

What About PHYSICAL SIN?

February 5, 2005
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It is good to be back with you again after our short vacation. When we last spoke two weeks ago we were just finishing off our study on the book of James, you may remember. During that Bible Study we turned to James, chapter five, and you might want to open your Bibles there for just a moment. You may still have your fifty dollar bill tucked in there as a bookmark from the last time we talked? You will remember that we were looking at the subject of healing and we are going to return to that today.

In verse 14 of chapter 5, we read these words: ***Is anyone among you sick? If anyone among you is sick...That is an interesting challenge there. Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save (or, we said, heal) the sick ... The prayer of faith will heal the sick. The Greek word can mean "heal" and is often translated "heal." So ...the prayer of faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And ... (This was the interesting part that we had to hurry over) ... if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.***

I think at the time I said, "Well, of course, that is clearly referring to physical sins." Then I realized when I said that, that "oops," that could be a slightly controversial item, certainly one that isn't always well understood, but we were running short of time, so I just mentioned it in passing, and we carried on. You may recollect, those of you who were online after the study finished, that Don Goddard did suggest that perhaps it might be a good idea to take more time to explain about this topic of physical sin.

So that is precisely what I am going to do in today's Bible Study. If you would like a title for this Bible Study, it would be, "What About Physical Sin?"

Is it important to know? Because, really, when you are doing any Bible Study, you

want to look at something that is going to be fairly useful in some way to us, to extend our understanding, to give us instruction in how to live differently, some information that would be of practical use to us. I think that this topic should fit in those categories because, first of all, it is related to the subject of healing and health and well-being, and I would think that all of us are quite interested and concerned about our healing and our health and our well-being, so that sounds like it is fairly practical.

Also, as you look through the topic of physical sin, as linked to sickness and healing, it gives us a greater insight into God's nature - how He has a concern for us, physically, you and me, and our well-being, and what He has done about it. So it shows us more of God's mind toward us. Also, as if that is not enough, it ties in, as you will see, hopefully, to Jesus' crucifixion and His death. Bearing in mind that Passover is not **too** far away, it's not a bad topic to cover, and, of course, it will help us to perhaps understand more clearly, or reaffirm, what we already know about the meaning of Passover.

Lastly, and probably of least importance in many ways, it might just help us be conscious of the debates between Mr. Herbert Armstrong, now deceased, and Mr. Tkach, the Worldwide Church of God, and a number of other well-known churches of God, because most of us probably feel a certain amount of loyalty toward Mr. Herbert Armstrong. We recognize that he gave us a tremendous legacy of what he believed to be truth, and I think we are aware that many people criticize, condemn and tear him apart. The Worldwide Church of God certainly did and pretty much threw out everything Mr. Armstrong taught and stood for (and the subject of physical sin, strangely enough, was one of the earliest topics that they took objection to).

So as a little bit of background, I will read two or three, maybe four or five paragraphs from Mr. Armstrong "versus" Worldwide Church of God and some of the others of the Churches of God, so you can see that there is actually a little bit of a controversy here, a debate; and we are not going to look at it for the purpose of proving Mr. Armstrong right. We will look at it for the purpose of seeing what the Bible teaches, and hopefully we will see that Mr. Armstrong, as so often was the case, was more right than the rest.

For example, here are some of the comments made by the Worldwide Church of God in its booklet, "The Plain Truth about Healing." Strangely enough, Mr. Armstrong's booklet had the same name, but it had a totally opposite point of view, which is rather strange, so somebody's "plain truth" doesn't appear to be plain or truthful! Mr. Tkach and, I think, Mr. Bernie Schnippert both collaborated on this book. It came out around about 1988, about two years after Mr. Armstrong's death, so that is pretty soon, you have to say. This is what they said about physical sin:

"The physical sin concept leads to worry, depression, self-righteousness, judging, confusion, guilt and inordinate fear of doctors. Its fruit is not good because it is not true."

Okay. That is quite blunt. The physical sin concept is "not true," and amazingly, apparently, leads to worry and depression and all that sort of stuff. Carrying on, they say:

"The concepts of physical sin and spiritual sin are based on the false idea that sin can be divided into two neatly separated planes of physical and spiritual."

So the whole idea of there being two types of sin is a **false** idea! I wonder where the idea came from? Then they carry on in their next chapter of the book:

“Now that we have seen illness in these simple terms, unencumbered by **erroneous** concepts of physical sin which the previous chapter showed to be **incorrect**...”

Then they carry on. So, in other words, they say that physical sin is an erroneous concept, is incorrect, is not true, and is a false idea.

Thankfully for them, they are quite plain there. I wouldn't say it is plain “truth,” but it certainly is plain. They say the idea, basically, is nonsense. You would have to be an idiot to believe in physical sin, essentially. So if you believe in physical sin, they would say that you are lacking in brain power. You are deceived; you are foolish.

Okay. What did Mr. Armstrong say? He says, in his booklet by the same title:

“How does Jesus' broken body make our healing possible?” (A very good question.) “It is important that you understand the answer to this - because some have been falsely teaching there is no such thing as physical sin.”

So, Mr. Armstrong says that people who say there is no physical sin are giving you false teaching. Mr. Armstrong continues, and I would say this is probably one of the bluntest portions of his writing, I think, perhaps, that most of us have come across:

“To say there is no such thing as physical sin, as has been said by self-professing intellectuals, is not intellectual - it is rank stupidity, ignorance, or willful perversion of plain, simple truth!”

Now there is really no meeting ground between these two concepts is there? Mr. Tkach, Mr. Schnippert, the Worldwide Church of God, and, I won't name them, but several others of the Churches of God that you would come across, believe that physical sin does not exist. It is a “dangerous concept” that will make you worried and depressed and so on. Mr. Armstrong says that people who teach **that** are guilty of rank stupidity, ignorance, or willful perversion (that means deliberate perversion) of plain, simple truth.

Okay. I think that sets the ground work in the sense that we will look to the Bible for the answers and just see which of the two camps was the more accurate with their views.

