



THE BEST MEDICINE OF ALL

January 2018

*I know that my redeemer lives,
and that in the end he will stand on the earth.
And after my skin has been destroyed,
yet in my flesh I will see God;
I myself will see him
with my own eyes—I, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!*

Job 19:25-27

I have found that the best medicine is not the pills you put into your body. Nor is it the coping skills you use. Something much better will be our Healer. The love of God shown to us through godly friends is probably the best healer of all. I think I'm old enough and have had enough life experience to be able to make that statement.

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At one time I'd gone through spurts of ugly feelings, common to depression. I felt like a failure, no longer able to serve God as I had. Doesn't everyone who tends to get depressed feel that way at times?

Friends tell us that we're not close enough to God. We're told we need to pray more. Like Job, we're made to feel the problem is our own spiritual failure.

In one afternoon Job had lost his ten children and all his wealth. Shortly afterwards he was afflicted with a horrid skin disease. Three of his friends came to give support. After seven days of being with them, Job burst out with a statement that was not at all like him, "*May the day of my birth perish,*" (Job 3:3)

His three friends took turns rebuking him harshly. One of them, Eliphaz, insensitively insinuates that Job has not sought God in the way he should, implying that Job would be delivered if he would only commit his way to God. But all of us who suffer emotionally know how "simply" committing to the Lord is very difficult.

Besides that, our problems, like Job's, are not likely spiritual issues at all. In many cases depression is caused by grief and has become an illness in the way physical pain might be caused by illness. It's not so easily overcome—not by pills, nor by coping skills.

How can we let go and let God take us to a good place when we're in such deep darkness? How can the little ability to trust that we have left, help us do all we should to come back to God? We long for his peace, but it seems inaccessible.

And then, a godsend arrives . . .

A caring friend calls, asking how you are. They don't ask whether you've done what you should. They don't tell you how you should do this or that. Instead, they tell you you're a beautiful person and that you're appreciated by those who know you. They tell you they admire your courage.

As the fog in your mind lifts, you hear the words. You sense the kindness in the voice. You feel the love—the wholehearted love.

The warmth and comfort of God's peace slowly returns, and you find healing—a healing of the heart.

And you know that your Redeemer lives.

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