

Things We Accept

From: Overcoming the Overwhelming:
A 40-Day Journey toward Rediscovering Faith in God

Day 34: Things We Accept
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1 Corinthians 2:12

***Now we have received, not the spirit of the world,
but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know
the things that have been freely given to us by God.***

Sometimes we have the tendency to fall into the thinking that because we live on this earth, we will necessarily experience life the same as those who do not have Jesus. We tend to accept that just because it is “allergy season” or some disease “runs in the family” or because “these are hard financial times for everyone” that these things have to be true for us also. My perspective on this topic radically shifted about twenty years ago.

It happened when I was teaching in high school. It isn’t hard to imagine how many sicknesses are present in one school on any given day. Between children coughing and sneezing and teachers sharing equipment, a person is exposed to illness all day long. It was normal for me to assume that eventually, I’d get sick, and I did about twice a year.

When the symptoms started coming on, I requested a substitute teacher and started making lesson plans because when I got sick, it was usually in the extreme. I’d make arrangements for someone else to transport my kids to and from school, and my husband would make a trip to the grocery store for food and meds that would help in my recovery. I would then crawl into bed, and my husband would pray for me to be healed. I always felt so defeated about being sick, but I still believed I’d recover.

Now, teaching is a very demanding profession. The ignorant ones who say, “Those who can do, and those who can’t, teach,” have never taught adolescents or small children while keeping everyone alive by the end of the day and then doing that five days a week for an entire school year. So, getting sick, though it made me feel miserable, represented some sort of warped form of

vacation in my mind. I did nothing for several days; well, because I was too sick to do anything, but being sick was not only accepted because “everyone gets sick”, but because I needed the “rest”. I know, it’s a bit distorted, but I’m just being honest here, and I don’t think I’m the first person on earth to accept sickness because of the perceived benefits.

On one of my “vacations”, I was reading a pamphlet on healing, and it was basically saying that when we get sick, we can trust God to heal us. I already believed that, so I was just trying to encourage myself that I’d be OK.

It was what happened while I was reading it that changed my viewpoint forever. Like a gift from heaven, the thought came into my thinking, “If I can believe that God will heal me when I get sick, can’t I believe God not to get sick in the first place?” I shared this thought with my husband and let the idea roll around in my heart for a couple of days. This thought was like hearing good news, and I came to the conclusion that yes, God could keep me from getting sick in the first place, but how would this happen? I didn’t have any teaching on the topic—didn’t know anyone who was teaching this, so I began a journey which, quite frankly, was a wonderful surprise.

First of all, I changed my mind (repented) of the idea that just because I was surrounded all day by germs, I was necessarily going to get sick. When thoughts about the inevitability of getting sick would come into my mind, or someone at work would start moaning about “flu season”, inside my heart I would say, “I reject that thought in the name of Jesus.” When I’d be in line for the copy machine at work, and the teacher right before me was sneezing and sniffing so much that he should have been home, not at school infecting others, instead of subtly thinking, “Oh, great. Thanks a lot for sharing your germs,” I’d say in my heart, “I refuse to accept this illness in Jesus’ name.” When children would sit in my class red-nosed and listless, I would not only pray for them under my breath but declare, “I do not accept that I will be sick because this child is sick.”

The temptation to give in to illness in order to have a mini vacation was replaced with this thought: If I need a break, I can take one. I’d rather relax being well than sick. So, when the stress of my job became overwhelming, I would take a mental health day off.

For the next two years, I did not get sick at all. Mind over matter? Let’s not be ridiculous. That was twenty years ago. Have I

been sick since then? Yes, I have, but significantly less often. When I have been sick, my faith has been that “by His wounds I was healed”, and I have been healed.

