

*Sisters in the Spirit
Ministries, Inc.*



*September 2023
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Issue 7*

Sisters in the Spirit Ministries Newsletter

Empowerment for the Christian Woman

What's Your Spiritual Season?



By Rev. Dr. Katrina White Brown

It's Harvest time!

Autumn is the time of year when crops are harvested; the days get shorter; the air gets cooler; and the leaves commence their magnificent and colorful transition.

Just as the seasons in nature change, Christians also have spiritual seasons that change. Ecclesiastes 3:1 declares "to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven." The seasons of our lives change; while it's important to know what spiritual season you are in, remember that seasons are only temporary.

Fall/Harvest Season

Our spiritual fall is the time when we are reaping God's harvest. God is enlarging our territory and we are receiving blessings in ways that we could not have imag-

ined. Because of that, the focus of our fall season must be gratitude.

Sometimes we get it twisted by believing that because we don't have everything we want, or because our circumstances or situations aren't the best, we don't have much for which to be grateful. A lack of gratitude sometimes disguises the fact that we are actually receiving a harvest.

Our harvest may come in the form of spiritual growth. Often the growth comes as a revelation from God clarifying something that had been confusing. The growth may come in the form of spiritual discernment - a better understanding of a challenging problem or troubling situation. God may not have changed the situation, but He may have provided the wisdom and knowledge to operate in His Will in our response to the situation.

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20 SECONDS OF PRAISE



Health officials recommend washing your hands frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds as a primary defense against germs. You can time this by singing a chorus of:

He Still Loves Me - By Beyonce
(from the movie The Fighting Temptations)

**Seems like I always fall short
of being worthy**

**Cause I ain't good enough
But He still loves me**

**I ain't no superstar, the spot-
light ain't shining on me**

**Cause I ain't good enough
But He still loves me**

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Sisters in the Spirit is an outreach ministry created to empower Christian women in better serving the Lord. We are here to help "equip God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ..."

Ephesians 4:12



I recently read a story that dramatically illustrated how we all can do better for each other, simply by “doing unto others as we would have them do unto us.” This concept is known as the “Golden Rule”. Applying it, particularly in our business dealings, would revolutionize the customer service industry.

I’ve worked in the hospitality and restaurant industries and also in retail sales. They are all very tough businesses because of the direct customer contact aspects of the jobs. People can be downright mean and unreasonable. Customers and guests can be outrageously rude, unrealistic in their expectations, untruthful in their interactions, and especially for Christians, ungodly in their behavior. We can do better!

In the story I read, a lady approached an old man selling eggs on the side of the road. She asked “how much do you sell your eggs for?” The old vendor replied “50¢ an egg, madam.” The lady says, “I’ll take 6 eggs but I’m not paying 50¢ for each for them. You either take \$2.50 or I’m leaving those eggs right here!”

The old man replied “you can buy them at the price you want, madam. This is a good start for me because I haven’t sold a single egg today and I need this to live.”

The woman bought her eggs at the bargain price she insisted on and left with the feeling that she had won because of her 50¢ savings. She got into her fancy car and went to a fancy restaurant with her friend. She and her friend ordered exactly what they wanted. They ate just a little and left a lot of what they had asked for right on their plates. They paid the bill, which was \$150. The ladies gave \$200 and told the fancy restaurant owner to keep the change as a tip.

This story might seem quite normal to the owner of the fancy restaurant, but very unfair to the egg seller. For me, it raises this question: why do we always need to show that we have power over the most needy in our society, but are so generous to those who don’t even need our generosity?


Jesus said “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:31-46) The “least of these” refers to those in a variety of needy situations: the hungry, thirsty, impoverished, sick, and imprisoned. It also includes those in need of compassion, kindness, justice, fairness, and love. Jesus condemned those who saw others in need and yet did not help. We can do better!

The story about the egg shopping woman concluded with an example of what it means to do better. A father used to buy goods from poor people at high prices, even though he didn’t need the things. Sometimes he paid more for them. One day his son asked him “why are you doing this Dad?” His father replied: “It’s charity wrapped in dignity, son.”

In my Spirit - I challenge you my Sisters that each one of us do better - because we can.

Love, Peace, and Blessings Always,

Katrina W. Brown



A Back to School Prayer for Teachers

By Becky Keife

“Teachers are amazing, imperfect, and profoundly important people who need our prayers.”

As far back as I can remember, teachers have played a significant role in my life. In second grade, Mrs. Barber invited me to an after-school poetry club, instilling a love of alliteration and rhyme in my eight-year-old soul. In fifth grade, Mrs. Ball could tell something was wrong when I normally got straight A's but flunked a history test. She kept me in at recess and hugged me as the stress of my parent's divorce leaked out in weighty tears.

In middle school, Mrs. Lunsford encouraged my imagination and said yes every time I proposed a new way of doing an assignment, like making up a song about the thirteen colonies. In high school, Mr. Allison modeled a true passion for literature and deep care for his students. He wrote in my yearbook that I could be the next Hemingway or Fitzgerald or whomever I wanted to be. And in graduate school, Dr. Bentz came alongside me on my journey as an aspiring author, generously sharing both knowledge and encouragement as I began my publishing journey.

