

Chapter 1

God's Will for Our Wellness and What Led Me to Believe

God wants the chronically ill to be healed in body, mind and spirit. He is willing and able to heal them supernaturally when medicine fails to provide a complete recovery, and even when it doesn't. But His healing isn't always immediate, and not everyone who asks will receive a miracle.

Yet, God wants to heal more people supernaturally than are being healed today. In this book, I discuss why healing is within closer reach than what experience may have taught us to believe. I explore the reasons why physical as well as spiritual healing are God's will for humanity, and what we can do to dispel the doubts that prevent us from embracing this reality. I also describe how our dysfunctional biochemistry, unresolved emotional trauma and spiritual strongholds can hinder our knowledge of God's love for us, and consequently, our ability to receive healing from Him. I then offer solutions for addressing these and other roadblocks to healing. Finally, I ponder reasons why God may allow some to suffer prolonged illness, and how we can have faith in God for a miracle, at the same time that we reconcile ourselves to the

possibility that not all of us will be fully healed on earth.

The intent of this book is to propose to the helpless and hopeless another path to wellness, which isn't based upon wishful thinking and random chance, but rather, buried truth and history, and evidence that has healed multitudes in underdeveloped nations and in Pentecostal and charismatic churches, where belief in supernatural healing is strong. A path that is less trodden in nations of wealth and reason, where reality is that which is experienced in the physical world and hope is in science and man's ability to provide. A path that is ignored because people don't know what God can do, don't realize how vast and all-encompassing His love is, and may not believe that they deserve that love, anyway. I invite you to step out and journey down this path with me. You may find that the gift of healing is meant for you, too.

I have suffered from chronic Lyme disease for over half a decade, but am receiving healing miracles in my body and spirit as I write this book. I'm also witnessing the healing of hundreds of people and being used by God to heal others. I have published two books on medical treatments for Lyme disease, and my current book is a best-seller in the Lyme disease community. Nonetheless, God has been showing me that people with Lyme and other chronic illnesses sometimes need more than medical treatments; they need a miracle. And He's showing me that He's willing and able to provide when medicine cannot.

So if you've been suffering for years from disease, why not take a chance and hope for a miracle from God? What do you have to lose? If you've invested thousands of hours and dollars into medicine, only to be frustrated by its results, losing a few months or years to a new hope may be a small sacrifice. Especially if the alternative is to continue down a path of failed or only moderately helpful treatments. Take heart—God loves you and wants to heal you!

The God of Love, the God of Miracles

So who is this God of love and miracles? Well first, He is a triune being who exists as three persons, who are all-knowing, all-powerful,

Chapter 1

and all-loving. Like you and me, these persons, known as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are unique in character, feelings, emotions and will, and they want to be in loving relationship with the humans that they created. The Son's name is Jesus Christ and He came to earth as a man, over 2000 years ago to show humanity what God the Father is like, and to heal and save people from their sins, since this keeps them from having a relationship with Him (more on this later). He also came to give them the Holy Spirit, who lives inside all who believe in and follow Him.

However, God speaks to everyone who seeks Him, no matter their religion, and healing miracles happen across a variety of faith systems, yet not all faith systems lead to belief in a God of love. The path of the triune God is the one I know and love, because it provides not only a complete solution to the problem of healing, but also to the problem of life and the quandary of eternity. Since this God heals in body, mind and spirit, and is the One that I have grown to love, my focus for this book will be upon Him and the hope and promises that He has given humanity, according to the Bible.

The Bible is collectively referred to as the Word of God by those who believe that its words were given by divine revelation to men in charge of communicating God's eternal truths to others. In this book, I use Jesus' teachings and Bible verses to substantiate my claims, because I believe that these teachings and verses are from God. If you aren't sure whether you believe in the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, I encourage you to study its history and ask God for a revelation of truth on the matter, because it may benefit you as you read this book.

The path of spiritual healing through the triune God; that is, through the God of Christianity and His promises in the Bible—isn't for everyone, but if I can share the gift that I have received during the eight years that I have come to know Him, I believe that some will find this gift— this deity and His promises of healing, to touch their hearts in such a manner that he becomes the solution to all that ails them. With all this in mind, in the following section, I share my personal healing

journey, and the circumstances which led me to believe in miracles, and in my God's ability and willingness to heal.

My Story and the Stepping Stones of Faith

Chronic Lyme disease has disabled me for over six years. It has snatched my thirties out from under me, as most of my hours since 2004 have been devoted to sleep, tears, treatments and research for the next remedy.

Like many chronic illnesses, no cure exists in medicine for chronic (not acute) Lyme disease. The best scenario that its survivors can hope for is remission from symptoms, a place of bliss that only some attain and which isn't always permanent.