Still, now I try to watch myself for merely accepting sickness, and for the most part, enjoy a healthy life. Although I do take the normal precautions against getting sick, such as washing my hands, etc., I don’t live in a bubble. I travel on planes, babysit grandchildren, and work among the people in our ministry. I visit stores, eat in restaurants, and visit friends in hospitals. When someone around me is sick, I don’t allow myself to worry or get freaked out. In my heart, I simply say,

“I don’t accept that I will get that illness. By Your wounds, I am healed.” (Nor would I even think of deliberately exposing myself to sickness.)

When “allergy season” comes around, and I feel that first tickle and have a little sneeze attack, I have a conversation with my body. I say, “OK, Body, it is OK for you to sneeze and respond to the junk that’s in the air, but you will not overreact. You will respond appropriately like normal people’s bodies.”

When a sneeze or two happens, I say, “By Your wounds I am healed.” Instead of thinking, “Oh, no! It’s not working,” I insist on being well in Jesus’ name.

Christina’s Faith

*Our daughter, Christina, began showing allergies to food at a very young age. She was allergic to eggs, milk products, red apples, mandarin oranges, and especially to corn. Even though we made sure she didn’t eat these things, sometimes we’d forget, or someone wouldn’t know and feed one of these foods to her. She would get horrible stomach aches followed by a rash. I figured this was just how it would be for her, but I started to notice that it was affecting her personality by making her irritable. Her little **three-year-old** eyes would look at me as if to say, “Help me, Mommy.” When I began to see how miserable she was and that it was altering her personality, I got mad.*

Why was I allowing this to go on?

Around that time (in 1980), during a prayer service, I went into the nursery and got her to have the elders anoint her with oil and pray for her. I told her that Jesus was going to heal her of her allergies. In my heart, there was a holy anger at these allergies. I felt like somewhere in my spirit I was putting my foot down. I was not going to take this anymore! The man who prayed for her did just as I asked. He prayed that she would be completely healed.

A day or two later, we were having dinner at a friend's house. As they passed around the whole kernel corn, the worst possible food for her, she put some on her plate. I looked at her and was going to remind her of her allergy to corn, but before I had a chance, she said, "It's OK, Mommy. Jesus healed me." I was not about to get in the way of her faith, and I said, "OK." From that moment on, Christina had no food allergies of any kind. One day, she was allergic to almost everything. The next day, after our prayer and her confession of faith, she was allergic to nothing.

I know that sometimes children grow out of food allergies, but not overnight. God honored His promise and her faith. The most wonderful part was that this made a tremendous difference in her personality. She was finally free from pain and able to enjoy life and all the good foods God created.

We told my mom about this miracle by asking her to make us some popcorn. She, at first, looked at me as if I'd forgotten that Tina couldn't have it, recalling how sick Tina got when my mom made popcorn for her a few months before that. With both Tina and I smiling at her, we explained that Tina had been healed. My mom's eyes just about popped out of her head, and then she sat down on her kitchen floor and cried like a baby. How full of joy we all were at God's faithfulness.

Sickness seeks to destroy and even kill. We can't afford to accept it. Remember, just because others are sick does not mean

we must be. Should we become sick, then we can believe God to be healed. If we aren't "there" yet, then we can believe that the medical care we are receiving will heal us. God will meet us where our faith currently is, and He will continue to encourage and teach us to believe Him for greater things, but let us consider if we are "accepting" things we could conquer in His name.

Isaiah 54:17

*No weapon formed against you (me) shall prosper,
And every tongue which rises against you (me) in judgment, You (I) shall condemn.
This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord (is my heritage),
And their (my) righteousness is from Me (God),"*
Says the Lord.

Psalms 91

*He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*

²I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust."

³Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.

⁴He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

*⁵You shall not be afraid of the terror by night
Nor of the arrow that flies by day,*

⁶Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

⁷A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand; But it shall not come near you.

⁸Only with your eyes shall you look, And see the reward of the wicked.

⁹Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place,

¹⁰No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

¹¹For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.

¹²*In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.*

¹³*You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra,
The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.*

¹⁴*“Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will set him on high, because he has known My name.*

¹⁵*He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honor him.*

¹⁶*With long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation.”*

