

Infirmities of the Body of Christ

An Infirmary is a hospital. Doctors tend to the infirm there.

**There are 2 kinds of folks in the Infirmary:
Weak and Sick**

Is the body of Christ an Infirmary?

The Physically Weak

Weakness is relative. Babies and old folks are normally weak and may or may not need special care. Parents and family may be enough to deal with these types of weakness.

There are cases where babies fail to mature and stay weak. Act 3:2 “Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple...” Act 14:8 “In Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked.”

The Physically Weak

Physical growth is stunted to the point that they can't take care of themselves, much less of others. These examples refer to no fault of the one who is weak – it is a physical condition outside their control.

“Mamas don't let your cowboys grow up to be babies” refers to those who never grow up. They are like Peter Pan who lives in never never land. They are at fault and must learn to work to provide for themselves and others.

1. Spiritual weakness is similar

Heb 5:12,13 “Although by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to reteach you the basic principles of God’s word. You need milk, not solid food!, For everyone who lives on milk is still an infant, inexperienced in the message of righteousness.”

When the Corinthians were fussing about who had the greatest gifts, they were immature. 1Co 14:20 “Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.”

Spiritual weakness is similar

When the disciples fussed about who was the greatest, they were worldly and immature.

Luk 9:46-48 “Then an argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. But Jesus, knowing the thoughts of their hearts, had a little child stand beside Him. And He said to them, “Whoever welcomes this little child in My name welcomes Me, and whoever welcomes Me welcomes the One who sent Me. For whoever is the least among all of you, he is the greatest.”

Spiritual weakness is different

Spiritual immaturity is similar to physical immaturity in that one should outgrow it. Time is required to grow and expectations are adjusted accordingly: more time = more growth. But age affects our strength.

But as we age, spiritual weakness should NOT return. In fact, we should continue to gain strength. 2Co 4:16 “Though our outer self is wasting away, yet our inner self is being renewed day by day.”

Spiritual weakness is different

As we grow, we learn to feed ourself and then to feed others, so it is spiritually. This bears spiritual fruit. If this process is delayed or does NOT occur, we are in danger of being pruned or CUT OFF by God. John 15:2 “He cuts off every branch in Me that bears no fruit, and every branch that does bear fruit, He prunes to make it even more fruitful.”

Mat 7:19,20 “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, by their fruit you will recognize them.”

Spiritual strength is different

The worldly expectations are to retire at a certain age. God's expectations are older men are to become leaders in the body of Christ, having gained strength through years of service.

Tit 1:6 “An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife,^b having children who are believers and who are not open to accusation of indiscretion or insubordination.”

1Pet 5:2 “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is among you, watching over them^b not out of compulsion, but because it is God’s will;^c not out of greed, but out of eagerness”

Spiritual strength is different

Jam 5:14 “is any INFIRM among you? let him call for the elders of the assembly, and let them pray over him, having anointed him with oil, in the name of the Lord,”

Jam 5:15 “and the prayer of the faith shall save the DISTRESSED one, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if sins he may have committed, they shall be forgiven to him.” -Young's Literal Trans.

2. Sickness

Diseases cause physical sickness

Our bodies are designed to fight disease. We sometimes need help. Our bodies are wonderfully made to do this. Psa 139:14 “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.”

Certain germs, bacteria, viruses are foreign invaders and do NOT belong in our bodies. Once inside, they can deliver severe physical consequences.

Spiritual Sickness

Sins cause spiritual sickness. Sin is going against God's law and is foreign to our spirit.

1Co 11:29,30 “For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.”

1Jo 5:16,17 “If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he should ask God, who will give life to those who commit this kind of sin. There is a sin that leads to death; I am not saying he should ask regarding that sin. All unrighteousness is sin, yet there is sin that does not lead to death.”

Spiritual Sickness

Sins cause spiritual sickness – Simon the sorcerer's case before Peter, the apostle:

Act 8:21,23 “You have no part or share in our ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of your wickedness, and pray to the Lord. Perhaps He will forgive you for the intent of your heart. For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and captive to iniquity.”

1Cor 12:10 Peter had the “distinguishing between spirits” gift of the Holy Spirit. Evil spirits make one sick.

3. Building up the body of Christ

- Nourished on Truth: 1Tim 4:6 “If you point these things out to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.”
- Exercise your faith in Truth: 1Tim 4:7 “But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.”

Building up the body of Christ

- 1Tim 6:11,12 “But you, O man of God, flee from these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made the good confession before many witnesses.”
- Rom 15:14 “Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.”

Conclusion

- The body of Christ is NOT an infirmary. It is full of strength, able to do the mission given it.
- Certainly, strengthening and healing take place there, but the main goal is action of battle, not the recovery and recuperation efforts of a hospital.
- Just as our own body heals itself, so the body of Christ is designed to self-correct to maintain it's effectiveness.
- List of passages: Mat 18, Rom 12, 1Cor 12, Eph 4 and many others deal with the internal operations of the body of Christ to maintain it's strength. Are you making the body better or worse?