Let's look at James chapter five, verses 14 and 15 more closely, mostly verse 15. **And the prayer of faith will save (or heal) the sick, and the Lord will raise him up.** Now here is the “interesting” portion of that verse. **And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.** If he has committed sins he will be forgiven?? Pray tell me, which of us **hasn't** committed sins? Which person calling for the elders of the church for anointing hasn't committed sins?

Everybody who calls for the elders of the church, when they are sick, is a person who sins, every single one of us! If one of you hasn't sinned in the last ten years, tell me afterwards and I will congratulate you. You and I know that we sin pretty much on a daily basis, I would think. Sometimes we manage it quite a few times in a day, so what does it mean here, “**if** he has committed sins?” That is clearly suggesting that there will be healings involved where **no** sins need to be forgiven.

“If he has committed sins...” Now let's just check out that we are correct here Biblically. Let's just make sure we understand that everybody sins outside the church and inside the church. Romans 3:23 **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,** Everybody has sinned. You have, I have, even the Pope has sinned, quite a lot, I would think. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, so how could James possibly say **if** somebody has sinned, they will be forgiven? Everybody sins. That statement, if it was to imply that James is talking of spiritual sins is, frankly, a nonsensical statement. It is meaningless to say that if somebody has sinned spiritually, they will be forgiven, because every single one of us has sinned spiritually.

Let's turn to I John, chapter 1, and start in verse 8. **If we** (and we is “us,” us Christians, us redeemed, us the called, us the elect) **say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in**

us.9 If we confess our sins, (which obviously we must) **He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.**

So John is being quite blunt. He says, frankly, that you, out there, sin — that you are sinners. You break God's law; you sin. So then again, when you look at James as we did a few moments ago and it says **if** any man has sinned ...you think, “What on earth is James talking about, because **all** of us has sinned? People in the world sin, and John tells us those of us even in the church, who have been called and baptized and have God's Spirit, **we** sin!”

So without even going that much further, almost immediately you are left thinking that James is talking about something different here than spiritual sin. He has to be! If that inspired sentence, inspired under the inspiration of God, written by James, has any real meaning, and God means what He says and says what He means, then that meaning has to be something **other** than spiritual sin.

Okay, so we will be coming back to that a bit later. You and I tend to think of sin as being very much “spiritual.” I was brought up in the Catholic Church and I know a great deal about sin; you learn a lot about being a sinner if you are a Catholic. We know that sins are all sorts of things like lying; that is clearly a sin. Stealing is clearly a sin. There are many sins, like adultery is a sin, but the subject of sin is something that we tend to always limit to being something “spiritual.” In that case we think, “Well, in what way could those spiritual sins, if that's how we think of them, ever lead to sickness and have to be forgiven to be healed?”

For example, if your sin, and I am not suggesting that it is, but if your sin was, say, falsifying tax returns, that would be stealing because that is a sin. Would you expect falsifying your tax return and exaggerating your expenses, or understating your business turnover, to lead to sickness? Well it's possible, rarely, but, by-and-large, stealing doesn't make you sick.

What about breaking the Sabbath commandment? Would you expect that to lead to sickness? Breaking the Sabbath is certainly sin; it goes contrary to the Fourth Commandment. If you break the Sabbath commandment and don't honor God on the Sabbath Day, you are sinning. Is that what James had in mind - that Sabbath breaking might somehow make you sick and that you would have to be forgiven?

What about, for example, idolatry? We don't, of course, do that ourselves do we? But just suppose you had a little hankering for a set of rosary beads to help you with your prayer life, you know, "our Fathers" and "hail Marys" and so on. Well it's clear enough that that would be idolatry. That would be breaking the First and Second commandments, pretty much. Would that make you sick? The answer is that spiritual sin, really, isn't connected very much to sickness! And yet, from what James said, it seems that healing has to do with some sort of forgiveness of sin. Yet it just doesn't seem right, does it, that "sin" as you and I tend to think about it leads to sickness?

So then, what do we mean by sin? This is really where we start to look at the fact that God, and the Bible, and the Bible's writers had a slightly different view of sin than we tend to have in our twentieth and twenty-first centuries. For example, we know that stealing is sin and murder is sin, and breaking the Ten Commandments is sin. If you are Catholic, not going to Mass on Sunday is also sin. You are a bit lazy; you couldn't get out of bed in the morning; Mass was at nine o'clock; you overslept; you missed Mass. Technically, that was a mortal sin, if you are a Catholic. What that means is that if you died before you'd been to confession and the priest didn't wave his magic wand over you, you are destined to an eternity in hellfire because you did not go to Mass. That is a sin, if you are a Catholic.

What about other people's struggle with things like, say - is dancing sin? Is it a sin to go dancing? Some churches teach that, yes, dancing is a carnal pleasure and it is sin. Is it sin? What about drinking alcohol? Is drinking alcohol a sin? Perhaps drinking far too much you might agree is sinful, but is a glass of sherry sin? You would probably say no, but some

people would say that it is. There are people who are complete teetotalers, who won't touch any alcohol ever, and believe that anybody who does is a sinner. Their understanding of sin is that drinking alcohol constitutes sin.

We had a number of Ladies' Nights at the Spokesman's Club years and years ago in the Church, and I remember that some of the single men, bachelors, would invite some of the Church ladies to come along who were themselves unattached, and due to the shortage of ladies, sometimes ladies of all sorts and shapes and sizes were invited along. On one occasion I know, a lady who had just started attending a few months earlier was invited by one of the men to come to the Ladies' Night and hear the men speak and participate in the social atmosphere, and so on. And at the social atmosphere, during and after the Club, there was wine and sherry being served.

This lady, who had been attending six or nine months, something like that, was in her early eighties, and her background for eighty-odd years was that alcohol is "of the devil." Alcohol is sin, and she could not tolerate being in the room with these "sinful men" in the Church, including the minister, drinking wine and sherry. She sat outside for that portion of the Ladies' Night because she was convinced in her own mind that drinking alcohol was sin.

