



F.A.C.S. REPORT

"A Monthly Newsletter on the Relevance of the Christian Faith."

Vol. 18, No. 9

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September, 1999

What's Inside:

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"Shouldn't every Christian be praying without ceasing that God would remember mercy in his wrath? Shouldn't we, like Daniel, confess our sins and our fathers', and pray and fast that God would restore us? . . ."

The second article this month covers an important health topic -- treatment for hardening of the arteries.

When non invasive surgery is available as a cure for blocked arteries, we wonder why open-heart surgery is still popular.

WHY DO THEY PRAY?

By Franklin Sanders

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities before we ask and our ignorance in asking; We beseech thee to have compassion upon our infirmities; and those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot, ask, vouchsafe to give us, for the worthiness of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- Book of Common Prayer

I WAS PUZZLED recently by two passages of Scripture. The first was in the tenth chapter of Daniel, where Daniel says he was "mourning three full weeks." Three weeks? Fasting and praying three weeks? For what?

Then there is Anna in Luke 2. Anna was married when she was a young woman, and her husband died after seven years. At the age of eighty-four she 'departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.'

What was she praying for? At eighty-four, what desires could she have? And where did she live? Did she live in the temple? What does it mean, she "served God with fastings and prayers night and day"? For what?

Now, this is not about whipping yourself because you don't wear your own knees out day after day, you slouch, you. And although both Daniel and

Anna were without a doubt praying for the Consolation of Israel, the coming and victory of Christ, it's not just about praying for "great things" as opposed to praying for "little things" next to your own interest. The question is, what were they praying for, and who appointed them to do it? Most of all, what does it mean for us?

St. Paul tells us to "pray without ceasing," but Paul was a working man and he knew that if you don't work, you don't eat, and if you don't eat, you won't pray for long. How do you "pray without ceasing"?

all the ships at sea." I belong to the Reformed Episcopal Church, and we use the Book of Common Prayer. In the communion service there is a point at which the prayer says, "And we most humbly beseech thee, O Lord, to comfort and succour all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity." I confess, when I hear those words, I often think of that radio announcer addressing, in addition to his other hearers, "all the ships at sea." Aren't our prayers supposed to be specific? Can we really pray for everybody in trouble?

AND ALL THE SHIPS AT SEA

BACK IN the thirties and forties (before I was born, I hasten to add) there used to be a radio announcer who began his newscasts with something like, "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen and

AROUND THE WORLD

ABOUT TEN YEARS ago I went to New Zealand. I remember how eager I was to go to church, and how taken I was by the idea that the Lord's Day was beginning, and like a great wave the

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worship of the people of God would ripple heavenward around the world. Here I was on the opposite side of the globe from my own church and family, but all over the world God's people were gathering to worship, and by an accident of providence there I was just on the right side of the International Date Line. Somehow or other I had been pushed to the head of the line!

FIRE FROM HEAVEN

WELL, MAYBE it's not so silly to pray for everybody in trouble or for the "whole state of Christ's Church." *Maybe* it is the unceasing prayers of the people of God that accomplish his will in the world. I remember a sermon I heard years ago about Revelation 8. The scene is very dramatic, but also very strange. It keeps flipping from heaven to earth, and what's happening on earth causes the action in heaven.

There is silence in heaven for half an hour, then seven angels come forward. One comes to the altar before God, and he has a golden censer in his hand, and he fills it with incense. Why? So that he "should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." That's

right. The prayers of the saints are mixed with the incense, and ascend to God.

What happens next? The angel takes fire from the altar, and throws it to the earth, where it becomes thunderings and lightnings and an earthquake. The prayers of the saints, ascending with the incense of the altar, call down *fire from heaven!* What an astounding thought! The work of God in history is accomplished by means of the prayers of his saints.

MEANINGLESS REPETITION?

NOW I KNOW that many if not most Evangelical Christians place a high value on their freedom. Most chafe at the idea of submitting to the mere outward form of a liturgy such as the one we use in the Book of Common Prayer, and will quickly volunteer that form without faith is useless. Right, but what about form with faith? What have we lost by throwing out the form? Is there no place for Anna or Daniel today?

