
GOD'S WILLINGNESS TO HEAL.

Divine Healing Home No. 1, October 3, 1894.

Dr. Dowie said: In the course of our exposition of Gospel according to St. Matthew, we have reached the eighth chapter, which is, as it happens, the very central point of all the teaching in Divine Healing. We use it again and again hundreds of times in a year. We have found it to be the passage which in exposition has been the most helpful throughout the many years of our mission.

Dr. Dowie then read the first seventeen verses of the eighth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew.

I will begin today the discussion of the willingness of the Lord to heal, but I will not conclude what I have to say; for upon that question hinges the whole subject of Divine Healing.

To Know God's Will is the Most Important Thing.

The most important of all things is to know absolutely what the will of God is.

There are no more precious words to me in the Holy Word of God than these two words of God, "I will," in whatever connection they come.

It is written of Christ in prophetic Scripture, and He Himself says it:

In the roll of the Book it is written of Me
I delight to do Thy will, O My God;
Yea, Thy Law is within My heart.

To those who are truly Christ's, the first and the most supreme thing is to know what the will of God is. The next thing is, in so far as that will directs us either to do or to abstain, to do that will.

Unless the law of God is absolutely within the heart, the law of God will not be pleasing. But if the law of God is in the heart, the supremest joy is to do the will of God, or to abstain from doing things which are contrary to the will of God.

When the natural man receives God, he gets spiritual discernment. He gets spiritual power to see the glory and the beauty and the power of the blessed will of God and the joy and happiness which must come by conformity to that will. Power not only to discern, but power to do, and delight in doing, God's will, becomes the supreme joy of the life.

I think every one who has made any advance in spiritual life will recognize this as his experience.

Divine Healing is Absolutely the Will of God.

In this matter of Divine Healing we have nothing to teach except the absolute will of God.

Although I might not be able to see why, if God said that it was His will that I should be sick, I should want to be sick, because He would know what was best. But God has uttered no such thing.

Divine Healing is on exactly the same plane as Divine Salvation.

When a sinner comes to God for Salvation, there is no portion of the Christian Church which would say to that sinner, "Go to your Father and say to Him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son. If Thou art willing, please take me back into Thy favor, O God, and if not, then take me and send me back to the swine's trough. Send me to perdition, that Thou mayest be glorified in my damnation just as much as in my salvation. Father, let Thy will be done; and if it is Thy will to send me to hell, send me to hell.' "

You could not imagine that such a prayer as that would be a right prayer.

You could not imagine that any portion of the Church of Christ would teach such a prayer.

Why should not that prayer be offered? The answer would come back, because the will of God is declared plainly in His Word, saying:

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to youward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The will of God is declared plainly that Christ tasted death for every man.

Jesus said, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

The Word of God declares that every sinner can find salvation, and that Christ suffered not only for the sins of His own people, but for the sins of the whole world.

The desire of God is that the whole world shall be blessed.

No man is damned unless he elects to be damned.

No man will find his way to hell unless he chooses to find his way there. If any one desires to find God, that man must find his way to heaven by God's Grace. God is intensely willing that he shall.

We therefore say to the man who is affected with sin, "Go to God; do not be afraid; He is your Father; you are His son. If you have spent all in riotous living and come to Him with only the dregs of your existence, if you will only cast yourself on His mercy, He has never sent away a sinner who has truly repented of his sin; therefore come and seek His mercy. He is willing

to save you.”

It is our duty to speak to sinners in some such way as that.

We Must Prove That Divine Healing is God's Will.

In exactly the same way are we to speak to the sick. We are to say to them, “There is nothing plainer than that it is the absolute will of God to heal you.”

“Give us,” they cry, “not merely the assertion, but the proof of such an assertion.”

That proof it is our duty to give. It is of no use making assertions without advancing proof. There is no use of making assertions unless you prove them to be reasonable and justified. God Himself has declared that He desires to reason with His people. He has said, “Come now, and let us reason together.”

We Are to Present Our Bodies to God, Acceptable for His Service.

As declared, in this connection, by the pen of the Apostle Paul, it is His absolute will that we should present these bodies unto Him. Paul says:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The declaration is made that it is a reasonable service to present the body to God; that it is an acceptable service unto God.

God desires the body as a living sacrifice. He wishes to make it holy.

We have a right to present our bodies to God that He may sanctify them and cleanse them from every particle of pollution, so that they may be vessels unto honor, sanctified and made meet for the Master's use and prepared to be used in every good work.

