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## THE DOCTOR

*Pastor Richard Fox*

**What's a visit to the doctor like for you?**

**For some reason, I don't always look forward to going to the doctor. Normally it's when something doesn't feel quite right and I'm nervous about what the doctor is going to find. I don't really want to find out I've got some form of heart disease or other debilitating illness. Sometimes even making an appointment can be frustrating. Trying to fit it in around my busy schedule, and theirs can be quite difficult. I wonder if it's worth the effort sometimes. And then there's the waiting and paper work when I arrive at the medical centre. All the fuss doesn't encourage me to be preventative about my health, I only go when there's really no other choice.**

But when I actually get to see a doctor, they're usually very friendly and interested in me. They want to help and provide the best advice. And even though they ask a lot of questions, it's good to know they're making a solid effort to find out what's really wrong. Sometimes all that's needed is rest, other times it's a course of medication.

Often when I leave the doctor I can't even remember why I was trying to avoid it in the first place. I go away feeling comforted by the doctor's help, and the hope that I'll soon be well again.

Of course it's not always a simple fix. Sometimes there's no easy cure or even a cure at all. Then doctors have to deliver terrible news to someone. But even then, the doctors I know don't give up. They work hard to try and find a way to help or provide relief.

There's a quote about doctors which sums up what they do quite well, "A doctor's job is to cure sometimes, to relieve often and to comfort always."

In many ways, Jesus is a bit like a doctor.

For some reason, we may be afraid to visit Jesus and speak with him about what is going on in our lives. Maybe it's because we don't think we'll like his prognosis and treatment plan. Chemotherapy can help heal cancer but it's not the most pleasant course of action! Maybe it's because we haven't been as good as we had hoped to be and we think Jesus won't want to listen to us until we get our act together. We might've neglected to care and show love to someone, or made selfish choices that have hurt others. We might think Jesus is too busy to fit us in. We might even feel like Jesus would actually reject us and refuse to help.

But there's nothing we need to be afraid of when it comes to visiting Jesus. He doesn't want to punish us for what's wrong with us. He wants to welcome us with open arms and help us. Jesus wants to love and forgive us.

We don't even need to make an appointment. Jesus is available anytime, even in the middle of the night. He's always ready to listen and guide us through whatever we're experiencing in our life. We can talk to him by praying to him and one way to do that is to simply say, Jesus help me.

But just like going to our regular doctor we may not get a quick fix. Although Jesus is always listening and ready to help, we may need to wait, to see the results of Jesus listening to us. The healing we need may take time. Just like waiting for medication to run its course or allowing a time of rest to bring our body back into balance.

And like the doctors I know, Jesus is definitely friendly, in fact, he's better than friendly. He's like a best friend who can help, guide, and support us. Why not try and speak with him today?

From my experiences, doctors never seem to turn anyone away. Even if we have the nastiest and most contagious flu they'll still see us.

Everyone is welcome to receive medical attention. No matter what they've done or their background, doctors try to work with the patient to help them.

Seeing doctors help addicts in an emergency ward shows some of the lengths and depths they go to to help anyone and everyone.

Jesus also welcomes everyone. He doesn't want to turn anyone away. Even people who have committed the worst crimes, even people who haven't. Jesus not only wants to help in the short term, but he wants to be an ongoing helper. He wants to be in a relationship with us so that he can be with us on the whole journey of life.

Doctors also listen to many of our deepest confessions about what is wrong with us, especially physically and mentally. Some of the things I share with the doctor to seek help with are often what I wouldn't share with anyone else, even though I don't know the doctor very well. I trust my doctor to keep confidentiality. As a result of confiding to our doctors, doctors see us at our most vulnerable. They can see us at our worst and at our weakest.

Jesus also sees us at our worst and wants to hear our deepest confessions. Like visiting a doctor, we don't need to be afraid to share with Jesus everything that is on our hearts and minds. Jesus knows us, every intimate detail, and that doesn't scare him away. He wants to hear from us and listen to what is going on in our lives. Not for his sake but for our sake. He wants us to share our problems. It might be guilt and shame, fear and despair, worry and stress. When we share these feelings with Jesus we can feel a huge sense of relief and peace. We may not feel it completely straight away. It may take a number of conversations with Jesus. We may need to share with him what we are feeling and experiencing many times. Maybe about our past, maybe about current issues. Along with that, we also need to hear his words of love, forgiveness, and healing over and over again. By repeatedly hearing Jesus' words, we can be set free of guilt and shame, fear and despair, worry and stress.

So do you need a check-up and a visit to the doctor?

Jesus as our doctor can help us. He can fix our brokenness. Our conscience. Our heart. Jesus forgives all of our sins and heals all of our diseases.

Jesus did this many times in the bible. In fact, he was renowned for it. Many people sought him out for healing and he cured them. There were people from all walks of life and backgrounds. There were criminals and enemies of Jesus. There were children and elderly.

Jesus does heal, it may not always be an immediate physical or emotional healing, but it is always a spiritual healing. A healing of forgiveness and being set free from guilt and shame, despair and fear, worry and stress. Because of Jesus dying on the cross for us and rising again to life, we receive God's healing and are given the gift of eternal life with Jesus.

Jesus welcomes us all so you don't have to wait for his help as a last resort.

Jesus wants to listen and care for you right now.

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