

E. Stanley Jones: Ways God Heals

E. Stanley Jones' ministry included retreats called Christian Ashrams (an idea developed when he was a missionary in India). He describes some of what he learned about healing in these retreats.

One night...we have a Healing Service where a message on some phase of Christianity and health and healing is given, followed by a healing service. Since the Christian answer is the total answer, the body must be included. [They invited people to come for spiritual healing, physical healing, or both.] ...

We are not absolutists in regard to healing. By absolutist I mean those who take the position that all diseases must be cured in this life or else there is sin or lack of faith. This leaves a lot of wreckage behind among people who are not healed by prayer or medicine or surgery. We explain that this is a mortal world and we are not supposed to be immortal in a mortal world: the body breaks down sometime, so that death is a part of life. Some diseases must await the final cure in the resurrection when we get our immortal bodies. So God will heal us now or give us power to use the infirmity—not to *bear* it but to *use* it—until the final cure when we get the immortal body. ...

How does God heal? In many ways. First, through the physician or the surgeon. They do not heal; they simply clear away the obstructions to allow nature or God to heal. ... Second, God heals through mental suggestion—you can create a climate of disease or health around you by your thinking. ...Third, he heals through surrendering of fears, resentments, self-preoccupation, guilt which produce disease. Fourth, he heals by the direct touch of the Spirit of God upon our bodies. Fifth, he heals through the final cure in the resurrection when we get our immortal bodies. Death is but an anesthetic which God gives in changing bodies. In the meantime he gives us power to use bodily infirmity. (*A Song of Ascents* 228-29)

I do not believe that physical healing should be made central in the Christian movement. If you do that, that makes you the center. God heals you, keeps you in repair, he serves you. But anything that leaves you at the center is off-center. God is the center and we serve him. So reconciliation to God is our first and chief emphasis. But reconciled with God, we become reconciled with ourselves, and reconciled with our bodies, with our brother man, with nature, with life. By this reconciliation to ourselves and to our bodies many diseases drop off, for they are rooted in the mental and spiritual. So our main emphasis is on reconciliation to God, conversion, new birth, self-surrender, receiving of the Holy Spirit. (*Song* 331)

God wills health, and the kingdom of God is God's total program for health—health to the mind and the soul, to the body and to society. Every single principle and attitude of the Kingdom is health producing and health maintaining. Call the roll of those principles and attitudes and every one, if practiced, would produce health: "love, joy, peace, good temper, kindness, generosity, fidelity, gentleness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22)

Moffatt). These are called the fruits of the Spirit; those fruits are fruitful in producing health, every one of them.

...So when Jesus came on the scene “he made a tour through the whole of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the Reign and healing all diseases and sickness among the people.” The gospel of the Kingdom and the healing of diseases and sicknesses were inseparably connected. Physical healing wasn’t his whole gospel for the above verse is followed by this: “When he saw the crowds he went up the hill,” and then the Sermon on the Mount follows and he shares the total message of the Kingdom in its relationships to the individual and society. (*The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person* 350-51, 352-53)