These treasures of Divine grace which God has given to us in spirit are contained, like our spirits themselves, within an earthen vessel. If the communication of God's Grace is to be effective to humanity, the earthen vessel by means of which that communication is made must be clean. If the vessel is impure, it is simple common sense that, no matter how clean water you put into that vessel, the impurity of the vessel will taint and pollute the water and make it undrinkable.

So it is with the service of God. The Grace of God flowing into our spirits is impeded when we have an unclean body. There is not the same full, free, large

and perfect life that there would be if that body were clean and free. Yet I will say that a Christian may live a Christian life and be sick. We know large numbers of those impure in body, unclean in body, very sick, who are truly God's children. But the Grace of God does not flow through them to others in such purity and power as it would if they were in sound bodies.

A Diseased Body is an Impediment to One's Work for God.

The spirit itself is beclouded and the thoughts are diverted, and the whole of the living stream of God's own life in you is in a manner tainted by disease. You cannot live or think or act as you would wish to.

Therefore it must be, and it is, the will of God that the body should be presented to Him as a reasonable service. There is nothing more reasonable than that if we are to serve God in these bodies, these bodies should be clean.

It makes a great difference to a man when teaching whether he has severe catarrh in the head or not. If a man's head is full of catarrh and his lungs weakened by disease and all the miseries consequent upon a tuberculous condition, that man must be impeded in giving to others the abounding life of God.

There is no use of such a man speaking of life for the spirit, life for the soul and for the body when he is scarcely able to utter the words, and is most manifestly a victim to the violence of disease. His testimony is injured.

I believe that the reason why Christian people are impeded very much in their ministry to others is because they have not presented their bodies to God and their bodies are not cleansed.

Starting with that thought, I desire to prove to you from the Word of God and from sound reasoning—because this is a reasonable service—that it cannot be the will of God that we should be sick.

I will take the negative side today: that it cannot be the will of God that His children should be diseased.

In the first place, consider this: Jesus would never have entered into this world had there been no sin.

Disease and Death the Products of Sin and Satan.

Sin is the work of the Devil. Disease and Death are the results of Sin, therefore Disease and Death are products, so to speak, of Father Satan and Mother Sin.

No one who has any belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures can seriously question that fundamental position.

Disease is simply death in an incipient form. Disease is working death. The declaration was made by God

that in the day that man sinned he should die, or "dying thou shalt die."

As a matter of fact, Adam and Eve did not die for many long centuries. They both lived on beyond the Fall—after being driven from the Garden of Eden. Sons and daughters were born unto them, yet the Word of God was true that in the day they ate, dying they should die; for in that very day that they ate, sin entered into them. The moment that sin entered, disease came with it. That was the form which death assumed.

Death immediately entered by means of sin, and, therefore, disease is simply death in its initial stage.

You will find that made abundantly clear by the fact that up to the time that Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of sinless innocence, they were not conscious of any climatic difficulties. But after they hid themselves from the face of God, they realized that they were naked. They were ashamed, and they needed covering because the elements were against them.

Sin had entered and sin had polluted the earth.

Sin had entered, and into the very element of the air Satan and the evil hosts had come.

Satan, the "Prince of the Power of the Air."

When sin entered, the way was opened from hell to earth and vast numbers of evil spirits trooped up from the depths of hell and took possession not merely of the earth, but of the air. In the Scripture, Satan is revealed to us distinctly as the "Prince of the Power of the Air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience."

That spirit is not only the god of this world, but he blinds the eyes of those who believe in the light of the Gospel.

Not only has Satan very large powers upon the solid earth, but he has immense power in the very air itself and in the unseen skies above us.

That is not an assertion merely, that is a fact. You will see, for instance, in the Book of Daniel, that the prophet is told by the angel that he was impeded in coming from heaven to earth, although sent forth by God Himself, because of opposition on the way. It is one of the most remarkable passages of this kind in Scripture, and gives a very clear account of this angel having had to fight his way through:

Then said He unto me, Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to humble thyself before thy God, thy words were heard: and I am come for thy words' sake. But the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me: and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

That "Prince of Persia" was not an earthly prince, because he had to get some help of another kind. It was a withstanding in the heavens itself.

There are many indications in the Scripture that Satan has divided his kingdom very cleverly, and has appointed demons to preside over nations to tempt kings and peoples.

There were good angels who watched over Persia, as well as evil angels.

A Twenty-One Days' Battle in the Upper Air.

You see this angel had been sent forth, and it took one and twenty days for him to get there.

If the "Prince of Persia" had been a mere man, he could not have hindered the angel at all.

It would be impossible for any man to keep back an angel of God.