If I had known in 2004 the kind of battle that I would be up against when my body crashed overnight with an abundance of symptoms, I might have taken a different path in my healing. If I had known that my hours over the following five years would be gobbled up by arduous treatments and a never-ending search for better remedies, I might have put more of my hope in God from the beginning, and less in my treatments.

Yet I am thankful for the gains that I have made in my health since 2004. Five years on the treatment treadmill and thousands of dollars later, and I am grateful that some of my body and brain has been returned to me. I'm happy to have hints of normalcy in my daily routine, even though symptoms still clamor to be heard.

But I now know that there is sometimes a better path to wellness and God is leading me down it.

My journey down this path began after I attended the ILADS (International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society) physician's conference in October, 2009. At this conference, a prominent physician who had treated over 12,000 cases of chronic Lyme disease proclaimed that current treatments weren't working to rid most people of Babesia, one of the multiple co-infections implicated in chronic

Lyme disease. At the same time, I heard a rumor from one of the doctors that nobody ever completely gets over Lyme disease—that lifelong relapse is the reality for the afflicted. When I asked another doctor, who had treated over 11,000 patients, whether she knew of anyone who had remained in remission from Lyme disease for at least ten years, she quietly responded, “No.”

Dismayed, I returned home from the conference, uncertain of which direction to take next in my healing. Having written two books on Lyme disease, I knew as much as the doctors about treatments, and sensed that I would be sentenced to the treatment treadmill for life if I hoped to maintain my healing gains. Roughly sixty to seventy percent improvement was what I had achieved and what I could keep if I continued to spend thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours per year on treatments. But was this how I wanted to live out my young adult years, which were for most healthy people my age, dedicated to dating relationships, marriage and family, recreation and getting established in a career?

Many with chronic Lyme disease, after one to five, even ten years of treatment, return to a life of relative normalcy. Thankfully, attaining an active life is possible, with the proper treatments, a strong immune system, dedication to recovery and a healthy lifestyle. But too many others, disadvantaged by trauma, unknowledgeable doctors, financial poverty or an onslaught of toxins or pathogens too fierce to overcome, struggle in the swamp of disease for decades—perhaps making gains in their healing, but still disabled by symptoms.

This battle isn’t unique to those with Lyme disease; those who suffer from other chronic illnesses face similar challenges. Conventional, allopathic medicine is adept at treating many ailments. For instance, it excels in emergency medicine, but is generally confounded by the challenges of chronic illness. It tends to focus upon managing symptoms, instead of treating the underlying cause of disease. Besides, many conditions of chronic illness are difficult to heal, because they involve dysfunction in multiple bodily systems, tissues and organs, and few doctors can take the time required to address all of these. Those that do

find themselves mired in a swamp of complications that requires more tools and resources than science has to offer.

Sadly, many chronic and/or degenerative diseases, such as heart disease, Crohn's, lupus, fibromyalgia, Multiple Sclerosis, cancer (which is considered to be a manageable, chronic illness in some cases), diabetes, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Syndrome, autism, Parkinson's, rheumatoid arthritis and the like, are mysteries for the medical community. Often, physicians can do no more than assign a meaningless name to the multiple systemic dysfunctions that these disorders cause and prescribe a pill or two to mitigate symptoms. The translation for these diagnoses might as well be, "The true cause behind your symptoms is unknown, so here's a label that really explains little about what's going on inside of your body."

In this book, I refer to the impact that Lyme disease has had upon my life and what it has taught me about God and healing. Yet, people suffering from other chronic diseases will be able to relate to what I share, since the symptoms of Lyme are often found in other chronic illnesses, and their impact upon a person's life is similar.

Many of the chronically ill spend their lives attempting to overcome their symptoms, or resign themselves to a life of pain, isolation and disability. Some fade from society and remain in its shadows because the fast-paced, stimulus-driven lifestyle that it demands of its participants overwhelms, and is unforgiving of those who look healthy but who can't seem to function and produce like their healthier counterparts.

I am thankful for the discoveries that have been made in medicine in recent years to help those suffering from mystery illnesses. Doctors who practice integrative and naturopathic medicine are finding solutions for the multiple dysfunctions created by chronic illness, but these solutions only partially compensate for a biochemistry gone madly awry.

Yet six years of research has made me painfully aware of what the medical community still doesn't know about disease and the body's

miraculous processes. It needs to learn much more in order to effectively combat the challenges of an increasingly toxic world, and pathogens whose strategies for survival are outsmarting developments in medicine.

The realization that medicine probably wouldn't completely heal me and thousands of others was one of the final catalysts that set me on a different path to healing. In reality, though, God had started showing me this path many months prior to ILADS.

I had been living in San Jose, Costa Rica when I first got a glimpse of this path. Unable to work full-time, I had moved to Costa Rica from Denver, Colorado in November, 2007, because I could no longer afford life in the United States. I also wanted to see whether a change of environment would accelerate my healing process.

