

# How to pray for the sick

Much uncertainty exists when praying for the sick people. How do we go about it? Is it the Lord's will that the person should be healed? Do all illnesses come from the devil? May only someone with the gift of healing pray for the sick?

The following are basic guidelines that you can use whenever someone is ill.

- Illness can basically have three causes:
  - it can be because of sin in your life
  - it can be a demonic attack
  - normal illness that the Lord allows in your life.
- When you are ill the first basic question you can ask yourself is: Is there any conscious unconfessed sin in my life? If so, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal it to you, confess it before the Lord and accept His forgiveness. If the Lord leads you, you can pray with a fellow believer about the matter and bring it into the light with him/her. It often happens that a person is healed as soon as they have confessed their sin. James 5:16 "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."
- 1 Cor 11:27-32 says illness can be caused by the improper use of communion:

"Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord, eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by The Lord we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world:

This "unworthy manner" is often indicative of an unconfessed sin in a person's life.

- When you pray for the healing of someone else ask the Holy Spirit to show the person any form of sin in his life that has not yet been confessed and that he will be willing to confess it and turn from it.
- Illness that comes from the evil one must be resisted in Jesus' Name. The problem is knowing when it is an attack from the evil one. Pray to the Lord for discernment. He is faithful, He will show you what the situation is. In a case where you are not certain at all, pray anyway and say: "Satan, I refuse to accept any form of illness that comes from you, I refuse it in the Name of the Lord Jesus and I resist any form of pain/illness which you bring over me."
- Satan can also cause illness in a person's life if there is occultic bondage in his life, if black magic is practiced on him or by means of curses that have been spoken against him. In such cases the person must be delivered from this bondage and the curses must be broken in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Black magic only works when someone is not saved or if there is unconfessed sin in the person's life.
- Many people think that if we go to the doctor and receive medicine, God is not involved in

the healing. It is definitely wrong to think so. God was and is involved in the development of medical science and He uses doctors and medication to heal people. Therefore it is important to pray for the doctor when you go for an appointment; that he will make the correct diagnosis and prescribe the right medication.

- The Lord may have a specific reason if He allows sickness in your life. Ask the Lord to reveal the reason. Accept the fact that God is not obligated to answer and that He may choose to keep silent. In cases like these it is best to accept God's plan and to be still before the Lord.
- People sometimes think that there is something wrong with them when they are ill, that they do not have enough faith to be healed. It is true that God expects faith from us. But God heals regardless of our faith.
- Sometimes people do not want to be healed because they enjoy the attention and sympathy or they don't want to go back to work to take up their responsibilities again. Pray for a willingness to recover and receive healing.
- Pray for wisdom when you pray for someone's healing. Pray for guidance of the Holy Spirit. Someone may have heart problems for instance and we know that God can heal that. However, if the person is overweight and eats too much, it would be more fitting to pray for self control so that he can discipline himself by eating less and losing weight. That will take away the cause of the problem.  
Ask The Lord what causes the illness. It can be unconfessed sin from the past; because of occultic bondage; The Lord sometimes allows it to teach the person something or it can simply be an attack from the evil one. Depending on the situation we should pray for the person in a different way every time. The Lord can allow sickness in a person's life to purify him; the fruit thereof is sanctification.
- Enrich your prayers with Scripture when you pray for the sick. Pray according to the promises of God. Also remember that not all promises are relevant or valid in every case.
- Remember to saturate your prayer with Praise and Worship when praying for a sick person. It gives Glory to God's work and faith to your own heart. The weapon of Praise and Worship is especially important in the case of a demonic onslaught.
- The principles of spiritual warfare, our authority in Christ and His victory over the evil one, are of utmost importance when there is the possibility of a demonic onslaught. We must bind the evil one in the Name of the Lord Jesus, break and resist his works.
- Testify to what the Lord has done. It gives others confidence to pray and it strengthens their faith in God's ability to heal. Testimonies like these often contribute to the conversion of others and the returning of those who have backslidden.
- Make a note when you pray for someone who is ill and write down the answers. You will be astonished when you see how many people that you have prayed for were healed.
- The father, being the head and priest of the home should pray for his family if someone is ill. However the whole family must learn to pray together for a sick member of the family. When a family prays together it strengthens family ties and sympathy for each other. We are inclined not to pray if we visit a doctor. This is wrong.
- According to research about 50-80% of patients that visit doctors are people suffering

from psychosomatic diseases. It means that these illnesses originate from psychological/spiritual problems. There is often bitterness, hatred, unforgiveness, stress, etc. because of pain and hurt from the past and this can cause people to become physically ill. To heal those illnesses past, things have to be confessed and worked through.

- It is true that the Lord gives the gift of healing to some people. It does not mean, however, that only those Christians may pray for the sick. Mark 16:17-18 says: "And these signs will accompany those who believe... they will place their hands on sick people and they will get well." Go with boldness to the Lord when praying for sick people. The time has come for James 5:13-15 to become normal practice in the church of the Lord again. "Is anyone of you in trouble? He should pray. Is any one happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is anyone of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of The Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned he will be forgiven."
- Where the church gathers, prayers should be offered for the sick people by name. Those who are sick should be brought to church so that they can be prayed for there. James 5 says clearly that when someone is ill, he/she must call the elders of the church so that they can anoint him with oil and pray for him/her.
- God uses different "methods" to heal people:
  - God heals through the laying on of hands
  - God heals through the anointing with oil and faithful prayer
  - God sometimes heals people at communion
  - God heals people in answer to intercession for them
  - God uses doctors and medication to heal people.
- Remember when you pray for someone or for yourself that healing does not always occur overnight or immediately. It can sometimes take days or weeks before someone is completely healed.
- In Exodus 15:26 The Lord call Himself Jahweh-Ropheka, it means: The Lord who heals you. It is God's Name, it is who He is, what He can do and what He wants to do. When you pray for the sick, pray to God who calls Himself Jahweh-Ropheka.