

The Will and Healing

An Introductory Excerpt

1
2 **The Lord has shown me that many who are always complaining,**
3 **and are apparently feeble, are not in so bad a condition as they**
4 **think. Some of them have a powerful will, which, if exercised in**
5 **the right direction, would control the imagination, and be a potent**
6 **means of resisting disease; but it is too frequently the case that the**
7 **will is on the wrong side, and stubbornly refuses to yield to reason.**
8 **That will has settled the matter: invalids they are,** and the attention
9 given to invalids they will have, irrespective of the judgment of others.
10 { CTBH 102.1 }
11 **Thousands are sick and dying around us who might get well and**
12 **live, if they would. But their imagination controls them. They fear**
13 **they will be made worse** if they engage in any physical labor, when
14 this is just the change they need. **They should exercise their will-**
15 **power and rise above their difficulties, engage in useful**
16 **employment suited to their strength, and forget that they have**
17 **aching backs, sides, lungs, and heads.** { CTBH 102.2 }
18 **Let invalids have an exalted aim in life, seeking to be useful and**
19 **efficient in their own families,** and to become useful members of
20 society; **let them not require the attention of the whole family to be**
21 **centered on themselves, nor draw largely upon the sympathies of**
22 **others;** let them do their part in bestowing love and sympathy upon
23 the unfortunate, remembering that each has woes and trials peculiar to
24 himself. **In thus blessing others they will realize an abundant**
25 **blessing themselves.** { CTBH 102.3 }
26 Those who, so far as it is possible, engage in the work of doing good
27 to others, by giving practical demonstration of their interest in them,
28 are not only relieving the ills of life in helping them to bear burdens,
29 but are at the same time contributing largely to their own health of
30 soul and body. Doing good is a work that benefits both giver and
31 receiver. **If you forget self in your interest for others, you gain a**
32 **victory over your own infirmities. The pleasure of doing good**
33 **animates the mind, and vibrates through the whole body.** If thou
34 clothe the naked, and “bring the poor that are cast out to thy house,”

35 and “deal thy bread to the hungry,” “then shall thy light break forth as
36 the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily.” { CTBH
37 102.4 }—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*

38 *Additional Quotations On the Will and Healing*

39 The power of the will is not valued as it should be. Let the will be kept
40 awake and rightly directed, and it will impart energy to the whole
41 being and will be a wonderful aid in the maintenance of health. It is a
42 power also in dealing with disease – {2MCP 690.1} **By the exercise
43 of the willpower in placing themselves in right relation to life,
44 patients can do much to cooperate with the physician’s efforts for
45 their recovery. There are thousands who can recover health if they
46 will. The Lord does not want them to be sick. He desires them to
47 be well and happy, and they should make up their minds to be
48 well. – {2MCP 690.2}**

49 **Often invalids can resist disease simply by refusing to yield to
50 ailments and settle down in a state of inactivity. Rising above their
51 aches and pains, let them engage in useful employment suited to
52 their strength. By such employment and the free use of air and
53 sunlight, many an emaciated invalid might recover health and
54 strength.**—The Ministry of Healing, 246 (1905). – {2MCP 690.3}

55 Improved Health Promised—Evil habits and practices are bringing
56 upon men disease of every kind. Let the understanding be convinced
57 by education as to the sinfulness of abusing and degrading the powers
58 that God has given. **Let the mind become intelligent and the will be
59 placed on the Lord’s side, and there will be a wonderful
60 improvement in the physical health. – {2MCP 690.4}**

61 But this can never be accomplished in mere human strength. **With
62 strenuous efforts through the grace of Christ to renounce all evil
63 practices and associations and to observe temperance in all things,
64 there must be an abiding persuasion that repentance for the past,
65 as well as forgiveness, is to be sought of God through the atoning
66 sacrifice of Christ. These things must be brought into daily
67 experience; there must be strict watchfulness and unwearied
68 entreaty that Christ will bring every thought into captivity to
69 Himself; His renovating power must be given to the soul, that as
70 accountable beings we may present to God our bodies a living
71 sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto Him, which is our reasonable
72 service.**—Medical Missionary, November-December, 1892. (Counsels
73 on Health, 504, 504.) – {2MCP 690.5}