Okay, so, in looking at this topic, "What is Physical Sin?" we had better make sure that we understand, really, what "sin" is. Is it drinking? Is it dancing? Is it playing cards? Is it stealing? What was James referring to when he said that sin could be forgiven when you are being healed?

Let's turn to I John, chapter 3, and another well-known memory verse, verse 4. I am reading from the New King James version. It is slightly different from the King James. The King James says that sin is the transgression of the law. The New King James says: **Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.** Definition: Sin IS lawlessness. That's sin defined by John, who knew a thing or two. Sin IS lawlessness.

The King James Version says that sin is the transgression of "the" law. That is

really not completely accurate, because there is no word for "the" in the Greek. Most modern translations say that sin "is lawlessness." It doesn't matter what the law is. Applied to God's laws, not man's codes of conduct, sin is breaking **any** of God's laws. That's how it is defined there. It is not talking specifically about the Ten Commandments. It doesn't say, "Sin is Commandment breaking." It says, "Sin is lawlessness." I think that the Weymouth translation says, "Sin is the violation of law." Not of "the" law of Exodus 20. Bear this in mind. It will become important later. Sin is the violation of God's laws - plural.

We will see later that there are many laws that aren't just the "spiritual" laws. For example, Mr. Armstrong, referring to this verse in his booklet on The Plain Truth about Healing, says:

"It is referring to the laws instituted by God, not to the transgressing of man-made codes."

So all the laws that God put in place are being referred to here, and it is sin in its **widest** sense to break **any** of God's laws. For example, Mr. Armstrong points out that if you pollute your lungs with tobacco smoke...and maybe some of us do that. Certainly I've met a few people, in the church, sometimes in the church and baptized for a number of years, who have smoked cigarettes. Sometimes you can smell it on them, and sometimes they conceal it with mints and other devices, and sometimes they are quite open and will tell you quietly that they really are struggling. They have baptized now for five years and still can't do without ten "ciggies" a day. That's fine. I don't have an issue with that. That is their problem to work out with God's help.

But certainly smoking pollutes the lungs, damages the lungs and the blood chemistry and causes all sorts of problems and can cause lung cancer. Mr. Armstrong says:

"Polluting the lungs with tobacco smoke definitely is transgressed physical law. This transgression of law, according to God's definition, is physical sin! Its penalty is sickness, disease or debility."

So Mr. Armstrong, in explaining I John 3:4, says that that includes broken physical laws such as smoking. We will see, as we carry on, that the word “sin” is much broader and more comprehensive than our twentieth, twenty-first century religious interpretation.

Let’s turn, for example, to Romans, chapter 14. We will see another definition of sin which is considerably wider. It goes into the subject of people who won’t eat meat; people who are vegetarian. We will start in verse one. **Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things.** If somebody is perceived to be, in some areas, some aspect, a little bit weak in the faith, let’s not get into an argumentative debate over it **2 For one believes he may eat all thing ...** That doesn’t mean snakes and octopus and shrimps and prawns and lobsters. It is talking of someone in the church who knows the laws of clean and unclean foods, which are physical laws. But this person believes that he can eat all things, meat and non-meat ... **but he who is weak eats only vegetables.** Okay, so you have a simple differentiation here. One person will only eat vegetables and fruits and herbs. Another person likes a nice T-bone steak **with** their vegetables.

Verse 3: **Let not him who eats (everything) despise him who does not eat (meat), and let not him who does not eat (meat) judge him who eats (meat); for God has received him** (meaning both of them). Okay, so let not the meat-eater sit in judgment and start condemning and jumping up and down over the person who doesn’t want to eat meat. And, equally, don’t let vegetarians jump up and down and start pushing around the person who **does** like their steak. It is not an issue as far as God is concerned.

Dropping down to verse 21, Paul takes us quite a bit further. He says here, **It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.** So Paul says, “I’ll tell you what; if you have somebody in your congregation who would be offended by your wine-drinking or your meat-eating, don’t do it in front of them.” It is better not to eat meat **or** drink wine or in fact do **anything** that causes a weaker person to stumble, if they stumble

at it. They might not. They might be quite happy that you eat meat but they are quite happy not to.

Verse 22: **Do you have faith** (that you can eat meat)? **Have it to yourself before God.** Don’t trumpet it around in front of someone who is struggling with that particular topic. **Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. 23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.** What he is suggesting there in verses 22 and 23 is that if somebody really has a hang-up over meat-eating and they really, really don’t believe that it is correct, it is not proper, not right, and they get somehow “intimidated” by church brethren or the minister into eating meat when they really don’t in their heart believe that it is right, they are committing sin. That is what it says. **Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.** “Okay, I am going to eat meat. No problem.” Peace of mind. **But he who doubts** (about his meat-eating) **is condemned if he eats,** because he is **not** eating from faith. He is searing his, or her, conscience, **for whatever is not from faith is sin**

That is not talking of lawlessness. That is not saying that sin is lawlessness. That was a different definition. We understand, I think, that sin is lawlessness, but here it is saying that whatever is not done “out of faith” is sin. I have seen a very, very bad example or two of the abuse of some of God’s people over the question of meat-eating. I remember a young woman, going back perhaps twenty-five years or so, who was attending church for, I guess, a year, maybe a couple years, and she was a vegetarian. I never did ask her in particular why. Perhaps she didn’t like the idea of animals being killed. Perhaps she didn’t like the idea of antibiotics and hormones and the numerous drugs that keep the animals alive long enough to get to the slaughter house, being in her system. Perhaps she didn’t like the taste or the smell. I don’t know, but the point was that she did not like meat, and she chose to eat only vegetarian foods, which to me was fine. What’s the problem?

But it was really quite offensive to watch the way the minister at that time dealt with

her, because she was counseling for baptism and he categorically told her, “I will not baptize you until you start eating meat.” To me that was an absolute, utter disgrace and abuse of a young lambkin in the congregation of God. She wanted to be baptized. She wanted God’s Holy Spirit. She wanted to go God’s way. She had this resistance to meat-eating and the minister just pressed her into eating meat. There is no question in my mind that she fell into verse 23. I am sure that she doubted and was most uncomfortable but did it to satisfy the minister and get baptized.

