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## A Physician Without Limits By Jean Vattakattu Varghese

The year 2020 began with much happiness and many expectations. But we never could have imagined that 2020 would bring a global pandemic that would drastically change all of our lives. Within just a few months, COVID-19 has affected more than 200 countries and territories around the world, causing over 500,000 deaths worldwide (as of this writing). Scientists are trying their best to find a treatment that would bring an end to this pandemic. Sadly, the secular world usually disregards the Great Physician who is without limits.

Let me use the examples of two kings from the Bible: King Asa and King Hezekiah. In 2 Chronicles 16:12 (NKJV) it states, "And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was very severe; yet in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but the physicians. So Asa rested with his fathers; he died in the forty-first year of his reign." The next example is from 2 Kings 20:1-3, 5, 7 (NKJV): "In those days Hezekiah was sick and near death...he turned his face towards the wall, and prayed to the Lord saying, "Remember now, O Lord, I pray, how I have walked before you in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done what was good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly...Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you... and he recovered." From these examples, it is evident that one king relied on man's capabilities and wasn't healed, while the other king turned to God and trusted Him, which led to healing (albeit temporary) from his sickness.

There are numerous examples in the New Testament of how Jesus healed those who suffered from physical ailments such as the blind, the lame, and the lepers. In Luke 8:43, we see a woman who had a serious gynecological blood disorder for twelve years. She had spent all her livelihood on physicians, yet none of them could help her. But she had faith in the power and mercy of Jesus, and because of her strong faith Jesus had

compassion on her and healed her sickness.

Obviously, we need doctors and other healthcare professionals to provide treatments and medications while we live on this earth, but mankind has limitations on what can be done. God is the Master Creator of the entire universe and nothing is impossible for Him. As it says in Matthew 8:27 (NKJV), "Even the winds and the sea obey Him". But as we saw in the above examples, we should always turn to God first and pray for our needs, trusting that He will heal us in accordance with His will. James 5:15 (NKJV) says, "The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise Him up..." While we pray, we also need to trust that God IS able to heal us IF He so chooses, according to His perfect plan and timing. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Luke 11:2, NKJV).

The medical community is scrambling to find a cure for COVID-19. Yet God has given us the solution for pestilence in 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV). God says, "If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." Yes! God is merciful and gracious and He is waiting for us to turn unto Him. So as Christians, we need to commit to praying for a spiritual revival in this country and in the world. We need to pray for humility, confession, and repentance for those who have turned away from God... but we also need to search our own hearts to see if there are any sins that we need to confess and repent of. When God sees genuine repentance, He promises two things that are desperately needed in this broken world: forgiveness and healing.

As mentioned, it is important that we also pray for God's will to be done and not our own desires. God has a specific purpose behind every situation that He leads us through. In those situations, God will provide His grace which is

sufficient for us. 1 John 5:14,15 (NKJV) says, “Now this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of him.”

God is not only the healer of diseases but also the healer of our sins. For sin entered into the world when Adam, the first man, disobeyed God; because of which every human is born in sin. But God Himself being a compassionate One, because of His everlasting love He has for us, sent His only begotten Son, Lord Jesus Christ, to die for us. “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one man’s obedience many will be made righteous” (Romans 5:19 NKJV). Jesus Christ was born from a virgin and had no sin in Him, but He bore our sins in his own body – by whose stripes we are healed. Healing from sin is definitely free to all! What you only need to do is confess with your mouth and believe in your heart that Lord Jesus died for you and was risen on the third day.

Be it anything – sickness, sufferings, brokenness or sorrow, there exists a Physician without limits who is ready to answer you at any time. The living God stretches out His healing hands to work miraculously in your lives! Are you willing to turn to Him?

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## Using Christian Counseling Techniques for Student and Peer Advising

By P. Brittany Vickery and Stephen B. Vickery

“You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts.” Psalm 119:98-100 (NKJV)

Historically, student advising predominately focused on academic performance. However, in a time and culture of increasing uncertainty, advising has broadened over the years to include more personal issues that student pharmacists, or even colleagues, may feel unprepared to handle. Incorporating Christian counseling techniques can aid in offering both compassion and sound advice and can help prepare an advisor to assist in non-academic situations. Since most of us are not trained as counselors, this article highlights some practical methods that might be helpful when a student or colleague approaches you regarding a personal issue.

In Romans 15:1(NKJV), Paul wrote “*We then who are strong ought to bear the scruples of the weak, and not just please ourselves.*” Scripture also tells us to comfort, encourage, admonish, and serve each other (1 Thessalonians 4:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Romans 15:14; 1 Peter 4:10).<sup>1</sup> These are helpful, foundational principles to embrace and build upon when serving as an advisor. It is also important for us as Christians to ensure that the advice we are giving – and the way we are giving it – aligns with a Biblical worldview.

Ultimately, this means that what we believe to be true is based upon what scripture proclaims as truth. In Matthew 12:34b-35 (NKJV), Jesus states, “*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.*”<sup>1</sup>

First, when someone approaches you with a question regarding a personal issue and you have time restrictions, communicate that right away. Tell them how much time you have available and ask if that is an appropriate amount. If more time is needed, offer them other available times that would better accommodate their needs. Also, it is vital to make the person you are speaking with feel important and valued. This can be accomplished with the use of optimal nonverbal communication. A few things to consider are to give the person your undivided attention (e.g., no cell phones or computers), maintain eye contact (in a comfortable but not overbearing manner), and maintain an open and relaxed posture.<sup>1</sup> These methods are important and applicable for virtual meetings as well. It may also be helpful to remove barriers in order to appear more inviting, such as moving out from behind your desk and sitting beside the person you are speaking. This can help them feel more comfortable speaking with you, especially if they are a subordinate.

Second, let them know you will maintain confidentiality