

Consider Jesus – in Sickness

**Thoughts for Daily Duty, Service,
and Suffering**

By Octavius Winslow

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"Consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess."—Hebrews 3:1

"He Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses."—Matthew 8:17

How closely and tenderly is Jesus one with His Church! Take the subject of the present meditation as an illustration. There is not a chamber of pining sickness, nor a couch of suffering languor, at which His presence may not be experienced in all the divine power and human sympathy of His nature. The careful reader of His life must have been deeply impressed with the frequency with which His personal contact with bodily infirmity and disease is recorded, and with what promptness and skill He addressed Himself to the task of alleviation and cure. "And He healed people who had every kind of sickness and disease." And still His power and skill are needed, and still are the same. Into the shaded chamber of how many a sick one whom Jesus loves will these pages come, breathing, it is humbly prayed, the soothing fragrance of His Name around the restless pillow! "He Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses." Let us consider IN WHAT WAY Jesus did this.

He bore our sicknesses WHEN HE BORE OUR SINS. Sin is the prolific source of all evil, and especially of all disease. This reflection embitters and intensifies the sufferings of the child of God. The thought that, perhaps, had it not been for some particular defection, some hidden declension of soul, some sin of omission or of commission, his Heavenly Father would not have sent the discipline of sickness--is intensely painful to the heart that desires to please God in all things. But how consolatory the truth that, if we may trace all disease to sin as its original and primary cause, we may also trace all sin to the cross of Christ, where He atoned for it, unsealing in His own heart's blood a stream which has cleansed it all away. Oh, let this thought, my soul, soothe and comfort you--that in all your bodily suffering there is no condemnation, the atoning blood of Jesus having washed you whiter than snow, leaving you not the cause, but the effects only of your sin.

But, if sin is the originating cause of sickness, love--divine, everlasting, unchangeable love--is the immediate and proximate cause. That is a sweet expression in reference to Lazarus--"He whom you LOVE is sick." No physician can bring to your sick-bed a medicine so healing, a remedy so soothing, as this truth--that your sickness originated with a Father's love--love selecting the NATURE, love appointing the TIME, love grouping all the CIRCUMSTANCES of the affliction. If, Lord, I can but see that Your love kindled this burning fever, appointed these silent hours, this darkened room, this unrefreshed bed, these quivering nerves, this throbbing head, this fluttering heart--"may Your will, not mine, be done."

Jesus bears our sickness in the grace and sympathy by which He enables us, uncomplainingly and submissively, to bear it. Oh, what a hallowed sanctuary is often the sickroom of a child of God! What divine presence is there felt, what glorious manifestations of the Savior are there made, what holy lessons are there learned, what heavenly prospects are there unveiled! Jesus is there, and thus makes it all that it is.

Be not hasty in judging of the state of your soul in sickness. Mind and body reciprocally and powerfully act upon each other. A diseased body will often impart its morbid complexion to a healthy soul; and, looking away from Jesus, will fill it with doubt, darkness, and despondency. It is what Christ is, and not what you are, that is to fill you with peace, joy, and hope.

Cheer up, my soul! this long, this painful sickness is not unto death, but that God may be glorified. When He has tried you, you shall emerge from this fire all the holier, and more Christ-like--rising from your couch and going forth from your sick-room, "as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race." And thus by the sanctifying discipline of sickness, your covenant God and Savior is but preparing you to dwell in that happy land, the inhabitants of which shall no more say, "I am sick."

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