For example, I don’t eat cheese. I have never eaten cheese. I think that at the age of eight years, my Mum put a slab of cheese in front of me and, frankly, the smell, the appearance of cheese I find obnoxious. I have never eaten cheese. When I watch people with melted cheese all over their pizzas, and pastas and things of that nature, the **smell** and the **sight** of it I find just revolting! But my family eats cheese. Nobody said to me, “You had better eat cheese or we won’t baptize you,” because, frankly, cheese-eating or not cheese-eating has no impact at all on my Christian life. And, frankly, neither does whether you eat meat or not.

So it is an interesting point, but notice carefully there that, on the topic of what sin is, sin, frankly, is going against your conscience, as in this case with meat or with wine. That lady who I mentioned earlier, frankly, if she in her heart believed that wine-drinking was sin, and she had taken a sip of sherry or a small glass of wine, well, whatever is not from faith **is sin.** Interesting, isn’t it? So if wine-drinking is sin to you, then it **is** sin. If meat-eating is sin to you, then it is. If card-playing is sin to you, then it is. Now, each of us may grow in maturity, see things differently, our faith may develop, but sin is certainly much wider than just the Ten Commandments,

A problem we have in the English language, and also French and Spanish, is that we tend to equate sin with “religious” fault, with breaking some “religious” rule. Sin is always to do with a “moral failure,” but in Hebrew and in Greek, sin doesn’t automatically have that limited, moral, religious aspect to it. The word “sin” in

Hebrew and in Greek is much, much wider than that. For example, taking Hebrew first of all, the most common word for sin, *chata*, is translated “sin” over four hundred times, so it is, I think, the most common word for “sin,” and it simply means “to miss, to err from the mark, speaking of an archer.” So, if you can imagine an archer with his bow and arrow firing at the target and he misses — that’s sin ... the target is a long way off and he takes good aim, and off goes the arrow straight toward the target, but it ends up five feet away from the bull’s eye. He has missed the mark. He has erred. He has actually “sinned,” in Hebrew, but there is no **moral** problem. There is no “religious” involvement here. Nothing says that the man is “guilty” of any problem, but he has missed the mark. He has, in Hebrew, “sinned.” So the meaning is “to miss, to err from the mark, speaking of an archer, to stumble, or simply, to make a mistake and wander out of the way” - no religious significance necessarily.

In the Greek, the word would be “hamartia.” That appears a number of times in the New Testament. Thayer’s Lexicon says, “to miss the mark, to err, to be mistaken, to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor, to do or to go wrong.” So, to miss the mark, to be mistaken, is sin, but it does not, does not, does not, does not imply necessarily **any** moral guilt. For example, if you wanted to drive from, say, Texas to go to the Feast of Tabernacles in Branson, just for the sake of argument, and you ended up in St. Louis, you would have clearly missed the mark. You set off for Branson; you ended up in St. Louis, or New York or, even worse, San Francisco. You erred. Okay? You wandered from the path.

In Hebrew and Greek, you could say that you “sinned.” You might be stupid, but there is no moral guilt involved. But you have, nonetheless, sinned. So, let’s be careful. The word “sin” doesn’t necessarily, in every situation, refer to moral, religious guilt. Its primary meaning, as used in adventure stories written by the Greeks and so on, is just “to miss the mark” like somebody with a bow and arrow would miss the mark. They have sinned.

For example, if you smoke cigarettes and you pollute your lungs and restrict your blood vessels and get heart disease and cancer, you erred from the path of good health. You missed the mark, so therefore, it is quite right, in terms of Hebrew and Greek, to say that smoking is a sin, because you are missing the mark of good health. You are wandering from the pathway of good health, and that is all that sin is.

You might remember, some of you who have been around a good while, Mr. Armstrong’s headline once in the *Worldwide News*, [Smoking is Sin](#). Some people scoffed at that, but that is precisely what the Hebrew and Greek mean. Smoking is sin because smoking is wandering off the right path of good health. Of course, there are often two levels here. Smoking because you just happen to like, somehow, the taste of cigarettes is just a physical thing and, of course, it becomes a little bit addictive and so you have to smoke to stop from getting all bad tempered, and so on. That is largely physical, but if you knew that you should not smoke, and you knew that was something that God did not like, and you lusted and coveted for something you shouldn’t have, of course that would create a different type of sin, a spiritual sin of lusting and coveting.

In the Bible, in the main, you and I are mostly concerned about our salvation. Frankly, God is mostly concerned about our salvation as well. So, in the Bible, most references to sin are talking about turning away, wandering off God’s ways into Satan’s ways. So when we read about sin in the Bible it is true that, most of the time, because God is dealing with us at that level, most of the references to sin are to the fact that you are erring from God’s way, you are missing the mark from God’s standards, you are sinning. Of course, the wages of those sins, wandering off God’s way of life, is death. The wages of sin is death. So, most of the time the scriptures talk of sin in the sense of spiritual sin and spiritual salvation and spiritual death. But keep in mind that sin simply means to miss the mark. It may be doing it spiritually, but it could be other types of missing the mark.

For example, I mentioned smoking. What about excess alcohol? Okay. What if you want to drink, let’s say, fifteen bottles of wine a day? What if you were to drink, let’s say, two, three, four bottles of Jack Daniels a day? I am not sure how long you would be among us, but if you were among us more than a few months, you would have, I think, a pickled liver. You would have liver disease, bad time, big time.

There is a well-known soccer player here in England. He retired from playing soccer probably twenty-five years ago, but he is still extremely famous. He was an absolutely brilliant soccer player in his day. He played for one of the world’s best known soccer teams, but he had a problem with alcohol. He just drank and drank and drank and drank. As a consequence, in his early fifties, his liver was shot to pieces, and he was within, I think, a matter of days of dying just a couple or three years ago. Thankfully for him, in a sense, they managed to find a liver transplant that was suitable for him. I presume somebody had to die to be a donor, in that sense, but a liver was found and it was transplanted and this top soccer player had a new lease on life.

