Me happy. If you will just prosper and be in health, physically and spiritually, that will make Me happier than anything.

Let's cooperate with Him, for His dear sake, to get the very best of health.

I have mentioned that one reason, but there is another reason. He wants other people to be happy.

In Isaiah 43:10-12 He tells us that we are His witnesses. There are some business concerns that have the motto, "A satisfied customer is our best advertisement." I think that is true. Jesus is looking for satisfied customers to reveal to the world that His way of life is a good way.

The great Physician is looking for patients who will follow His prescription, and as a result can testify that He is a good doctor. I read something interesting on this. Let me share it with you.

"God wishes them to be living examples of what it means to be well physically and spiritually. He wants them to show that the truth has accomplished a great work for them" *Ministry of Healing*, page 294.

Isn't that nice? Well tell me, do you have better health than you did five years ago? Do you have better health than you did a year ago? Those are fair questions. They are sensible questions. And we would do well to face up to them.

If we don't have better health than we did awhile back, instead of wasting time blaming other people or too much time blaming ourselves, why not say, Dear Lord, I just heard you want me to be in health even as my soul prospers, and I want to learn how to do it. I want to learn how to get that experience. I want to have better health in six weeks than I have now.

Could any of you stand better health, or do you have all you can take? I suppose there are several people here who could have twice as good health without it hurting them at all. Let's work with Him to have it, and thereby demonstrate to others how to be healthy and happy and holy. What do you say?

There is still one more reason. We are going into the time of trouble. At the close of that time comes translation day. Does physical preparation have anything to do with both of those experiences? Yes.

Some people are going to have to be laid away before the time of trouble. There may be those that say, That's all right with me. I would just as soon be laid away. Well God knows who to have laid away and who not to have laid away. It would be too bad if God intended for me to be strong and vigorous and be able to go through that time, and instead of rising to that glorious experience I live beneath my privileges and go down to the grave.

How many people so far have had the experience of being translated? Just two. Enoch and Elijah. Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to be among that group that never die? And I believe the folks that never die will be those that have learned how to live. Don't you think so?

Because God loves us and wants us to be happy, and because He wants us to be witnesses for Him to show what His program does, and because He wants us to be prepared for the time of trouble and translation day, He has given His people a way of health and life. He wants us to study it and live it so we can prosper and be in health. And it will make Him happy if we do it.

"In order to be fitted for translation, the people of God must know themselves" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, page 186.

There is a great work that has to be done for the remnant on health reform before the latter rain can come and the loud cry be given. Yes, God has given us a wonderful way of life.

In the little time we have tonight it would be foolish to attempt to mention all the different items that go into a health program, so I want to talk about two things that contribute to it. But the more I study these things the more I feel that if you and I could really get hold of what I am going to give you in the next few minutes, it would put some of us steadily on the upward road as far as increase of health is concerned.

I am not going to talk about meat eating. In fact, I am not going to talk about diet at all. My message is on something else entirely. My message is on sleep, spelled S L E E P. Here is a message for the beloved that God want's to prosper and be in health:

"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so He giveth His beloved sleep"
Psalm 127:2.

God gives His beloved sleep. Are you one of His beloved? Well, He has something He wants to give you. Wouldn't it be too bad to be too busy to get the gift God has for us? It may well be that if we are too busy to get His gift, we are too busy. He says in the first three words of that text it is vain. Missing sleep isn't worth it.

"Give yourself proper time to sleep. They who sleep give nature time to build up and repair the weary waste of the organisms" *Medical Ministry*, page 80.

In our text it says God gives us sleep, but we have to give ourselves time to sleep. Can you make yourself go to sleep? No. But you can make yourself lie down. Do you need to get repaired?

I took something to be repaired not long ago. They said it would take at least two hours to repair it. I had to wait. Now you can't get repaired in two hours. I don't know how much time you need, and I can't read you anywhere in the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy that tells you just how much time you need. There are some people who think they know pretty well just about how long people ought to sleep, but that is just an average.

You might not be average. You might be above or below. Your first duty is to learn how to take care of yourself, and learn how much you can stand and how much you can take. That is your first duty.

I was quite interested in this comment:

"I have had presented before me the fact that in your class of medical missionary students are those whose first work should be to understand themselves, to count the cost, and know when they begin to build whether they are able to finish. Let not God be dishonored by breaking down the man in the process of educating him. The pale,

weak student is a continual reproach to health reform"
Ibid, page 79.

I am a student, aren't you? Study that whole page. Every student is to learn how much time he needs to sleep, because sleep is what builds up and repairs the weary waste of the organism. If I never got tired I wouldn't need to sleep, would I? No. But we do get tired. Sometimes we are conscious of it. Sometimes we are not. But it is a good thing to put some money in the bank before you get down to the last penny. It is a good thing to stop at the service station for gas before you hear the sputter that shows the empty sign meant empty.