74 **The power of the will is not valued as it should be. Let the will be**
75 **kept awake and rightly directed, and it will impart energy to the**
76 **whole being and will be a wonderful aid in the maintenance of**
77 **health. It is a power also in dealing with disease.** Exercised in the
78 right direction, it would control the imagination and be a **potent**
79 **means of resisting and overcoming disease of both mind and body.**
80 **By the exercise of the will power in placing themselves in right**
81 **relation to life, patients can do much to co-operate with the**
82 **physician's efforts for their recovery.** There are thousands who can
83 **recover health if they will. The Lord does not want them to be**
84 **sick. He desires them to be well and happy, and they should make**
85 **up their minds to be well. Often invalids can resist disease simply**
86 **by refusing to yield to ailments and settle down in a state of**
87 **inactivity.** Rising above their aches and pains, let them engage in
88 useful employment suited to their strength. By such employment and
89 the free use of air and sunlight, many an emaciated invalid might
90 recover health and strength. — {MH 246.1}

91 Let invalids do something instead of occupying their minds with a
92 simple play, which lowers them in their own estimation and leads
93 them to think their lives useless. **Keep the power of the will awake,**
94 **for the will aroused and rightly directed is a potent soother of the**
95 **nerves. Invalids are far happier to be employed, and their**
96 **recovery is more easily effected.**— Testimonies for the Church 1:557
97 (1867). — {2MCP 648.3}

98 Then Jesus said to them, “That ye may know that the Son of man hath
99 power upon earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy,) I
100 say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house”
101 (Luke 5:24). What, take up his bed with his palsied arms! What, get
102 upon his feet with his palsied limbs! What did he do? Why, he just did
103 as he was bidden. He did what the Lord told him to. **The power of the**
104 **will was set to move his palsied limbs and arms, and they**
105 **responded, when they had not responded for a long time.** This
106 manifestation showed before the people that there was One in their
107 midst that could not only forgive sins but that could heal the sick. —
108 {FW 67.6}

109 **Thousands are sick and dying around us who might get well and**
110 **live if they would, but their imagination holds them. They fear**
111 **that they will be made worse if they labor, when this is just the**
112 **change they need to make them well. Without this, they can never**

113 **improve. They should exercise the power of the will, rise above**
114 **their aches and debility, engage in useful employment, and forget**
115 **that they have aching backs, sides, lungs, and heads.** Neglecting to
116 exercise the entire body, or a portion of it, will bring on morbid
117 conditions. Inaction of any of the organs of the body will be followed
118 by a decrease in the size and strength of the muscles, and will cause
119 the blood to flow sluggishly through the blood vessels. **Many think**
120 **they are unable to perform their own domestic duties and so**
121 **depend upon others.** Sometimes it is exceedingly inconvenient for
122 them to obtain the help they need. They frequently expend double the
123 strength required to perform the task in planning and searching for
124 someone to do the work for them. **If they would only bring their**
125 **mind to do these little acts and family duties themselves, they**
126 **would be blessed and strengthened in it....** – {11MR 196.2}

127 **Despondent feelings are frequently the result of undue leisure.**
128 **Idleness gives time to brood over imaginary sorrows. Many who**
129 **have no real trials or hardships in the present, are sure to borrow**
130 **them from the future. If these persons would seek to lighten the**
131 **burdens of others, they would forget their own.** Energetic labor that
132 would call into action both the **would seek to lighten the burdens of**
133 **others, they would forget their own.** Energetic labor that would call
134 into action both the mental and physical powers, would prove an
135 inestimable blessing to mind and body. – {ST June 15, 1882 Par. 13}
136

137 **Invalids should not allow themselves to sink down into a state of**
138 **inaction. This is highly detrimental to health. The power of the**
139 **will must be asserted; aversion to active exercise, and the dread of**
140 **all responsibility must be conquered. They can never recover**
141 **health, unless they shake off this listless, dreamy condition of**
142 **mind,** and arouse themselves to action. – {ST June 15, 1882 Par. 14}

143 The influence of the mind on the body, as well as of the body on the
144 mind, should be emphasized. The electric power of the brain,
145 promoted by mental activity, vitalizes the whole system, and is thus an
146 invaluable aid in resisting disease.... **The power of the will and the**
147 **importance of self-control, both in the preservation and in the**
148 **recovery of health, the depressing and even ruinous effect of**
149 **anger, discontent, selfishness, or impurity, and, on the other hand,**
150 **the marvelous life-giving power to be found in cheerfulness,**
151 **unselfishness, gratitude, should also be shown.** There is a
152 physiological truth—truth that we need to consider—in the scripture,

153 “A merry [rejoicing] heart doeth good like a medicine” (Proverbs
154 17:22).—Education, 195-197. – {RC 137.5}