His pickled liver, resulting from his alcohol addiction, was taken out and a brand new liver was put in its place. Suddenly he has nice rosy cheeks, and he can walk, and he is able to breathe properly, and he is fit and well, and, unfortunately, he is back on the booze again, and probably heading this time for an end with no further chances. So, yes, excess alcohol is wandering from the path of good health. It is missing the mark. It is erring from what you should do to enjoy good health, so therefore, physically, it is missing the mark, or sin — “physical sin.”

What about lack of sleep? The body requires a certain amount of sleep to be fit and well and to recuperate and if you don’t give it that sleep, you are erring, missing the mark, or committing physical sin, because you are erring from one of the laws that were designed to keep your body in good health.

What about being over-weight? Most of us know the weight that we should be, what is deemed to be an acceptable weight

level, and if we eat entirely the wrong foods and entirely too much of them, and weigh entirely too much, then we are erring from the path. We are wandering from the path that would be best for our health. We are missing the mark, and, not surprisingly, if we carry too much weight for too long, then sickness is a consequence, very often.

What about sugar consumption? We eat **far** too much sugar as a nation!

Most of these things that I have just mentioned are really down to our choices. In other words, it's up to you and me. We tend to choose the foods we eat, and how much we want to eat, and we choose whether to smoke or not smoke. We decide whether to drink a pint of Jack Daniels a day or just a small tippie. We decide whether we want sugar in everything and perhaps ten, twelve or fifteen bottles of Coca Cola a day, or to choose nice fresh spring water – it's our choice. That choice, of course, can be wrong because of ignorance; someone just doesn't know the difference, isn't educated in these areas. It could be just a wrong preference, or it could be a lack of self discipline. It could be that we just don't do what we ought to do because we haven't quite "got the character" there yet.

But occasionally the sins which are committed aren't caused by us. Sometimes the missing of the mark is because of somebody else's behavior. For example, car fumes, car exhausts, can cause respiratory problems. Frankly, that is all around us. It is not something that we necessarily do ourselves. The foods that we eat very often are stuffed full of additives and preservatives and they have been denatured in the processing so there is hardly anything good left in them. Again, it is not really us that do that so much, but we are the end of the chain.

What about the noise in factories? That can cause hearing loss and deafness. Again, we are subject to that. It is not really our choice, very often. Or take asbestos. Many construction workers are exposed to substances that injure or damage their health. They contract asbestosis and various lung cancers from asbestos.

What about the one thousand children who die every day of Aids? That is not **their** sin. That is almost certainly because others who are sinning somewhere else, but those one thousand children die every day from Aids because physical laws have been broken and the consequence of those erring, missing the mark, wandering from the path is that these little kids die by one thousand every day. In fact, the figures are that forty thousand children die every day of disease. I don't for a moment imagine that it is their fault. It is just that physical laws are broken and they suffer the consequences.

God has set in motion many laws that govern our health and well-being, and when we err, when we miss the mark, when we stray from those laws, we are sinning, physically. But there is no spiritual guilt involved here, and that is an important point to realize. Having too many potatoes and too many Coca Colas might be erring, missing the mark, or physical sin, but there is no spiritual guilt, there is no moral failure on our part. It is just poor choices; simple, plain error on our part. Yet, we are accountable, aren't we? Nobody, as a rule, opens our mouth and shovels down all the stuff that we eat. If we want to sit in front of the TV for ten hours a night with a six-pack beside us, that's our choice. So for many of our health problems, consequent upon physical sin, frankly we are often ourselves quite accountable. We need to take that fairly seriously.

Let's turn to I Corinthians, chapter 6. God set these laws for our benefit, for our good, so it shouldn't surprise us, really, that when we stray away from them, miss the mark, err, sin physically, that there is a consequence. We need to be careful not to try to wriggle out of our responsibility and try and blame the whole "system," as if we are completely innocent of our health problems. Sometimes, not always, of course, I think we all realize that, but sometimes, and you know the difference, our problems are caused by our own choices. In verse 19, just taking the principle here, Paul is actually talking about immorality, sexual sin. Let's look at what underlies it. **19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, whom you**

have from God, and you are not your own?

So Paul is saying, "Look, you ought not to be out there engaging in immorality with your bodies because your body is the temple of God's Holy Spirit." And that clearly applies whether you are committing sexual sin or not. For all of us who have God's Spirit in us, that Spirit dwells in our bodies, and Paul says that our bodies are the temple of God's Spirit. Now what sort of temple would we think God would want to dwell **in**? One that we abuse? One that we neglect? Or one that we look after, to the best of our ability, accepting that there are many things which we don't understand about health and well-being.

20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. Some of the old manuscripts don't actually have the words "and in your spirit." So the phrase, bluntly, is "glorify God in your body, which is God's." Therefore, you and I need to be careful that we do aim to glorify God in our bodies - the way we **use** them and perhaps also the way we look **after** them.

Let's turn to Luke, chapter 5, and get down to the question of physical sin a bit more. **17 ¶ Now it happened on a certain day, as He (Jesus) was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.** It is interesting that it actually says "to heal **them**," so perhaps many of them missed out on an opportunity here because only one man actually did get healed, but carrying on in verse 18, **Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him.** I think one of the other Gospels tells us that there were four men helping to carry the one man who was paralyzed on this little stretcher.

19 And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd,... Because when they arrived down the street, lo and behold, here was Jesus' house, because that is where this was taking place, in Capernaum, and there was

a whole crowd around the door. The house was filled to overflowing with people standing in the street jumping up and down trying to look in the windows and, frankly, they thought, "What can we do?" This man is on a stretcher and he wants to be healed. He is paralyzed and the four men are with him. "Oh dear, John, we can't seem to get any farther because, well, I guess it wasn't God's will for you to be healed. If it was God's will, the crowds would part and we would just go straight through. Let's go home." But they weren't put off. They had a desire. They wanted to achieve something and they were going to keep on pushing until they got it done.