Throughout her history, the Church has always prayed the "daily office." Morning and evening at least (and more often in many ages) the church has prayed, offering thanks and worship for the whole world, interceding for the whole world, praying that God's will would be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Perhaps our little children are wiser than we are, when they pray for "all the dogs and cats and people." And if the prayers of his people can call down fire from the throne of God, can't they also call down grace for all "who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity?"

Oh, I know that we should "make all our requests known" with great specificity, and I wouldn't even make fun of the harried housewife who prays for a parking place, although I do account that empty space one of God's lesser miracles. But if the great work of God in history operates through our prayers, then what kind of zeal, what sort of breadth, what great generosity should they show?

FEELING GOOD

by Ian Hodge, Ph.D.

ALTERNATIVE HEALTH has become one of the growth industries of the nineties. It does not appear to be dwindling as we move into the twenty-first century. There are a number of reasons for this.

First, it seems that the baby boomers have turned against their parent's notion of cradle-to-grave security provided by the state through health, education and welfare. While they still believe in welfare, they seem to mistrust the medical system's ability to deliver help and assistance.

Second, an increasing skepticism of the medical profession has led people to seek alternative measures. This skepticism has been fueled by the medical profession's inability to provide a consistent diagnosis of the ailments that many face and provide treatments that not only halt diseases but help in eradicating them. The recent turnaround on cholesterol and the use of butter are just two examples.

Third, with the increase in abortion and euthanasia many people realize that far from being a profession that prolongs life, a significant portion of the medical profession has taken upon itself to halt life unnecessarily. Why would you trust a doctor with your life if he has shown himself willing to take a life at *someone else's* request? It is no wonder the alternative health market has blossomed.

Fourth, recently in Australia, the third largest killer of people has been identified as those illnesses brought on by being treated for another illness. Third highest! Forty-Two thousand deaths in three years. Yet there is no outcry against hospitals and doctors for their contribution to this. Taylor had pointed out this fact in his book, but it has taken 20 years for this point to be enumerated and now listed as the third highest cause of death in Australia. We wait to see if the public funding of medicine will be curtailed unless it moves itself down

A GREATER DUTY

IN MY OWN MIND I have thought a lot about the meaning of Y2K. To strike the arrogant people of America in the place of pride, their technology, certainly calls forth a memory of Babel. But if that is true, shouldn't every Christian be praying without ceasing that God would remember mercy in his wrath? Shouldn't we, like Daniel, confess our sins and our fathers', and pray and fast that God would restore us?

We have seen plenty of individual Christians, and even many churches, urging people to prepare for Y2K *physically*. But have we

missed the point? Are we just as fearful as the heathen, and just as blind to the source of our own healing? Shouldn't we be *praying*, as individually and as churches, while we prepare? Shouldn't we be praying that God would send America *repentance*, and that we could see a revival greater than the Great Awakening? And while we're at it, shouldn't we pray for Christ's victory in the whole world?

I am not Daniel, or Anna, but my prayers, like theirs, are mixed with the incense of the altar, and ascend to the very throne of God - and none of them are lost. You and I together with the whole Church have

been called to the astounding privilege of working with God to accomplish his purposes. What reason is there to wait?

St. James tells us, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

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the list of killer diseases. The Australian government, meanwhile, is funding the third-highest killer of its people. This does not make sense. In the US, Ralph Nader was to claim that patients were being "killed" by medical practice: wrong prescriptions, incorrect dosages, risky surgery, or carelessness in procedures and prescriptions.

Fifth, many books have helped place doubt on the medical profession's claims about its ability to treat patients accurately and reliably. This writer's first published essay abroad in 1979 was a review of the book *Medicine Out of Control* by Richard Taylor, an Australian doctor. Taylor did no more than assert that the evidence for many claims by the medical profession was sparse or nonexistent. In other words, the medical profession could not necessarily make you better. This would be enough to make ordinary people doubt their doctor and begin on the path of alternative options.