If any angel of God wished to get into this bouse, there is no doorkeeper who could keep him out. This "Prince" was the Devil, who with his hosts had power to block the way and make it a matter of great difficulty for the angel of God to get to Daniel, no less than twenty-one days of fighting having taken place.

Michael, the archangel, is always represented in Scripture as the great military angel who contended with Satan about the body of Moses. He was the great military angel in charge of the hosts of heaven. He swept the hosts of hell away to let this angel through with God's Message.

You will find quite numerous references in the Scripture to the fact that the air is in possession of the Devil. For instance, the Devil went out and wrought up a great wind out of the wilderness and brought down the house of Job's sons about their ears and killed them all.

The Devil tried to destroy Christ by a wind; for when Christ was lying asleep in the hinder part of the ship, the Devil caused a great storm. The apostles and Christ Himself were in great danger.

The Devil may have said, "I have great power in the elements, and I will drive that ship to the bottom of the Sea Galilee."

The disciples awoke Christ and said: "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?"

Christ arose and looked around upon the winds and the waves. He did not say, "Oh waves, you are obeying My Father's will; oh wind and waves, pile on; you are doing right." Standing in the ship, He rebuked the winds and the waves and said with a commanding voice, "Peace, be still." Therefore He rebuked the power which lashed them into fury and commanded that power, the Prince of the Power of the Air, who was endeavoring to sink the vessel, to be still. That is the

plain English of it.

Destructive Storms Not the Work of God.

It has always been to me an exceedingly pleasant thing to know that I do not have to credit God with these terrible storms. I read the other day of a terrific cyclone, in a certain city, which tore up the buildings and destroyed men women and children and cattle and created great devastation.

That was not the work of the Almighty God. That was not the work of a Holy, Beneficent Being.

That was the work of demoniac power.

The atmosphere is in a distorted and horrible condition for the most part. It is either too hot or too cold much of the time, and when we have a nice day and begin to feel that the weather is beautiful, up comes the Devil with another storm and some trouble somewhere. Hence it is a joy to me, and has been in my voyages across the great wide sea, to know that in every storm and in every tempest I could hear the voice of demons, high above the storm and tempest, but I could call, upon my God and hear His Voice across the waters and above the tempest saying, "Peace, be still."

God Delivers From the Power of the Storm Demon.

I have cried to Him often and often in the midst of the sea and He has heard.

Our vessel once had been dismasted, through the carelessness of one who had neglected it. The vessel was also on fire and the fire was nearing the powder magazine.

In one case, on the coast of New Zealand, our screw broke. We were approaching the rocks not far from where a great mountain lifts its head. There, where steamer after steamer and vessel after vessel had been wrecked, we were in danger of being wrecked. The wind was driving us ashore toward the rocks which we could not escape. There was an absolute certainty that many would be lost unless the direction of the wind changed.

I have prayed to God in such seasons as these and He altered the winds. I give all the glory to God.

When the first fire took possession of the buildings World's Fair grounds, only a few hundred yards away from Zion Tabernacle, there was a strong southeast wind blowing. The embers were driven over to this Avenue and were beginning to set fire to the sheds in many places. I took up a piece of burning wood three or four feet long. I saw very clearly that the houses on this Avenue and our Tabernacle would be destroyed by fire unless God intervened.

I called my household together in 6036 Edgerton Avenue. After having gone over to investigate the position, I said that it would be vain for us to take our things out and attempt to escape, because the whole region would be burned down unless God altered the wind.

I did not permit anything to be taken out of the house, but went in to prayer and asked God to alter the wind.

God Changes the Wind in Answer- to Prayer, and Saves From Destruction.

When we arose from prayer about twenty minutes afterwards, the wind, which had been in the southeast, had changed to the northwest. The flames were driven out into the lake with terrific violence.

If that wind had continued, with the immense mass of inflammable material in these buildings, that conflagration might have gone on until there would not have been any Chicago.

I claim no glory, but I am simply telling what is the truth.

I take that story as an illustration. There are scores of persons who know that is true.

When the next fire took place, which burned down the greater part of the buildings, the wind was in the right quarter and we prayed God to keep it that way. It never wavered from the southwest.

Skeptical persons may say that the wind which had begun with the fire in one quarter was bound to shift around. If so, why did it not shift around the second time when we prayed at it should stay where it was? I give as much glory to God for keeping it in the same direction the second time as I did in the first time for shifting it around.

Once on the New Zealand coast, the wind was blowing strongly from the northeast and driving us toward the rocks. After prayer and a conversation with the Captain, and finding where we were, breakers in sight, we were driven by a strong northwest wind right out to sea. We were enabled to spend two days in repairing our propeller shaft. We got up to Auckland two days late, but all safe.