Because they could not find how they might bring him in because of the crowd, **they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling** (of the roof) **into the midst before Jesus.** That's really an incredible example of the men's faith because nothing was going to stop these guys. They pulled him up there. They laid their friend down on the side of the roof somewhere and then they pried off the tiles and pushed them out of their way. You can imagine Jesus in the middle of His talking and teaching to the Pharisees and Scribes and all the others there, and suddenly there were particles of dust and plaster falling off the ceiling.

Jesus looks up and, "What's this? What is happening up there?" More dust and plaster falls down and Jesus has to move out of the way and something tumbles down. Suddenly there is a bit of light up there and a little face looks down, "Yeah, Yeah, we are in the right place. We are in the right room." They dig a bigger hole and everybody is watching, in complete silence, I would imagine, by now. Everybody in the room sitting there, just looking up and astonished, stunned! "What is going on?" Then, of course, the man gets lowered down on ropes right in front of Jesus. A fantastic thing to have witnessed.

20 When He saw their faith ... Jesus saw the faith of several people. Certainly the four men who had fought to get up to the roof and torn the roof half apart and lowered their friend down, certainly they had faith, because they obviously were expecting a healing. They were believing

for a miracle. That was absolutely, totally evident. One assumes that the man on the stretcher had faith as well, that allowed all this to take place, so between them there was a lot of faith being displayed here.

When He saw their faith, He said to him (That's the sick man.), **"Man, your sins are forgiven you."** Remember we are looking at - "Is there such a thing as physical sin? What about it? Is it important?" Your sins are forgiven you? Now, what sins is Jesus talking about here? He says, "Your sins are forgiven you." Spiritual sins? In that case, why just forgive this man his spiritual sins? Was it his lying, his cheating, his false tax returns, playing cards and not being honest and cheating with those? Had he been guilty of running around with loose women? What sins did Jesus forgive him? Why just forgive this man? The four friends had spiritual sins, too, and the Pharisees most certainly had spiritual sins. That's pretty clear.

Why just forgive one man's sins? If it is spiritual sins, it becomes a bit odd. What's going on here? If it is physical sins, then it becomes, perhaps, a bit more clear. **21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"**

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, (Their "thoughts," by the way. They hadn't said this. They were just busy debating "internally.") **He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? 23 "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'?"**

24 "But that you may know (You unconverted, carnal, hard-headed, hostile audience) **that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" ---He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." 25 Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.**

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!"

But notice, verse 24, "So that you unconverted people might **know** and be

convinced that I can forgive sins, I say to the man, 'You are healed.'" Now, how could that prove that Jesus could forgive sins **unless** the healing **was** the forgiveness of sin. Because making a man rise up and take his bed home couldn't prove anything about forgiving a man's adulteries if he has done any of those, or forgiving a man's idolatry if he has done any of that. There is no way that Pharisees and Scribes and these people who didn't believe Jesus could know that sins had been forgiven. How could they know? It is impossible. There is no way to know that unless healing itself was the forgiveness of sin.

The Weymouth New Testament translates this verse as, "But to **prove** to you that the son of man has the authority to forgive sins,..." then He raised a man up from his bed. You will notice here that there is no evidence that the man repented, is there? He is laid down on this little stretcher, he is lowered to the ground, his faith for healing is obvious, but there is no record there of the man saying, "Bless me Jesus, for I have sinned. It has been nineteen years since my last confession. I have been guilty of telling lies a hundred and fourteen times ..." There is no reference at all to repentance, and yet you know that you don't get forgiveness of spiritual sins without repentance.

Let's turn to I John, chapter 1. One of the distinctions between spiritual sin and physical sin is that you must *repent* if it is spiritual sin. Verse 9, **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** How do we get forgiven? If we confess. If we confess our sins. If we don't confess our sins, there is no promise whatsoever of forgiveness. **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** I said before, when we **do** sin, and we do, including you, and even me ... when we sin we should run **to** God. Don't run **from** God when you sin. Keep "short accounts" with God! I'm talking about spiritual sin. You have to go straight away, even immediately, to God. Run **to** God when we sin. Sort it out! Don't hold onto sin!

I John was talking to the converted brethren. Acts 2:38 is talking to people not yet converted, but the same rule applies. **38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** So repent and believe. Repentance is necessary. If you and I want to be forgiven, and we do, well, we have to repent. We have to be remorseful, and tell God that we are sorry and that we want to turn around and live differently, and get back on the path and not wander away. We want to change, to repent. But there is no evidence in that incident in Luke with the man on the stretcher of **any** repentance. There wasn't! He just was let down, and his faith was obvious, and Jesus said, "I am going to show that I can heal sin. Get up and walk away. That proves to you that I can heal sin." Yet, notice, there is no repentance, so therefore it is strong indication that it was physical sin and not spiritual sin.

Let's turn to Luke, chapter 7, and try to reaffirm that repentance is something that must be there if we are talking about the forgiveness of **spiritual** sin. **36 ¶ Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat.** **37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil,** **38 and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.** **39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself (not out loud), saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."** This was a well-known lady sinner. I think we can all imagine what type of sin she was well known for.

40 And Jesus answered and said to him,(Bear in mind that the man had said nothing, just in his thoughts.) **"Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it."** "Okay," says

Jesus, **41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other (only) fifty. 42 "And when they had nothing with which to repay, (neither of them) he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."**

44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears ... That suggests that there were a lot of tears there ... and wiped them with the hair of her head. Very humble. 45 "You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. 46 "You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil.

So what do we know about this woman? She was broken hearted, utterly repentant, tears flowing as she kissed the feet of the Lord Jesus. Humility, repentance clearly demonstrated. Words weren't necessary. **47 "Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." 48 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" 50 Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."**

So, it is pretty obvious, I think. Repentance is required for forgiveness. But notice that when He forgave this woman, He did not say, "Go and sin no more." He saw that she was repentant and He knew that she would try to live properly thereafter. She had a change of heart and Jesus had the confidence and trust that she would do better in the future, so He just said, "Go in peace. You are forgiven."

