

“If You Have Your Health, You Have Everything”

by Bill Crews

Sound familiar? Of course! Not only have you heard it; you have heard it often. But is it so?

As important as your physical health is, it is far from being everything, and it is certainly not the most important thing. Because of my age and because of all the health issues I have gone through, I have come to have a far greater appreciation of physical health than I ever had before. If you are blessed with good physical health, be grateful to God for it; realize how fortunate you are, and enjoy it, take care of it, be a good steward of God with it. But don't ever think that because you have good health, you have everything; or that because you have good physical health, God must be pleased with the way you are living your life.

As physical beings we are governed by immutable physical laws (the “laws of nature” we call them) and are affected by physical circumstances. But as spiritual beings we are governed by immutable spiritual laws (the word of God as revealed through Christ — Hebrews 1:1-2) and affected by spiritual circumstances. When Jesus said, in response to Satan's first temptation, *“It is written, Man shall not live by bread (or food, physical food — BC) alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”* (Matthew 4:4), He was not only saying that man is more than a physical being. He was also saying that man's spirit is more important than his fleshly body, and God's word is more important than physical food. And no man **really lives** who ignores this!

When Jesus said, *“Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life”* (John 6:27), He was saying that spiritual food for the soul is far more important than physical food for the body. And the source of that *“food which abideth unto eternal life”*? *“Which the Son of man shall give unto you”*? (same verse) A reading of such passages as John 6:63, 68; 7:16; Matthew 17:5; Hebrews 1:1-2 and Acts 11:13-14 will show that reference is made to the words which the Father gave the Son, which the Son delivered to the apostles, and which the apostles taught and wrote. Those words are found in the New Testament of Christ.

If you have your health, you have everything? On the contrary, there are people who have very fine physical health who are atheists or idolaters or false teachers or hedonists. There are people who enjoy good health who are selfish or cruel or unjust or ungodly. In contrast, there are people who have no good physical health to speak of, people who are paralyzed or crippled or wasted or weak or in constant pain or dying from some fatal disease who are among the finest people on earth — because they have been faithful followers of Jesus, earnest doers of the Lord's will, strong in faith and love, living in hope of eternal life. Many have learned that one can be happy, content, productive, and, most importantly, Christians — without the benefit of good physical health.

Everywhere the apostle Paul went, he taught the truth and converted some. But he was also everywhere opposed and persecuted by some. He suffered much physical abuse. It adversely affected his physical health. Still he wrote, *“Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong”* (2 Corinthians 12:10). Paul would never say something like: “If you have your health, you have everything.” He would more likely say something like this: “If you have Christ, salvation, the hope of eternal life, you have everything.” My prayer for you, kind reader, is that you may *“prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth”* (3 John 2).

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