From night to night our heavenly Father says, Come apart and rest awhile. If we will give ourselves time to sleep, He will give us sleep. That's what He said. Let's keep our part of the bargain. What do you say?

I am not going to take time to mention all the excuses for not doing that, because you know them as well as I do, and I am not sure it does any good to emphasize them. I think we need to forget some of those things and accept God's program, and be glad that He wants us to be well, and to be simple and childlike enough to believe what He says and do it.

What did God give us the night for anyway? Sleep. If anyone asks you that, you would answer that way, wouldn't you? Most anyone would if they understand God's divine plan. Let's use it for what He gave it.

I want you to notice something that helps people to sleep and something that keeps them from sleeping. Remember, we are studying how to make God happy by being well. Sleep is what repairs the weary waste.

"The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep" Ecclesiastes 5:12.

What will help a man to sleep? Labor. Work. Exercise. That is what will do it. The man that has an abundance of riches doesn't have to work, but he does have to worry, and the more he worries, the less he sleeps. This text has part of the cure. It is work.

Does a man have to be poor to work? No. He doesn't have to be rich to worry either. But riches and worry are quite often associated, and poverty and work are quite often associated.

They don't have to be. We can all be laboring men no matter how much money we have in the bank. Thank God we can all be laboring men if we don't have a nickel. And the result of it, according to this text, is that it brings sleep. What kind of sleep? Sweet sleep. Thank God for that.

"The health cannot be preserved unless some portion of each day is given to muscular exertion in the open air"
Medical Ministry, page 77.

Well, if I eat health foods, will that take the place of it? No. Eating health foods won't take the place of this at all. If I take a two week vacation once a year and exercise, will that do it? No. It says each day.

We ought to be thankful for five hundred acres here. And if once in a while the Lord let's us have a flat tire, or some similar thing so we remember that we can get to places on our feet, should we recognize that it might be a providence?

Sometimes I feel inclined to lift a voice of warning on this matter of so much to use vehicles in place of our feet. We are told that no exercise can take the place of walking.

I think of dear Sister White up there in Michigan in the winter time trying to nurse her husband back to health. She got him out and walked ever day.

When a snow came I guess Elder White thought that was one morning he would get to rest. No sir. Sister White went to Brother Root. I have been in the maple grove where Brother Root lived. Some of his descendants are still there in Michigan.

Sister White said to Brother Root, "Do you have an extra pair of boots?" Everyone very wisely noticed how careful she was. She went out herself in her own boots, and she tramped through the snow. Then she came back and said, "Now James, I have just been out, and I think you can put your feet right in the places where I have walked."

He thought, Surely, if my little wife can do it, I can. He had been sick and he was feeling he couldn't do much. His state of mind didn't cause him to want to get out and exercise.

Maybe some of you have been in that state of mind. But she got him out, and she kept at it until finally she brought him back to Battle Creek able to enter into the work and give his message from the pulpit.

Oh friends, thank God for exercise. Let's rejoice that we have got some place to walk besides city streets. Let's thank God we have these roads, these trails, these paths. Some of us can have the joy of working as we take exercise. We can hoe corn or squash or beans. We can do other things that take outside exercise.

If your task doesn't lie in that particular avenue, you have the privilege of walking from where you live to where you work if it is in an office or inside the sanitarium. Am I right?

Don't defeat that glorious opportunity by using the car every time. Now there may be times that it is the thing to do. You may have something to carry. It might be raining. There might be any number of reasons. Let's not judge one another.

My point is, let us see exercise and walking as privileges. And remember, it is one of the things that will help you to get sleep, and sleep is what builds up the body.

We want to build up our health and strength so that we can make Jesus happy, and He has given us a program to do it.

I would like to see our farm manager and those who have charge of the gardens just deluged with people who are asking, Isn't there a hoe I can use for a little while this morning? Tonight after I get through with my indoor work or my studies I will have a half hour. Is there a place where I can hoe something?

"Let men and women work in field and orchard and garden. This will bring health and strength to nerve and muscle. Living indoors and cherishing invalidism is a very poor business. If those who were sick will give nerves and muscles and sinews proper exercise in the open air, their health will be renewed" *Ministry of Healing*, page 296.

The next page says:

"If those who are sick would exercise their muscles daily, women as well as men, in outdoor work using brain and bone and muscle proportionately, weakness and languor would disappear. Health would take the place of disease and strength the place of feebleness" *ibid*, 297

That is a divine prescription. And remember, it is from the One who says, "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health."