In San Jose, Costa Rica, I attended an Assemblies of God church, and while there, witnessed many healing miracles. I was at first skeptical of the bodies that would fall to the ground like a circle of dominoes around the pulpit whenever the pastor did an altar call to heal the broken and sick. But I soon realized that the wind of God's Spirit was collapsing these people to the carpet and healing them, because I once got caught up in that wind, too. A force greater than me snatched the strength of my legs out from under me and when I fell, peace overcame me. Sprawled about the floor, I wanted nothing more than to take a nap amidst the pile of people around me who had also been touched by God's Spirit.

Yet, unlike some who shared their stories of healing with me, I never got healed of my Lyme disease. That God would choose to heal my fellow churchgoers of their hangnails and backaches but leave me crippled by an insidious disease confounded me. I battled resentment and bitterness against my creator. God seemed to have His favorites, and apparently, I wasn't one of them!

"You just have to believe, Connie!" My friend José once said, rebuke threading his proclamation, as though it were my fault that I was still sick.

Yeah, right, José. I thought bitterly. Try believing God when you have begged Him to heal you for years but nothing ever happens!

People prayed for my healing, time and again, and God's Spirit touched me more than once in that happy church, but it seemed that it was only to affirm His presence in my life.

Yet I learned to believe in healing miracles, because I witnessed them all around me. Once, my good friend Alejandro's face was disfigured in a car wreck and God told his mother, Roxana, also a good friend of mine, not to take her son to the plastic surgeon because He wanted to be the young man's physician. And so it was, a week after the accident, that Alejandro's face was completely healed. On another occasion, during a sermon at church, Roxana complained of having injured her back that day. Sometime during the sermon, the pastor called out, "God just healed somebody's back." Roxana, who had been sitting next to me, exclaimed excitedly, "Wow, my pain is gone! Connie, that's me!" On yet another occasion, her other son Jason was in a car wreck (yes, there are a lot of accidents in Costa Rica), and God spared him when he should have been seriously injured.

Still, since God's healing had never touched me, I didn't yet know whether supernatural healing was meant for a select few, and if God really preferred the imperfect path of medicine for a majority. Surely, He was trying to teach me something through what I was witnessing in Costa Rica!

About six months after moving back to my native city of Denver in June, 2009, I began to get more answers. Shortly after ILADS, I attended a healing conference at a church in Denver. During the conference, one woman who knew nothing about me, approached me, placed her hands upon my back and prayed for God to heal my back and central nervous system. She couldn't have known that these were my areas of greatest trouble, and I concluded that God must have revealed my problems to her because He meant to heal me. Subsequently, I received two prophecies within a month from friends who attended different churches. Both affirmed that God was healing me,

but “gradually, to build my faith,” which challenged my assumption that supernatural healing is always instantaneous. Further investigations led me to conclude that God can work miracles over time. One of the women who had given me a prophetic word informed me that she had been healed of a rare, incurable blood disorder, but that the healing happened seven months after she had received prayer for her condition. I felt encouraged by this.

Subsequently, I learned that my friend Troy, who also suffers from Lyme disease, was being used by God to heal people in California and Colombia. At first, the miracles were few and far between, but after awhile, the healings began to happen on a daily basis. In 2009, I traveled with him to Germany to undergo a new type of Lyme disease treatment, and while there, I noticed that he had no qualms about approaching the ailing on the street, and asking them if they wanted prayer for healing. Shortly thereafter, and after Troy traveled back to California, the miracles began to happen. God seemed to reward his boldness and willingness to pray over others by working through him to instantaneously heal others. That he was being used daily to perform miracles blew my mind.

And then, a miracle happened to me.

I had been attending another healing conference at a church in Denver called Power Invasion Ministries when God touched me. A well-known minister named Joan Hunter, who has been used by God to miraculously heal thousands, was ministering to the sick and broken. As I sat in the church, I witnessed miracle after miracle, as Joan called people down to the altar to get healed of their ailments. I thought my eyes were deceiving me when I witnessed people growing several inches in height as God replaced their vertebra and stretched out their spines, which had been compressed by injury. One woman proclaimed that she felt a tumor shrinking in her belly as Joan prayed over her, and several others were instantaneously healed of vicious maladies. A few let out shrieks and spilled tears of joy as God touched them profoundly in their bodies and spirits.

When Joan did an altar call for those needing healing from lower back pain, my heart began to race. I couldn't get to the altar fast enough.

