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Dr. Feelgood Vs. The Great Physician

Ryan Hasty

Matt 9:12 – “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick.”

A common pet-peeve of many doctors is convincing his patient to be open and honest about the symptoms of his disease. Though any doctor worth his salt wants to fix the problem, not every patient desires to be completely healed of their disease. Eager to present themselves in a positive light, many patients are fearful of being lectured or judged by their physician for their bad lifestyle choices. Other patients are simply looking for pain medication to dull the hurt or continued disability to prolong their co-dependence. What they actually need is hard medicine, but they seldom take it because often their goal is a quick, temporary fix to get them through the week.

Dr. Feel Good, on the other hand, is very popular with these patients. If they are interested in simply dulling the pain brought on by their disease, he will provide all of the opiates their heart desires. If the patient is looking for a statement to support continued SSI/SSD disability, they will go out of their way to accommodate. Dr. Feel Good never rebukes your lifestyle; he will never judge your irresponsible choices; he will never speak negatively. His only goal is to make you happy because he can only stay in business when he has people who depend on him. That is where he derives his sense of self-worth.

In the religious world, Dr. Feel Goods are a dime a dozen. Their sermons are watered down, sugar-coated, and diluted of any mention of sin (**2 Cor 2:17**). They will never rebuke you unless exposed of their malpractice, at which point they'll pick up their scalpel to wound rather than fix you because Dr. Feel Good can only stay in business if he can acquire volatile Christians who depend on his quick fixes. Tragically and ironically, Dr. Feel Good is who he is because he cannot fix himself, and therefore becomes just as codependent on unstable Christians as they are on him. It is a vicious, deadly cycle for disciples who lack the faith and courage to seek help elsewhere.

The Great Physician, Jesus Christ, however, is fully qualified to cure us from the disease of sin. While most doctors require years of schooling, He has been qualified from eternity (1 Pet 1:20; Eph 1:4). Having no need of our charts, he is perfectly acquainted with our sickness, knowing us better than we know ourselves (John 2:25). As someone who sympathizes with our weaknesses (Heb 4:15), He has the perfect bedside manner. But unlike Dr. Feel Good, He knows how to use that scalpel to cut right into the problem and help us (Heb 4:12). While some doctors are too booked or fearful of contracting our disease, Jesus makes house calls (Matt 11:28); and no disease is too dreadful that He is not willing to lay His beautiful, healing hands upon (Luke 5:12-13). And our Great Physician has never lost a patient when He is willing to take the cure for this dreaded disease called sin.

If you are a Christian who is not getting the spiritual medicine you need, there are other physicians-in-training available to help guide you to the Great Physician. It may be hard medicine and the knife may hurt from time to time; but only the pure, unadulterated word of God can heal you of your disease.

Moral Behavior From a Moral Heart

Allan McNabb

"For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. ... The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell." (James 3:2, 6)

James sets forth the importance of speech in living a moral life. Controlling the tongue, therefore speech, is the most difficult thing to do in living the Christian ethic. James explains that an individual who can control his tongue can control every part of his body; therefore, control of our tongue is an important issue to consider concerning moral living.

As I write this article, I am thinking of evidence in everyday living to exemplify the fact that one who controls his tongue has become perfect and able to control his entire body. Have you ever seen a fornicator, adulterer, vandal, or thief who could control their tongue? Have you ever known an individual living in the depths of sin who could refrain from lying or shading the truth, from speaking profanities, or from speaking curses upon people and God? I must say that I cannot think of anyone who can control their speech while purposely living in sin.

Well, this is a two-way street. While it is true that all people sin and make mistakes, it is also true that one who cannot control the tongue has lack of control over the whole body. In other words, if we are unable to control our tongue, we will be unable to control other body members; therefore, if sin is present in speech it will also be present throughout the body.

I say these things not to rebuke you and me, but to humble each of us. Have you known a person who is perfect in speech? I must say that we all stumble from time to time, and if in nothing other than utterances of the tongue. Paul said that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And, John said that if we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

Well, where does the ability, or lack of ability, to overcome sin come from? Jesus teaches that whatever is done by our members is from our heart. In other words, as we think in our heart, so we do with our body. For example, if I have profanity in my heart, so I will speak profanity with my mouth. It is like the fellow who seldom utters profanity, but after hitting his thumb with a hammer utters the Lord's name in vain. You see, the profanity and cursing are in his heart and then uttered with his lips. Yes, these things may be occasionally controlled and withheld from the lips, but they will eventually slip out. Jesus says: "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man ... " (Matt. 15:18-20)

While looking into our heart and examining our life before God, we will see our shortcomings if we are honest and sincere. Those who desire to please God and live morally in this life will ever strive to correct and improve upon their weaknesses. To do this we must begin by making corrections in our heart, then corrections will come to our physical body. Jesus says: "first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, which the outside of them may be clean also." (Matt. 23:26) Jesus is saying that we need to cleanse our heart and allow our heart to effect change upon our outward behavior. In a word, this change of heart (mind) to effect outward change is called repentance. Of repentance Jesus says: "but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3) And so, it is a repentant heart that we must possess to continually change our outward behavior to live according to the Christian ethic. Dare I say, as evidenced by the tongue, that no Christian will become perfect to the point of never sinning and never making a mistake. Even the apostle Peter, while visiting the Galatians made a mistake in playing the hypocrite and not eating with the Gentiles in the presence of Jews (Gal. 2:11-14). So, it is necessary for us to be repentant to correct our mistakes and affect change, ask forgiveness of our sins, and continue to strive to be the very best we can be in service to God.

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Ask yourself two very personal questions. Is my heart right with God? And, does my outward behavior reveal a repentive heart that is right with God? Whatever your answer is, we can say one good thing - it is never too late to change while living in this life.