The question of the atmosphere being in charge of the Devil, very largely, is a very important point.

The Devil Carries Disease in the Wind.

This plague of grip from which many of you are suffering traveled with the wind. I watched it. I was upon the Pacific Coast at the time. I noticed by the telegrams when it had reached Russia.

When it had reached Eastern Europe I began to say,

“It is coming to the West; you will find presently Germany, France and all the countries on the west coast of Europe will be included. It will reach England and come over to the United States. It will come by the road of the wind.”

I watched it with great care. It came with the rate of the wind. It was not connected with the climatic conditions of particular country. After it had passed over the United States of America and passed out of the Golden Gate, it went down into the South Seas and struck the inhabitants of islands in the warm latitudes. Then it came to Australia and went to the home from which it had come, which, in my humble judgement, was hell.

It was filthy and horrid and most deadly in its nature. In this City of Chicago, when I came here later, there was a second attack of it in the winter of 1891. Three years ago were 1000 persons a week died in Chicago. It was in the atmosphere.

The atmosphere itself is laden with this disease. A pestilence walking in darkness, it is a destruction wasting at noonday. Smallpox and cholera are nothing to it.

When it came my way, I said, “I will not fight it; because You have given me a promise: “A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.”

One day it seemed to strike me. I just went to God and it went as quick as a flash. I did not have it at all in the midst of all that plague.

I was able to attend to all my duties and do the work devolving upon me. Yet in going in and out from Evanston, I saw men dying. Nearly all were going about sneezing, coughing.

That was in the air. That came either from God or from the Devil.

It Would Be Impossible to Love a God Who Would Send Such a Pestilence.

If it came from God, I do not love God. If that came from God, I cannot love God. It would be impossible for me to love Him. I could not call Him a God of Infinite Love who would torture, fill with disease and make miserable His own creatures. I could not love one who would devastate homes as was done in this city, depriving children of fathers and depriving wives of husbands.

Strong men were laid low in a few hours, and there are weeping widows in all classes of society.

Those who have escaped death are suffering blighting disease as a result of the disease.

Why I have taken so much time this morning is to elaborate the point and make it strong, that the Devil is

the Prince of the Power of the Air, and that the many diseases which come in the air have a diabolical origin. Some of them may be traced to the sin of man, but that shows a diabolical origin still.

For instance, suppose you take cholera and trace its origin, as you can, to the filthiness of the pilgrims at Mecca, who actually drink water full of cholera germs and die in thousands beside the sacred well. These people carry on the work of the Devil, for the Mohammedan religion, root and branch, is the work of the Devil.

In one form or another, even where we cannot trace it, we can always be sure of it, the Devil is at the bottom of every disease and every pestilence.

Every storm which devastates and distorts is the Devil's work. There will be no pestilence or devastating storms in heaven.

Meanwhile the Devil has tremendous power in this world. The only ones to escape are the people who can do God's will.

Christ Will Usher in New Heavens and a New Earth.

Now, inasmuch as Christ came to destroy the works of the Devil, He came to destroy every atom of disease in the air. My judgment is that the day will come when the earth will be purified and the air will be purified, and the Devil and his hosts will be sent back to hell, where they belong. On that day there will be “a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” There will be no death, no disease, no political bosses and no Board of Death. Cities will be clean.

The cities are full of disease because of the inability of the poor people to pay for cleaning which contractors are paid to do and neglect. Dirt and muck is left in the poorer part of the city, and then disease extends to the richer part of the city.

The Devil generates disease in the air in a thousand ways. Some ways are inscrutable to us.

I do not know how far volcanic action may be traced to diabolical power, but in my judgment it is traceable to that power.

The destruction, for instance, of thousands of lives in New Zealand by a volcano was a diabolical act. It was not God's act at all.

I do not believe that God creates blind forces and leaves us to be the sport of them. I believe what the Bible says, that this world is a world largely in possession of the Devil.

The Great Fight is for the Spiritual, Psychical and Physical Deliverance of Humanity From the Devil.

The great fight going on is not merely for the spiritual deliverance of the people, but for their psychical and physical deliverance, and the deliverance of the earth itself from the bondage of the Devil. Although the fight seems long, yet one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and He may fight a thousand years more to drive out the Devil.

I solemnly believe, notwithstanding all the allegations of science, which would give me some materialistic origin of these things, that they have a spiritual origin, an origin in the Devil.

That is the teaching of the Word of God. That is a very important point, and the more you think of it the more you will see it.