

## THE GREAT PHYSICIAN

Jesus used a number of figures to impress men with the nature and importance of His work. Perhaps the most meaningful of all is the idea that He is the great Physician. In Matthew, chapter nine we read: " And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. " Thus, as Jesus rebuked the hypocritical Pharisees for their misconception of His work as the Saviour, He pointed to Himself as the Physician for sin-sick souls.

The need for a physician implies the presence of sickness. The disease Jesus came to cure is the most deadly of all. James wrote: "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." But this sickness is deceitful and many do not see their need of treatment. Left unchecked it corrupts and destroys. But Jesus offers a cure. He has the balm of salvation.

Some have misunderstood the scope of Jesus' ministry by thinking that His primary purpose was healing the physical ailments of men. It is true that often He healed the lame, halt, and blind; but this was not the primary work to which He addressed Himself. He came to provide medicine for the soul, and that which He did for men's bodies in healing their afflictions was only incidental to this grand purpose.

A physician is no better than his qualifications. Jesus is altogether qualified for the work of healing. He applied these words from Isaiah to Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to *heal* the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and *recovering sight to the blind*, to set at liberty them that *are bruised*. ..." Luke 4:18

Many passages such as Matthew 9:36 indicate the sympathy the Great Physician has for sin-sick souls. We read, "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. "

A hospital patient might be healed by certain drugs; or by some special treatment; but these cures will not avail unless the patient is willing to accept the treatment prescribed. Jesus is the great Physician. He knows how to cure; He offers the remedy. But only those who submit to His care will be healed by Him. There is no such thing as trusting the doctor while refusing his orders. Those who believe in Jesus and do what He says are saved by Him.