

Getting The Prescription Filled Roger Blackwelder

During a recent visit with my wife's mother and brother in Tennessee, conversation turned to the topic of prescriptions. My brother-in-law and I had both encountered unexpected difficulties after trips to the doctor.

My doctor gave me a prescription for Aciphex, a prescription medication which reduces stomach acid like the over-the-counter medication Pepcid. I took my prescription to the local Walgreens, and for the first time in my memory, the pharmacist declined to fill the prescription. We joke about the poor handwriting of doctors, but the joke was serious this time. The pharmacist was able to make out the name of the medication and the dosage of each pill, but he could not read the rest of the instructions. He could not tell me how many pills to take or how often, and so he apologetically declined to fill the prescription.

My brother-in-law's story was even better. He took a prescription to be filled that had been prescribed for his dad. The result was the same; the prescription could not be filled, but the reason was a little different. In this case, the doctor had simply forgotten to specify the dosage of the medication. The pharmacist knew what the medication was and how often it was to be taken, but not how much of the medication was to be taken.

My brother-in-law solved his problem by having the pharmacist call the doctor's office and supply the missing information. I did not have my prescription filled. I chose to take an over-the-counter medication and hold on to the prescription form. Seeing it makes me feel better about my own poor handwriting.

Both stories illustrate something about the Great Physician. We go to doctors to get better, to recover from physical maladies. We go to the Great Physician to get better, to recover from the spiritual malady of sin.

My brother-in-law struggled because information was missing. Sometimes doctors are unable to diagnose our illnesses. Sometimes doctors are unable to treat a particular illness.

Our Great Physician understands what ails us. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). Our Great Physician devised a plan to cure our ill. "Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:4). Importantly for us, our Great Physician has fully revealed the plan to us. "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to *contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints*" Jude vs.3).

We should note that, while God has not given us answers to every curiosity in this life, He has given us all the information we need concerning our salvation. "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 29:29). God may keep some things secret; those things belong to Him, but He has revealed all that we need to know to be saved, to be spiritually healed.

The difficulty I faced at the pharmacy was of a slightly different sort. The doctor had written all the necessary information down, but he failed to write it in a manner so that it could be understood.

Our Great Physician dictated His word; "for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). He dictated specifically so that it could be read and understood. Speaking of his writings, Paul said, "by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Ephesians 3:4). His comment in Ephesians 5:17 gives confirmation: "Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

Our Great Physician has given a prescription for conversion. (Romans 10:17; John 3:16; Luke 13:3; Romans 10:10; Mark 16:16) Our Great Physician has given a prescription for worship, for the organization of the church, for the work of the church, and so on. Everything we need for spiritual health, and ultimately a heavenly home, has been given to us: "as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3).

Most people despise the necessary trips to the doctor. We dislike the incessant waiting, the company of walking wounded, and the lifestyle changes the doctor demands. For those who are truly sick, the worst part is the not knowing. We don't know if the doctor really knows what our problems are. We don't know if the medications the doctor prescribes will actually work.

When we come to the Great Physician, those fears have no place. If we will humble ourselves, taking the medicine He prescribes, we can be whole for eternity.