155 All who profess to be followers of Jesus should feel that a duty rests
156 upon them to preserve their bodies in the best condition of health, that
157 their minds may be clear to comprehend heavenly things. **The mind**
158 **needs to be controlled, for it has a most powerful influence upon**
159 **the health. The imagination often misleads, and when indulged,**
160 **brings severe forms of disease upon the afflicted. Many die of**
161 **diseases which are mostly imaginary.** I am acquainted with several
162 who have brought upon themselves actual disease by the influence of
163 the imagination. – {2T 522.2}

164 **One sister was carried by her husband from chair to bed, and**
165 **from room to room, because she thought that she was too feeble to**
166 **walk. But as the case was afterward presented to me, she could**
167 **have walked as well as myself if she had thought so.** Had an
168 accident occurred,—had the house taken fire, or one of her children
169 been in imminent danger of losing life by a fall,—this woman would
170 have been aroused by the force of circumstances, and would have
171 walked quite readily and briskly. **She could walk, so far as physical**
172 **strength was concerned; but diseased imagination led her to**
173 **conclude that she could not, and she did not arouse the power of**
174 **the will to resist this deception.** The imagination said: **You cannot**
175 **walk, and you had better not try. Sit still; your limbs are so weak**
176 **that you cannot stand. Had this sister exerted her will power and**
177 **aroused her benumbed and dormant energies, this deception**
178 **would have been exposed.** In consequence of yielding to the
179 imagination, she probably thinks, to this day, that when she was so
180 helpless she was so of necessity; but this was purely a freak of the
181 imagination, which sometimes plays strange tricks upon diseased
182 mortals. – {2T 523.1}

183 When I was shown that Dr. E erred in some things in regard to the
184 instructions he gave his patients, I saw that you had received the same
185 ideas in many things and that the time would come when you would
186 see correctly in regard to the matter. These are concerning work and
187 amusements. I was shown that it **would prove more beneficial to**
188 **most patients to allow light work, and even to urge it upon them,**
189 **than to urge them to remain inactive and idle. If the power of the**
190 **will be kept active to arouse the dormant faculties, it will be the**
191 **greatest help to recover health. *Remove all labor from those who***
192 ***have been overtaxed all their lives and in nine cases out of ten the***

193 *change will be an injury. This has proved true in the case of my*
194 *husband.* I was shown that physical, outdoor exercise is far preferable
195 to indoor; but if this cannot be secured, light indoor employment
196 would occupy and divert the mind, and prevent it from dwelling upon
197 symptoms and little ailments, and would also prevent homesickness. –
198 {1T 567.1}

199 **This do-nothing system, I saw, had been the greatest curse to your**
200 **wife and my husband. God gave employment to the first pair in**
201 **Eden because He knew they would be happier when employed.**
202 From what has been shown me, this do-nothing system is a curse to
203 soul and body. Light employment will not excite or tax the mind or
204 strength any more than amusements. **The sick often get where they**
205 **look at their poor feelings and think themselves utterly unable to**
206 **do anything, when, if they would arouse the will and compel**
207 **themselves to do an amount of physical labor every day, they**
208 **would be far happier and improve much faster.** I shall write more
209 fully upon this point hereafter. – {1T 568.1}

210 If invalids **would dispense with medicines of every description, and**
211 **improve their habits of eating, and exercise as much as possible in**
212 **the open air, their names would soon be dropped from the invalid**
213 **list. The power of the will is a mighty soother of the nerves, and**
214 **can resist much disease, simply by not yielding to ailments, and**
215 **settling down into a state of inactivity. Those who have but little**
216 **force, and natural energy, need to constantly guard themselves,**
217 **lest their minds become diseased, and they give up to supposed**
218 **disease, when none really exists. It is slow murder for persons to**
219 **confine themselves days, weeks and months in doors, with but**
220 **little out-door exercise.** – {4aSG 145.3}

221 Others are too active in body and mind. The mind of such must rest as
222 well as the body, and without it, will be overworked, and the
223 constitution must break down. Satan exults to see the human family
224 plunging themselves deeper, and deeper, into suffering and misery. He
225 knows that persons who have wrong habits, and unsound bodies,
226 cannot serve God so earnestly, perseveringly and purely as though
227 sound. A diseased body affects the brain. With the mind we serve the
228 Lord. The head is the capitol of the body. If the finger is pricked, the
229 nerves, like the telegraphic wires, bear the intelligence immediately to
230 the brain. Satan triumphs in the ruinous work he causes by leading the
231 human family to indulge in habits which destroy themselves, and one
232 another; for by this means he is robbing God of the service due him. –
233 {4aSG 146.1}