What is the other thing that keeps people from sleeping? Lack of exercise is one thing, and worry is the other. There is a remedy for that. It is the prayer of faith. Oh, yes, the prayer of faith. I want you to see the beautiful spirit of trust that came to David's heart as he prayed to God.

"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety" Psalms 4:8.

Remember I told you awhile ago that God's part is to give us sleep, but our part is to give ourselves time to sleep. Notice that David puts his will both on the side of lying down and sleeping. Thank God friends you can decide to go with God.

If you don't lie down in peace you may not sleep. Maybe you shouldn't sleep. There are times when it is more important to be awake than asleep.

You remember the night that Ahasuerus couldn't sleep? God didn't want him to sleep. God kept him awake so he couldn't sleep. And there may be times God has something to say to you. If He does, you had better listen. But usually it is God's purpose when you go to bed to give you sleep.

If there is sin on the conscience it is better to get down on our knees and get rid of the guilt. The feeling of guilt must be laid at the foot of the cross or it will

poison the spring of life. My dear friends, that doesn't need to take long hours of agony. The surrender of the will cuts short many a struggle.

We need to get down to business with God and say, Lord, I know if I weep a bucket of tears it wouldn't atone for any sin. If I should spend hours in agony it wouldn't pay for a single mistake. Help me to get down to business and lay my sins on Jesus, and believe that He forgives them, not for some agony I have gone through, but because of the agony He went through for me.

He takes my sin. He takes my guilt. He takes my agony. This is better than a tranquilizer.

One of the big national magazines has just come out with a warning that millions of people will read, and ought to read, about the terrible results of the indiscriminate use of tranquilizing pills over the nation. One of these airplane accidents that happened not too long ago came because the pilot had been taking tranquilizers. The plane crashed and killed the people on board, including the pilot.

The United States Army has a rule now that no army pilot can fly a plane until six weeks after he has quit tranquilizing pills.

Every day I have decisions to make just as important as the man who is flying an airplane. What about you? I need a tranquilizer that will help me go to sleep and get me up the next morning, and still be able to fly the plane. Thank God for a real tranquilizer.

Someone says, Yes, but I have so much trouble and worry and fear.

Look at the third Psalm. Look at the line in which the name of that Psalm is given? A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.

Have you ever been in any worse trouble than David was the time he fled from Absalom? Think of it. His own son had risen up against him to seize the throne and try to kill his father. And on top of that, David knew that it was his own fault.

Put all that together. Rebellion. His own life threatened. Having to flee from his throne and his home. And to know on top of it that it was his own sins that had caused the whole trouble. Do you think a fellow could sleep under those conditions?

"Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. But Thou, O Lord, are a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me" Psalms 3:1-5.

He needed some refreshment, and he got it. First in prayer, and then in sleep.

Oh friends, if we have got to worry, let's find the remedy like David did. As the result he got up in the morning, and said, he would not be afraid of ten thousand people that had set themselves against him (verse 6).

There is the remedy. If we can't sleep, let's pray. And notice that both prayer and sleep refresh and restore and build up.

When Jesus was on earth sometimes He slept, sometimes He prayed. Prayer took Him all night, but he went forth in the morning refreshed. Now you and I may not know all about how to do that, but the first grade child can't read all the words in the dictionary either.

Instead of taking our worries to bed with us, if you and I will get down and pray until we find peace and rest in the Lord, we will awake refreshed in the morning ready to meet the problems of the new day. Whatever time it takes to do it, let's do it.

"When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet" Proverbs 3:24.

The way to have sweet sleep is to trust.

"Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the Lord shall be thy confidence" verses 25, 26.

Oh, how good God is. How wonderfully good.

I want to share with you a beautiful poem written by Elder L. D. Santee, one of our workers of former years.

"How blessed to feel from my care laden heart,
Christ knoweth my sorrows and bids them depart;
To lay my tired head in an infinite rest
On the heart of another who loves me the best.

When my lips have been touched with the spirit of prayer, I feel that the presence of Jesus is there;
From all condemnation my soul is not free,
For my blessed redeemer has suffered for me.

He folds us as children close, close to his breast,
When the journey is over then cometh the rest;
He knows all our sorrows, He feels all our need,
And in His green pastures of love would we feed.

Surrendered in all to my Savior's control,
I give Him my life, and the love of my soul;
How sweet to feel from my sins I am free,

For my blessed redeemer has suffered for me.

I thank God for His wonderful way of life, His sweet and beautiful way of life.

Repeat with me our opening text:

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth"
3 John 2.

Will He get his wish? Will you work with Him to let Him have His wish. He would like to have every one of us an example of abounding health, physically and spiritually.

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