



By Elder Matthew L. Carpenter
Of the Seventy

Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?

Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, if we choose to repent and turn our hearts fully to the Savior, He will heal us spiritually.

A few months into his mission, our youngest son and his missionary companion were completing their study when our son felt a dull pain in his head. He felt very strange; at first he lost control of his left arm; then his tongue went numb. The left side of his face began to droop. He had difficulty speaking. He knew something was wrong. What he didn't know was that he was in the middle of a massive stroke in three areas of his brain. Fear began to set in as he became partially paralyzed. How quickly a stroke victim receives care can have a dramatic effect on the extent of his healing. His faithful missionary companion acted decisively. After calling 911, he gave him a blessing. Miraculously, the ambulance was only five minutes away.

After our son was rushed to the hospital, the medical personnel quickly assessed the situation and determined they should administer a medicine to our son that could potentially reverse the stroke's paralyzing effects over time.¹ However, if our son was not having a stroke, the medicine could have severe consequences, such as bleeding in the brain. Our son had to choose.

He chose to accept the medication. While full recovery required more operations and many months, our son eventually returned and completed his mission after the effects of the stroke were substantially reversed.

Our Heavenly Father is all-powerful and all-knowing. He knows our physical struggles. He is aware of our physical pains due to illness, disease, aging, accidents, or birth disorders. He is

aware of emotional struggles associated with anxiety, loneliness, depression, or mental illness. He knows each person who has suffered injustice or who has been abused. He knows our weaknesses and the propensities and temptations we struggle with.

During mortality we are tested to see if we will choose good over evil. For those who keep His commandments, they will live with Him "in a state of never-ending happiness."² To help us in our progression to become like Him, Heavenly Father has given all power and knowledge to His Son, Jesus Christ. There is no physical, emotional, or spiritual ailment that Christ cannot heal.³

From the mortal ministry of the Savior, the scriptures recount many miraculous events where Jesus Christ used His divine power to heal those who suffered physically.

The Gospel of John recounts the story of a certain man who had endured a debilitating infirmity for 38 years.

"When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in





that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?”

The impotent man responded that no one was around to help him when he needed it most.

“Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

“And *immediately* the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked.”⁴

Please note the juxtaposition of how long this man suffered on his own—38 years—and how quickly the healing came once the Savior became involved. The healing was “*immediate*.”

In another instance, a woman with an issue of blood 12 years, who “had spent all [of] her living upon physicians, . . . came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and *immediately* her issue of blood [ceased]. . . .

“And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

“And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she . . . declared unto him before all the people . . . how she was healed *immediately*.”⁵

Through His ministry, Christ taught that He had power over the physical body. We cannot control the timing of when Christ’s healing of our physical ailments will occur. Healing occurs according to His will and wisdom. In the scriptures, some suffered for decades; others, their entire mortal lives. Mortal infirmities can refine

us and deepen our reliance upon God. But when we allow Christ to be involved, He will always strengthen us spiritually so we can have greater capacity to endure our burdens.

Ultimately, we know that every physical ailment, malady, or imperfection will be healed in the Resurrection. That is a gift to all mankind through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.⁶

Jesus Christ can heal more than just our physical bodies. He can heal our spirits as well. Throughout scripture we learn how Christ helped those whose spirits were weak and made them whole.⁷ As we ponder these experiences, our hope and faith in the Savior’s power to bless our lives increases. Jesus Christ can change our hearts, heal us from the effects of injustice or abuse we may experience, and strengthen our capacity to bear loss and heartache, bringing us peace to help us endure the trials of our lives, healing us emotionally.

Christ can also heal us when we sin. We sin when we knowingly break one of God’s laws.⁸ When we sin, our soul becomes unclean. No unclean thing can dwell in God’s presence.⁹ “Becoming clean from sin is [to be] healed spiritually.”¹⁰

God the Father knows we will sin, but He has prepared a way for us to be redeemed. Elder Lynn G. Robbins taught: “Repentance isn’t [God’s] backup plan in the event we might fail. Repentance *is* His plan, knowing that

we will.”¹¹ When we sin, we have the opportunity to choose the good from the evil. We choose the good when we repent after we have sinned. Through Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice, we can be redeemed from our sins and brought back to the presence of God the Father if we repent. Spiritual healing is not one-sided—it requires the Savior’s redemptive power and sincere repentance on the part of the sinner. For those who choose not to repent, they are rejecting the healing Christ offers. For them, it is as though no redemption was made.¹²

As I have counseled with others seeking to repent, I have marveled that people who were living in sin had difficulty making correct decisions. The Holy Ghost would leave them, and they often struggled to make choices that would bring them closer to God. They would wrestle for months or even years, embarrassed or frightened of the consequences of their sins. Often they felt that they could never change or be forgiven. I have often heard them share their fear that if their loved ones knew what they had done, they would stop loving them or leave them. When they followed this line of thinking, they resolved to just keep quiet and delay their repentance. They incorrectly felt that it was better not to repent now so that they would not further hurt those they loved. In their minds it was better to suffer after this life than go through the repentance process now. Brothers and sisters, it is *never* a good idea to procrastinate your repentance. The adversary often uses fear to prevent us from acting immediately upon our faith in Jesus Christ.