More recently than 1979, Dr James Carter quotes an Office of Technology Assessment (OTA, a

research department for the US Congress) report as saying "only 10-20% of all medical procedures currently used in medical practice have been shown to be efficacious by controlled trial." The OTA report said that even the 10-20% which purport to have proven results "are in some cases based on flawed research," says Carter.¹

This is what is driving the rapid and enormous growth of the alternative health market.²

In this debate and shifting of opinion over treatment, heart disease appears at or near the top of the list. Leading the assault against older views on heart disease are the arguments over diet. This issue has even reached the front cover of *Time* magazine (July 19, 1999 edition). The lead article is about cholesterol. It seems that what we have been told about cholesterol and its contribution to heart disease may not have been correct. Now we are told to eat our steak and eggs, salting them accordingly to taste.³

A number of leaders in the alternative health movement have been arguing this for years. Insufficient

evidence, or wrong evidence has been used to bolster claims about cholesterol. Whether this is the fault of drug companies or not is something we do not plan to pursue at this time. But mistakes have been made, with obvious consequences.

While this is a diet related argument, there have been a number of arguments put forward that traditional medical procedures to treat heart disease are unnecessary. There is an alternative, non-invasive treatment that produces superior results.

For decades it has been known how to treat lead poisoning. Called *chelation therapy*, this treatment has been used successfully to treat lead poisoning in children and adults. It literally "claws" (Greek *chelate* means to claw) the lead out of the blood vessels. More recently, a number of doctors have found that the same treatment will pull other plaque and calcium deposits out of the arteries as well. When hardening of the arteries is present, so too is a buildup of materials in the blood vessels. Chelation therapy "claws" the buildup out of the

1. James P. Carter, *Racketeering in Medicine: The Suppression of Alternatives* (Norfolk, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Co., 1992), p. 6
2. Not to be left out, drug company Faulding recently purchased the highly successful Gold Glow mail-order business providing a range of vitamins, minerals, herbs and other alternative medicines.
3. See the following books: Dr Robert Buist, *The Cholesterol Myth: The New Healthy Heart Programme* (Melbourne, VIC: Sun Books, 1992); Melvin Anchell, *The Steak Lovers' Diet* (Atlanta, GA: Second Opinion Publishing, 1998). Both books are written by medical doctors.

system and passes it through the kidneys and out of the human body. The results for those undergoing this treatment have been outstanding.⁴

That this treatment is not more popular is surprising. No one has apparently ever died from receiving chelation therapy, yet there is a 25% chance of not surviving bypass surgery. And even if chelation is not all that its adherents make it out to be, there is at least some case for giving this treatment *before* radical surgery is undertaken. For it is well known that major surgery, especially with the heart, places life-threatening risks on the patient.

The main chelating agent used in the therapy is a synthetic amino acid ethylene diamine tetraacetic acid which is why the treatment is often referred to as EDTA chelation. Unlike surgery, which attempts to repair some of the major arteries around the heart, chelation therapy reaches all the arteries. When

hardening of the arteries is present around the heart, it is usually found in other parts of the body as well. Surgery cannot reach these vessels but chelation therapy can. This is why it produces such dramatic results.

Alternative medicine is doing more than advocating different and often less radical treatments. There is a renewed emphasis on nutrition as a means of preventing disease in the first place. Veterinary science has been working in this area for decades, and food formulae for animals contains a range of vitamins, minerals and nutrients that keep animals healthy and make them look good. While we may laugh at the idea of a shiny coat from eating the right foods, we certainly can benefit from the new wave of alternative medicines and treatments.

We are told we can eat all the nutrients we want, but plant foods, for example, do not produce minerals. They absorb what is in the soil

in which they grow. Modern farming methods do not replenish the soil with these nutrients, so it is unlikely we can get what we need from food. In addition, it has been estimated by one medical nutritionist that it would take 200 lbs. of spinach daily to get the recommended daily allowance of magnesium.

This is why the expanding vitamins, minerals and herb market will flourish. People are looking for answers outside the traditional medical zone. There are real treatments in these vitamin bottles, as this writer — and thousands like him — can testify. No matter how well we construct our diet, if the food we eat cannot contain the essential nutrients we need because farming methods leach the soil of its goodness, then the supplementary process can make a radical difference to our health.

4. See Morton Walker, *The Chelation Answer: How to Prevent Hardening of the Arteries and Rejuvenate Your Cardiovascular System* (Atlanta, GA: Second Opinion Publishing, 1994); Elmer Cranton, *Bypassing Bypass: A New Technique of Chelation Therapy* (Updated version, Trout Dale, VA: Medex Publishers, 1997). This second title advertises chelation therapy as "a non-surgical treatment for improving circulation and slowing the aging process."