Let's turn to John, chapter 8, about the lady taken in adultery. I am just trying to establish, still, that if we are talking

spiritual sin, repentance is necessary for forgiveness. No repentance, no forgiveness. **1 ¶ But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.**

2 Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.

3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. I wonder how they caught her?

And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Okay. I am not quite sure how that came about, or where the man was.

5 "Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" 6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. Time passed. 7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "Okay. He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."

Of course, everybody sins. We have proven that already, so perhaps Jesus meant, "Any of you who is without sexual sin." Perhaps that is what He implied here. "Let him throw the stone at her first." **8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.** We can speculate what He was writing. Was it the names of illicit liaisons or partners? We don't know. **9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.** Still surrounded I guess by the audience of people that Jesus had been teaching earlier.

10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Okay. Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." Now look at this absence here. There is no reference to the woman being "repentant." Jesus does not talk about "forgiving" her. She stood there, her

accusers disappeared, and Jesus said, "Have they gone? They're not condemning you? Okay. Neither am I." But then He gave her a strong admonition, "Go away. **Do not** sin again. Sin **no** more." But no reference to forgiveness. Was the lady repentant? It doesn't say. Did she have a lucky escape and carry on to do the same again? We don't know. Jesus simply said, "I am not going to condemn you, but I'll tell you what, lady: You had better stop sinning. Don't sin any more." Okay. That's fine, but notice. No signs of repentance. No reference to forgiveness.

Let's turn to John, chapter 5. We are in the book already and we will begin in verse 1. (We seem to be once again dawdling slightly. I talked earlier about the struggle to get enough material for a one hour message. I am thinking it might be a struggle now to get it done in less than two hours! But let's move on). **1 ¶**

After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches.

3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.

5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years.... Now that is a long time to be ill. **6 When Jesus saw him lying there ...** So I guess he was so disabled that he had to lie down all the time or could only move very slowly ... *and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"* It sounds like a strange question, really. "Yes, of course I do!" But maybe after all those years he had lost heart, maybe become apathetic and who knows what. Jesus said, "Do you want, do you desire to be made well?" He wanted some sort of commitment from the man. **7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, (I'm kind of slow, and infirm, and disabled and so on.) another steps down before me."** "I'm always second, or third, or tenth or

hundredth." **8 Jesus said to him, "Okay. Rise, take up your bed and walk."**

9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. That frankly doesn't expand very much, but that's a staggering miracle! Some guy who's been infirm for nearly forty years of his life, and now he is up on his feet and scampering about! **10 The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; You can't carry your bed!"** **11 He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.' I'll go with His views rather than yours!"** **12 Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?"** Who is this guy who's teaching you to "break" the Sabbath? **13 But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place.**

Afterward, when things had quieted down a wee bit, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you." Don't **sin** again lest a **worse** thing come. Of course the man is going to sin again because we **all** do. Even those of us who are the "very Elect"(!) and have been around God's Church for many, many years. We all sin, so you can hardly tell this guy to "sin no more," meaning "spiritually." But if physical sin is what caused the sickness, the illness, the infirmity, and the man knew what particular erring, missing the mark that was, he would have understood immediately what Jesus meant. "Sin no more lest a worse thing come upon you. You have been healed of that particular disease. Tell you what, mate," He said, "Don't you sin again, and you know what I mean, lest a worse thing come upon you."

15 The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

16 For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. Naughty Jesus! But notice that there is no evidence here of repentance either. The guy is lying there and Jesus says, "Get up," and he is healed. So therefore it implies again that it is physical

sin that is being broken, causing his illness, and Jesus says, "Don't sin that way again. You know what I'm talking about. Don't do it again, otherwise you will end up in worse physical condition."

If physical sin exists, and if it is linked to sickness and healing, and if healing includes the forgiveness of physical sin, as Mr. Armstrong taught for almost sixty years, then there are certain consequences. By the way, Mr. Armstrong **did** teach that for virtually sixty years. I have his autobiography here. Mr. Armstrong's first sermon, back in 1928, was on the subject of the Sabbath Day, explaining about the covenant of Exodus 31. Mr. Armstrong's second sermon ... His second sermon ... so if God is calling him and using him, that shows the priority that God puts on this ... Mr. Armstrong's **second** sermon, in late summer in 1928, before his ordination even, was on Divine Healing. So Mr. Armstrong taught on Divine Healing from 1928 all the way through to 1986 just about, so almost sixty years.

In the Autobiography, Mr. Armstrong writes, after his wife was healed miraculously of many ailments, within a number of hours of death:

"Then I made a discovery I had not read in any of the tracts and literature which we had been sending for and gathering on this subject (of Diving Healing). Healing is actually the forgiveness of transgressed physical laws, just as salvation comes through forgiveness of transgressed spiritual law. It is the forgiveness of physical sin. God forgives the physical sin because Jesus paid the penalty we are suffering in our stead. He was beaten with stripes before He was nailed to the cross."

So Mr. Armstrong taught physical sin, like I say, for sixty years. How did Jesus pay the penalty for spiritual sin? You know, when we lie, cheat, commit adultery, murder, and all of the things that we hopefully don't do. Jesus died. He shed His blood and died on the stake to pay the penalty in our stead. Okay. How would Jesus pay for physical sin if that was the case? He would do the same. He would have to pay the penalty in our stead. That is precisely what the scriptures show.

Turn to Isaiah, chapter 53, and we will read verses 4 and 5. It is a very poor translation in the King James and the New King James, and so on. We will go back and just clarify it in a moment. **4 ¶ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows;** Well that's a poor translation, really. The Jewish Publication Society says, "Surely our diseases He did bear and our pains He carried." The word there for griefs and sorrows actually in the Hebrew is "diseases and pains." So, a far, far more accurate translation is, "Surely our diseases He did bear and our pains He carried." Jesus, in other words, carried our diseases. Jesus took our diseases, our sicknesses, and our pain upon Himself. The question is, **when** did He do that?

Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted .5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. The word for "stripes" is "bruise or scourging." By Jesus' physical beating, in other words, we are healed. Why? Because as Jesus died to pay the penalty for our spiritual sins, Jesus was beaten mercilessly, taking pain, anguish and suffering upon Himself, to pay the penalty for our physical sins, and at the same time. Because, really, there are two parts to the Passover, if you think about it. There is the wine, symbolizing Jesus' blood of the New Covenant, and, of course, there is the bread, symbolizing Jesus' body broken for us.

If we turn to Matthew, chapter 8, we can see that particular verse which we just read in Isaiah, given by Matthew, just to confirm the right understanding of it. **16 When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses."** So Jesus absolutely took our sicknesses upon Himself at the same time, frankly, as He was paying the penalty for our spiritual sins.

When you think about the original Passover, remember that they took the lamb and slaughtered it, and painted the

blood over the doors of their homes, did they not? So the lamb died and its blood was painted over the homes, and then what took place, in the middle of the night? The Angel of death passed over the homes and they were saved from the death penalty. We understand Jesus' shed blood allowed the Angel of death, the death penalty, to pass over you and me. But, that is not all that happened with the Passover lamb, was it? The blood was used that way, but they also had to **eat** the lamb. They had to consume the meat of the lamb. There were two parts of the Passover. Take the blood; splash it around; the Angel of death would pass over you.

Then eat the lamb. They took the body of the lamb, and of course, the lamb represents Jesus Christ, so they took the body of the lamb. What was the consequence of that? Turn to Psalms 105 and we will read verse 37. You will remember that something like 2, 3, 4, who knows how many, million Israelites left Egypt immediately after the Passover. The number is not too clear, but two to six million is what various people speculate. They would be people from a few days old up to great-great grannies in their hundreds. Notice verse 37, **He also brought them out (of Egypt) with silver and gold, And there was none feeble among His tribes.** When Israel left Egypt, even at 110 or 120, old and wrinkly specimens, there were **none** feeble among his tribes. How? There must have plenty of sick people, but of course, they took the body of the lamb and that's where they were all healed.

For our last scripture, let's turn to I Corinthians, chapter 11, which is dealing with the Passover, and bear in mind that that is only eight weeks away, so it is about time to start to think about Passover and what we mean when we take Passover. Verse 23, **For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; (like the lamb's body) 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body (or this represents my body) which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."** So Jesus says quite plainly, "This bread represents my body to be broken for you."

It was broken by being scourged, whipped, and torn mercilessly in the hours leading up to His being nailed to the stake.

25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." Of course, the wine symbolizes Jesus' shed blood which paid the penalty for our spiritual sins and prevents our eternal death. **26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup (There are two parts: the bread and the wine.), you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.** And it was a fairly slow death, by the way.

27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. (These two parts.) 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner (Carelessly, shall we say; not thinking it through; not really conscious of what it all means) eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body (which was broken for our healing). 30 For this reason (because you are not doing it properly) many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep (meaning, "are dead").

Just a moment! He says that, frankly, too many of you brethren have relatives, friends, family who are dead and who shouldn't be. Everybody dies eventually, so talking of people who have died is hardly a problem, but Paul clearly implies that these people **shouldn't** be dead at this stage. They've gone to sleep prematurely. And many are weak. Many are sick. He says, "Look. There is physical sickness and illness among you and some of you have died prematurely because you don't understand the Passover."

There are two parts. There is the blood and there is the body. Just as Jesus' shed blood and death pays for our spiritual sins, so Jesus, before He was nailed to the cross, offered His body to be beaten, scourged, whipped, torn apart, shredded, suffering, I am sure, enormous pain, so that He could pay the penalty for our physical sins, where we have wandered off

the path by carelessness, foolishness, ignorance or perhaps, at times, downright deliberately.

In summary, Jesus dealt with the sin problem when He was scourged and beaten and crucified. At the same time - it was the same problem - He paid the penalty for physical sin by stepping in, in our stead, and He took, frankly, the penalty that you and I **should** receive when we wander off God's laws of health. Then Jesus paid the penalty for our spiritual sins. The Worldwide Church of God no longer believes that the bread represents Jesus' body being beaten for our healing. They can't take the Passover in a worthy manner. They can't. It is impossible.

The Passover is not too far off now, so for us, in conclusion, let's take our health

seriously. Let's take responsibility for avoiding physical sin, that is to say, missing the mark, erring, wandering off the path of a good lifestyle. When we do, either carelessly, or because other people do it and we reap the consequences of **their** sins... When we **do** need healing, and we will from time to time because none of us is perfect, then we can approach God for healing because Jesus paid the penalty for our physical sins **along** with the penalty for our spiritual sins.

When we **do** come to God for healing, we can never come to Him on our own merit, saying, "God, I deserve to be healed because I am one of the best you've got. Really, if anybody should be healed, it would be me." We can never, ever come to God on the basis of, "I am so good, God, that you had better just do it." We should always come purely on the basis

of, "You know, Father, you didn't put Jesus through all that for no reason. Jesus didn't go **through** all that for no reason. It is categorically clear that You and Jesus want us to be healed. You know that we wander off the path. We do physically sin. We do need forgiveness of those sins and healing, and you have taken an **enormous** price and paid for it in our stead."

So when we do need healing, brethren, let's recognize the price paid in our stead, of the savage beating of Jesus, and that by His stripes we are healed. Hopefully, with that, we now have a better understanding on the topic of "What About Physical Sin and Is It Important?"

Transcription and formatting by Diane Goddard and Don Goddard

Transcription of a sermon for reading is more than a simple typing of the words spoken. The style and grammar appropriate for a spoken sermon is not the same as for an essay, as the reader may observe. Inflection or intensity of the voice often alter the meaning of words; and punctuation and font face have been used to try to reflect the speaker's intent. Even the paragraph breaks require care to avoid shifting the sense of a passage. Additionally, for the sake of readability, falters, and misspoken or repeated words etc. are sometimes adjusted where it will not alter the meaning. The preparation of this document was done with the intent of the most accurate transmission of the speaker's message and any shift in meaning is purely unintentional.