Joan said to me, "Did you know that your right leg is two inches longer than your left?" Amazed that God had revealed this to her, I said, "Yes." She then placed her hands upon my back and as she prayed, I felt my hips and lower back shifting into a new position. The next thing I knew, she was measuring my legs and I noticed that the right one was now aligned perfectly with the left. When I returned home, I plopped down on the living room carpet with my legs extended. Normally, when I sit in this position, my right knee doesn't line up with the left, but this time, they were parallel to one another. Astounded, I also realized that I was standing differently. More of my weight had shifted to my left leg, and some of my back pain was gone. Apparently healing miracles weren't as rare as I had imagined. More importantly, I realized that God was willing to heal me, too! He wasn't blind to my suffering and wasn't withholding healing from me, just because I didn't have enough faith, as my friend in Costa Rica had insinuated. Yet the experience boosted my faith like never before.

Nearly everyone that God called to the altar that weekend seemed to receive a miracle, which further challenged my notion that God's healing is random, uncommon, and always dependent upon the faith of the recipient. In this case, it seemed to be more dependent upon the faith of the healer. In the Bible, verse 5:15 in the book of James states that, "the prayer of faith will save the sick," and many theologians interpret this verse to mean that it's the faith of the one doing the healing that counts. This fact can provide comfort to the sick when they worry that their faith is insufficient to heal them.

Yet, the faith of the one receiving healing matters, too. As I read books written by famous faith healers such as Heidi Baker, Smith Wigglesworth, Francis McNutt and FF Bosworth, I learned that greater miracles happen to those who believe in God's love and willingness to heal them.

Chapter 1

Shortly after receiving a miracle at Power Invasion Ministries, I read FF Bosworth's book, *Christ the Healer*, which further encouraged me in my faith. Of the dozen or so books that I had read on healing, this one provided the most compelling Biblical evidence to support the theory that physical and emotional healing are gifts given to humanity because of Jesus Christ's work on the Cross, and these gifts are available to all who believe in Him. (I describe this concept more in-depth in Chapter Three). Based upon Bosworth's experiences of being used by God to heal thousands, as well as history and a plethora of Biblical evidence, rather than far-fetched suppositions, this book increased my belief in God's willingness to heal me. It also brought me tremendous joy and relief, as I realized that God not only wanted me to be healed, but that He died in order to provide me with the power that I would need in the spiritual realm to overcome my disease.

All of this newfound knowledge and experience caused me to reflect upon the ILADS conference, and the hundreds of emails and telephone calls that I had received from Lyme sufferers—people in despair because year after year of treatment had failed to cure them or they no longer had money to pay for treatments.

I doubted that God meant for health to belong only to the rich and genetically strong. Surely, He was willing to heal people of Lyme disease and other chronic illnesses by His Spirit, as He had just healed me of my back pain!

I began to ask myself some hard questions. What if the path of medicine had no end? How many more years was I, were others that I knew who struggled with chronic illness, supposed to dedicate to the pursuit of health? Did God want us to live out our days doing treatments? Surely, He was using the trial of our illnesses for our good, but it seemed wrong that He wanted us to spend year after year chasing treatments, and dedicating a majority of our waking hours to those treatments.

And the more I attended healing conferences, studied Jesus' promises and the subject of faith healing, and the more I received prophecies

from others that indicated that I would be healed, the more absurd my former beliefs became.

God has created us all with a unique purpose, and it's not for us to be locked up inside of our homes, isolated from the world, with our hours and energy sucked up in the never-ending pursuit of health. We were made to love and serve others, but that task becomes complicated when disease isolates us or forces us to spend every waking minute upon our survival. I speak from experience. But in the absence of a better plan, simply abandoning the treatment treadmill and trying to survive with symptoms isn't an option for some of the chronically ill—especially if leaving the illness unattended leads to further disability.

So how many years do we do treatments in order to get better? When do we stop chasing the latest and greatest development in medicine? When I considered the absurd amount of money, time and energy that I had sunk into my healing, only to be rewarded with modest gains in my wellbeing, I realized that my life had become subject to a ruler called Lyme. And all of the treatments, instead of freeing me from my pain, had put me into bondage. They monopolized my time and thoughts, as well as my emotional, physical and financial resources, because a massive amount of everything is what's required to regain functionality from this, and many other diseases.

Not all of the chronically ill live on a treatment treadmill. They may have been told that there is no cure for their malady, so they gave up the fight long ago and decided that their disease didn't deserve that much attention. But they long for a better life. They want to participate in society; they want to be in loving relationships with others; they have dreams that they have let die because they can't "do"; and they battle depression because deep down, they know that they weren't made to hurt.

God's Plan for Our Lives

My journey has taught me that God doesn't want our lives to be filled with relentless pain, suffering and clawing at wellness. He can

Chapter 1

and will put us on a better path, if we know that path exists and are willing to walk it. My research and experiences have finally led me to take this path and to stake all of my hope for healing upon Him, because despite the risks, the path makes sense. In the following chapters, I describe other factors which have positively affected my faith and healing. May these be a source of light for you, too, and may the other concepts mentioned throughout this work provide you with hope in a loving God who heals.