When loved ones are confronted with the truth about sinful behavior, while they may feel deeply wounded, they often want to help the sincerely

repentant sinner to change and to reconcile with God. Indeed, spiritual healing accelerates when the sinner confesses and is surrounded by those who love them and help them to forsake their sins. Please remember that Jesus Christ is mighty in how He also heals the innocent victims of sin who turn to Him.¹³

President Boyd K. Packer stated: “Our spirits are damaged when we make mistakes and commit sins. But unlike the case of our mortal bodies, when the repentance process is complete, no scars remain because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. The promise is: ‘Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more’ [Doctrine and Covenants 58:42].”¹⁴

When we repent “with full purpose of heart,”¹⁵ “*immediately* shall the great plan of redemption be brought about” in our lives.¹⁶ The Savior will heal us.

The missionary companion and the medical professionals who helped our stroke-afflicted son in the mission field acted quickly. Our son chose to receive the stroke-reversing medicine. The paralyzing effects of his stroke that could have followed him for the remainder of his mortal life were reversed. Likewise, the faster we repent and bring the Atonement of Jesus Christ into our lives, the sooner we can be healed from the effects of sin.

President Russell M. Nelson offered this invitation: “If you have stepped off the path, . . . I invite you . . . to please come back. Whatever your concerns, whatever your challenges, there is a place for you in this, the Lord’s Church. You and generations yet unborn will be blessed by your actions now to return to the covenant path.”¹⁷

Our spiritual healing requires us to submit ourselves to the conditions our Savior has outlined. We must not



delay! We must act today! Act now so that spiritual paralysis does not prevent your eternal progression. While I have been speaking, if you have felt the need to ask forgiveness of someone you have wronged, I invite you to act. Tell them what you have done. Ask for their forgiveness. If you have committed a sin that impacts your temple worthiness, I invite you to counsel with your bishop—today. Do not delay.

My brothers and sisters, God is our loving Father in Heaven. He has given all power and knowledge to His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Because of Him, all mankind will one day be healed of every physical ailment forever. Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, if we choose to repent and turn our hearts fully to the Savior, He will heal us spiritually. That healing can begin immediately. The choice is ours. *Will we be made whole?*

I testify that Jesus Christ paid the price so that we can be made whole. But we must choose to take that healing medicine He offers. Take it today. Do not delay. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. The medicine is called tPA (tissue plasminogen activator).
2. Mosiah 2:41.
3. See Matthew 4:24. Christ went about healing all sick people, even those with

“divers diseases,” “torments,” “possessed with devils,” and “those which were lunatic.”

4. See John 5:5–9; emphasis added.
5. See Luke 8:43–47; emphasis added.
6. See Alma 40:23; Helaman 14:17.
7. See Luke 5:20, 23–25; see also Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 5:23 (in Luke 5:23, footnote a): “Does it require more power to forgive sins than to make the sick rise up and walk?”
8. See 1 John 3:4.
9. See 3 Nephi 27:19.
10. “The Gospel of Jesus Christ,” *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service*, rev. ed. (2018), lds.org/manual/missionary.
11. Lynn G. Robbins, “Until Seventy Times Seven,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 22.
12. See Mosiah 16:5.
13. On many occasions I have witnessed the accelerated healing of individuals when family members have rallied around one who has broken vows of fidelity and trust, helping them to turn to the Savior more completely for His healing power in their lives. If the truly repentant soul sincerely seeks to change, family members who help them in gospel study, sincere prayer, and Christlike service not only help the sinner change but also open the door for increased healing from the Savior in their lives. When appropriate, innocent victims can help the errant sinner by seeking heavenly guidance on what to study together, how to serve, and how to involve family members to support and strengthen the repentant soul to change and benefit from the redemptive power of Jesus Christ.
14. Boyd K. Packer, “The Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 28.
15. 3 Nephi 18:32.
16. Alma 34:31; emphasis added.
17. Russell M. Nelson, “As We Go Forward Together,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Apr. 2018, 7.