234 In order to preserve health, temperance in all things is necessary.
235 Temperance in labor, temperance in eating and drinking. Because of
236 intemperance a great amount of misery has been brought upon the
237 human family. The eating of pork has produced scrofula, leprosy and
238 cancerous humors. Pork-eating is still causing the most intense
239 suffering to the human race. Depraved appetites crave those things
240 which are the most injurious to health. The curse, which has rested
241 heavily upon the earth, and has been felt by the whole race of
242 mankind, has also been felt by the animals. The beasts have
243 degenerated [in] size, and length of years. They have been made to
244 suffer more than they otherwise would by the wrong habits of man. –
245 {4aSG 146.2}

246 **The idea that those who have overtaxed their mental and physical**
247 **powers, or who have broken down in body or mind, must suspend**
248 **activity in order to regain health, is a great error.** In a few cases,
249 entire rest for a time may be necessary; but such instances are rare. In
250 most cases the change would be too great to be beneficial. { CTBH
251 100.1 }

252 Those who have broken down by intense mental labor, should have
253 rest from wearing thought; yet to teach them that it is wrong, or even
254 dangerous, for them to exercise their mental powers at all, leads them
255 to view their condition as worse than it really is. They are nervous,
256 and finally become a burden to themselves, as well as to those who
257 care for them. In this state of mind, their recovery is doubtful indeed.
258 { CTBH 100.2 }

259 Those who have overtaxed their physical powers should not be
260 advised to forego labor entirely. To shut them away from all exercise
261 would in many cases prevent their restoration to health. **The will goes**
262 **with the labor of the hands; and when the will-power is dormant,**
263 **the imagination becomes abnormal, so that it is impossible for the**
264 **sufferer to resist disease.** Inactivity is the greatest curse that could
265 come upon one in such a condition. { CTBH 100.3 }

266 Right Exercise of Will Resists Disease—I have been shown that **many**
267 **who are apparently feeble and are ever complaining are not so**
268 **badly off as they imagine themselves to be.** Some of these have a
269 powerful will, which, exercised in the right direction, would be a
270 potent means of controlling the imagination and thus resisting disease.
271 **But it is too frequently the case that the will is exercised in a wrong**
272 **direction and stubbornly refuses to yield to reason. That will has**
273 **settled the matter; invalids they are, and the attention due to**

274 **invalids they will have**, irrespective of the judgment of others.—

275 **Testimonies for the Church 2:524** (1870). – {2MCP 689.3}

276 **Let invalids do something instead of occupying their minds with a**
277 **simple play, which lowers them in their own estimation and leads**
278 **them to think their lives useless. Keep the power of the will awake,**
279 **for the will aroused and rightly directed is a potent soother of the**
280 **nerves. Invalids are far happier to be employed, and their recovery**
281 **is more easily effected.** – {1T 557.1}

282 I saw that the greatest curse that ever came upon my husband and
283 Sister F was the instructions they received at ----- in regard to
284 remaining inactive in order to recover. The imagination of both was
285 diseased, and their inactivity resulted in the thought and feeling that it
286 would be dangerous to health and life to exercise, especially if in
287 doing so they became weary. The machinery of the system, so seldom
288 put in motion, lost its elasticity and strength, so that when they did
289 exercise, their joints were stiff and their muscles feeble, and every
290 move required great effort and of course caused pain. Yet this very
291 weariness would have proved a blessing to them had they, irrespective
292 of feeling or unpleasant symptoms, perseveringly resisted their
293 inclinations to inactivity. – {1T 557.2}

294 **I saw that it would be far better for Sister F to be with her family**
295 **by herself and feel the responsibilities resting upon her. This**
296 **would awaken into life her dormant energies.** I was shown that the
297 broken-up condition of this dear family while at ----- was unfavorable
298 to the education and training of their children. For their own good
299 these children should be learning to take responsibilities in household
300 labor and should feel that some burdens in life rest upon them. The
301 mother, engaged in the education and training of her children, is
302 employed in the very work which God has assigned to her and for the
303 sake of which He has in mercy heard the prayers offered for her
304 recovery. While she should shun wearing labor, she should above all
305 avoid a life of inactivity. – {1T 557.3}

306 Unless indicated otherwise, all quotations come from the writings of
307 Ellen G. White.

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