Many Christians think sickness, illness, disease, infirmities and early death is just part of the suffering we must bear as Christians.

This is a huge false doctrine that for over 2000 years continues to cripple and destroy multi-millions of Christians across the world!

I've known people who refused healing, thinking it was God's will; those who've embraced sickness like it was a blessing and others who've said their pain and disease was their cross to bear for Jesus. I just read a ministry's false teaching online that said Jesus had to get sick like the rest of us, because he was human! One senior pastor told a group my Mom visited once that he felt blessed by God that he had suffered with so many illnesses over his life so he could appreciate what others were going through. My Mom rebuked him and gave scripture to prove to him and the group that he was Biblically wrong. My Mom hated disease, sickness, illness, and pain in others, as does God… her faith ministry resulted in multi-thousands being set free and healed even from death's door… 2 raised from the dead… over 35 years! She also didn't return to this "false church" as we're commanded in Ephesians 5:11, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them."

OK let's go to the famous Beatitudes of Jesus, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:10-12

"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12

"strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22

Persecution, tribulations and suffering yes, but nothing about accepting and putting up with sickness, disease, illness and infirmities.

There's no scripture that says Jesus or any of the disciples had a disease.

Paul was whipped, beaten, imprisoned, shipwrecked, stoned, cold, naked, hungry, thirsty, tired, weary (2 Corinthians 11:24-27) The Bible never says he was ever diseased.

The only one people pull out of the hat is the false teaching on Paul having an eye disease (Galatians 6:11, 4:15) and physical ailment because of the thorn in his flesh that God allowed.

There is no support in the Bible or history to substantiate Paul was nearly blind. Paul personally wrote this epistle in Greek uncial or like the capital letters we use, which was common then.

Galatians 6:15 (give your eyes to me) is slang such as today we'd say, "I'd give my right arm to someone". It's a show of great love for someone, not that Paul needed new eyes.

Paul's thorn in the flesh was an angel of satan allowed by God to keep him humble… "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure" 2 Corinthians 12:7. The original Greek says it was "aggelos" pronounced angelos meaning angel of satan. It is never translated as disease or physical infirmity.

God says we'll suffer persecution (not disease) for being righteous and for spreading the Truth of the Gospel, so what does He think about sickness, disease and infirmities?

"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Genesis 1: 27

Does anyone really think God is sick, ill, infirm or full of disease and we're created just like that? Or that there's sick, ill, diseased, blind and crippled folks in heaven right now?

I hear people saying, "Yeah but Al, we sinned and now sickness, illness and death is what we inherited. It's physical nature now."

And you're right… until you become a Christian! Then it's your decision to become or stay sick, ill, diseased, infirm, deaf, blind, or crippled!

Woah… now I can see people getting mad at me! My decision?

God's Truth is absolute. Let me show you…

First… can anyone show me any true man or woman of God in the Bible (except Job which was a rare, one-time exception not the norm) that was sick, ill, or crippled? There's none. Why didn't they all embrace disease like so many Christians do today?

Only non-believers, those who sinned, didn't sacrifice to cover those sins (OT), didn't accept Jesus' offer (NT), and/or were rebellious against God… were afflicted with disease and early death from it.

"Saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, your healer."" Exodus 15:26

"Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases. "Ps. 103:2-3

"As for me, I said, "O Lord, be gracious to me; heal me, for I have sinned against you!"" Psalm 41:4

Jesus said satan is our enemy, not God. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly". John 10:10

Sickness hinders our spiritual growth and our destiny with God. Anything that draws our eye away from God, away from the pursuit of His glory and the accomplishment of His will is opposed to holiness. It does not glorify God to be sick. It glorifies satan.

God wants us healthy in mind, spirit and body... "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers." 3 John 1:2

In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, how many times did Jesus heal the sick, diseased, blind, impaired and crippled? Why did He bother, if God wanted them that way?

"But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing." Luke 9:11

"When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:"He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses." Matthew 8:16-17

God's Word says sickness is in league with demons. Jesus delivered and healed <u>all</u> who came to Him that were sick, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy...

"Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed". Isaiah 53:4, 5

"Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.". 1 Peter 2:24

Jesus bore a whipping (stripes) and died so you can be healed! He's already done it! Just accept it and <u>receive it</u> from Him! Put it on His back and leave it there. Honestly, you don't have to put extra in the offering plate nor do some penance to get it!

Not only can you receive free healing and deliverance from Jesus now, you can give it away too...

"And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." Mark 16:17-18

 "And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease." Matthew 10:1

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give". Matthew 10:8

"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." James 5:14-16

 Can we possibly do what Jesus did?

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father" (John 14:12). "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven'" (Matthew 18:19).

What can we do to obtain healing and to give it to others? A few scriptures are above... here's some more...

"My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh". Proverbs 4:20-22

"And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God" Romans 6:13 .Totally surrender your will and ambitions to God's will.

"And they (brethren) overcame him (satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony". Revelation 12:11

Forgive others (Matthew 6:14-15), repent (Mark 6:12) and have faith (Ephesians 6:15). We see that people came to Jesus and received. Do the same and expect healing the same as you expect salvation when you accepted Him as your Savior! Healing can come in many ways as testimonies reveal. Be humble, turn away from sin, fight the devil and submit to God always (James 4:7)! Suffering Yes; Disease No!