

WHAT IF HOSPITALS WERE LIKE SOME CHURCHES?

The three angels messages (Revelation 14:6-12) serve not only as warnings of last-day deceptions and prophetic waymarks on our journey toward the second coming of Jesus Christ, but they can also serve as a model for the traits of spiritually healthy churches.

Consider first this comparison between hospitals and churches.

Would you want to be admitted to a hospital where...

- patients were shamed by the staff and other patients for being sick or injured?
- well patients received preferential treatment?
- the sicker you got the less care you received?
- where sick patients were “discharged”?
- the staff spent most of their time discussing medical science.
- the administration spent a great deal of time convincing patients that the hospital was ‘accredited’?
- the only treatments you received for your disease were reading assignments in medical textbooks?
- the staff did not particularly care about keeping abreast of the latest discoveries in medical science?
- the only procedures allowed were those practiced centuries ago?

Would you want to belong to a church where...

- members were shamed for their sins (and dysfunctions) by the leaders and other members?
- where good people received preferential treatment?
- the more sinful you were, the less help you received?
- where sinners were ‘disfellowshipped’?
- the members spent most of their time discussing correct doctrine?
- the members spent a great deal of time and energy asserting that they were the true church?
- the main treatment you received for your problems was instruction about doctrine?
- the leaders were not well-informed about modern issues and had stopped searching the Scriptures.
- only those approaches to preaching, doctrine and evangelism used a century ago were acceptable.

What is Spiritual Health?

- The willingness to acknowledge sin and wrong knowing that God will not shame us.
- Acknowledging our helplessness and powerlessness.
- The willingness to receive salvation as a free gift.
- Non-resistance to God’s healing love.
- Building your self-worth, not on your own performance + others’ opinions, but on what God says about you.
- Loving God with all your heart, mind and soul.
- Trusting in Jesus Christ for everything.

The Path to Spiritual Health is... (Rev. 14:6-11)

- to know and experience God’s covenant love for you personally. This is the *everlasting gospel*. Reject salvation as a do-it-yourself project. Reject contract-salvation and accept covenant-salvation.
- receive the benefits of God’s covenant.
- *to fear* God – because the fear of God removes all other fears.
- *to give glory to Him* – because this reduces the ‘cancer’ of pride and guards us against trying to find love in the wrong places.
- *to worship Him* – because in worship He fills our cup with sufficiency of His resources. Thus there is no need to worship anyone or anything else.
- to share with others the spiritual help you have received. Let joyful worship become your personal witness to magnify God and draw others to Him.

The Evidences of Spiritual Health are... (Rev. 14:12)

- *The patience of the saints* – willingness to wait on the Lord, without running ahead of Him, to overcome trials. A super-abiding in Christ.
- *The commandments of God* – to love God with all our heart and others as ourselves.
- *The faith of Jesus* – to trust Jesus for everything!

Spiritual Health is to know that our God is BIG enough to handle anything.

This truth saves us from the life-damaging consequences of trying to play god.

Spiritual Health in the Three Angels Messages

The three angels messages	Spiritual Disease	Spiritual Health
1st angel's message: <i>The everlasting gospel</i>	Salvation as a do-it-yourself project. Contract salvation.	The gospel of God's free grace is the foundation for spiritual and emotional health for both individuals and churches. Because of Christ's redemption we are perfectly justified, completely forgiven, fully accepted, and deeply loved – covenant salvation.
<i>Fear God,</i> <i>Give Him Glory,</i> <i>Worship Him</i>	Fears of punishment, fear of the judgment, fears of rejection, and feelings of shame. Pride self-sufficiency. False self-worth = your own performance + the opinions of others.	These responses to the gospel of grace produce spiritual and emotional health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The "fear of God" overcomes all other fears. • Giving "glory to God" removes pride and self-sufficiency. • "Worship" opens the door to the flow of God's resources to fill the deepest needs of your life. <p style="text-align: center;">Genuine self-worth = what God says about you.</p>
2nd angel's message: <i>Babylon is fallen</i> Seeking love in the wrong places also leads to addictive behaviors and the abuse of love.	<u>Spiritual disease:</u> Identifies the principles of the abuse of "love" that damage spiritual and emotional health. <u>False identity:</u> what you do determines who you are.	<u>God's prescriptions:</u> His perfect love produces spiritual health so there is no need to look for love in the wrong places. <u>True identity:</u> who you are determines what you do.
3rd angel's message: <i>Do not worship the beast</i> Seeking satisfaction for our deepest needs through idols [beasts] when we do not believe that our God is BIG enough to handle our lives.	<u>Spiritual disease:</u> Identifies the principles of the operations of the "beast" which damage ourselves and others: force, fear, threat, coercion, intimidation, control, etc. The beast 'virus,' [Satan's lies about God, yourself, and others] reproduces itself to give us the identity of the beast (his <u>image</u> , <u>name</u> and <u>number</u>) – an identity based solely on the performance of external behaviors.	<u>God's prescriptions:</u> The worship of the all-sufficient Lamb produces spiritual health so there is no need to control others or be controlled by others. Replace Satan's lies with God's truths. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32) The internalization of God's truths will reprogram us with a new identity, (the <u>image</u> , <u>name</u> , and <u>number</u> of our God).
<i>The patience of the saints,</i> <i>the commandments of God,</i> <i>the faith of Jesus</i>	Impatience Lack of love Distrust	THE EVIDENCES OF SPIRITUAL HEALTH: <u>Patience of the saints</u> – willingness to wait on the Lord without running ahead of Him. Accepting difficult situations without giving God a deadline to remove them. <u>Commandments of God</u> – joyful and loving obedience. <u>Faith of Jesus</u> – complete trust in the trustworthiness of Christ.

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