Each of these teachers saw me. And I thank God for each one.

Now, as a mom of three kids, my gratitude for kind, enthusiastic, passionate, and skilled teachers has continued to grow. I'm grateful for Mrs. Halbert who saw my son's reading challenges and provided the extra support we needed. I think of Mr. Vigil who celebrated my other son's out-of-the-box thinking — making space for his wiggles and quirks instead of trying to stuff them in a hard chair. I'm thankful for Mrs. Cliffe who loved each student as if they were her own, and was intentional to call out the strengths in my other son — strengths I hadn't yet seen.

And those are just a few highlights from my life in the classroom as both a student and parent. Highlights that don't begin to acknowledge the long hours and endless creativity teachers pour out. Highlights that don't speak to the lows of discipline issues and budget cuts, hard mornings and grueling afternoons and nights spent grading papers and planning lessons at the cost of time with their own families.

Yes, teachers are amazing, imperfect, profoundly important people — who need our prayers.

Whether you send your kids to public school or private school, or you choose to educate them at home in an organized schoolroom or messy living room, make a com-

mitment to pray for your child's teacher...even if that's you! And if you don't have kids, your prayers are still needed! Think back to the teacher who made an impact on your life, or perhaps the kind of teacher you needed but never had. Join me in praying for them:

Dear God,

Thank you for teachers. Thank you for the individuals who spend their lives nurturing and investing in the next generation. As teachers' days begin again to be marked by bell schedules and lesson plans, would you mark their hearts with love, patience, and enthusiasm for their students?

Bless each teacher with the ability to see the good — the best — in each child. Enable them to encourage and equip every student to reach their full potential. Help teachers inspire a love for learning and instill confidence in each child in their capacity to grow.

Prepare each teacher for the challenges they will face. Lord, empower them to be emotional counselors, conflict diffusers, hope givers, and prayer warriors.

As teachers pour themselves out each day over essays and equations, ABCs and 123s, pour Yourself into them. Give them an abundance of hope, courage, wisdom, and joy. Gift them with parents and helpers, colleagues and administrators who champion their efforts and encourage their calling.

As teachers go back to school, Lord, grant them lavish grace for the tasks at hand. Beyond district benchmarks or state standards, help our teachers to work diligently and love their students well as unto You.

Bless this school year and bless each person who wears the beautiful and noble badge of Teacher.

Amen. “I thank my God every time I remember you.”

(Philippians 1:3 (NIV))



Becky Keife is an author, speaker, Bible teacher, mom of three loud boys, and the Community and Editorial Manager for Dayspring's (In)courage. She loves writing about anxiety, motherhood, and the kindness of God. *This article reprinted from Everyday Faith Magazine*



What's cooking for the fall?

Find the foods that makes fall dining delicious!

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 S L S B S C A R R O T S S H E B O E J U D F G G

Apple Cider
 carrots
 Great Northern beans
 peppers
 recipes
 seafood boil
 squash

apples
 Cheese Grits
 hot dogs
 popcorn
 rice and beans
 shrimp
 stewed tomatoes

blooming onions
 collard greens
 marshmallows
 pulled pork
 roast beef
 smores
 sweet potatoes

Brunswick Stew
 funnel cake
 oysters
 pumpkin
 roasted corn
 spaghetti and meatballs
 Zucchini bread



One day a farmer's donkey fell into a well. The animal cried loudly for hours, while the farmer tried to find something to do to get him out.

Finally, the farmer decided that the donkey was old and the well was already dry and needed to be covered anyway; that it really wasn't worth pulling the donkey out of the well.

He invited all his neighbors to come help him. They each grabbed a shovel and began to throw dirt into the well. The donkey realized what was happening and cried horribly loud. Then, to everyone's surprise, he quieted down after a few shovelfuls of dirt.

The farmer finally looked down into the well and was amazed at what he saw... with each shovelful of dirt, the donkey was doing something incredible: it was shaking off the dirt and stepping on top of the dirt.

Very soon everyone saw surprised how the donkey reached the mouth of the well, went over the edge and trotted out.

Life is going to throw dirt at you - all kinds of dirt. The trick to getting out of the hole is to shake it off and use it to step up. Each of our problems is a step up. We can get out of the deepest holes if we don't give up... Use the dirt they throw you to get ahead! God's Word tells us "you intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people." (Genesis 50:20)

Remember the 5 rules to be happy: 1. Free your heart from hate. 2. Free your mind of distractions. 3. Simplify your life. 4. Give more and expect less. 5. Love more and ... shake the dirt, because in this life you have to be a solution, not the problem!



- to spur on; impel; motivate.

That's what you do when you give to Sisters in the Spirit Ministries, Inc. We minister to the needs of God's people, especially women. Your financial gifts help to empower, encourage, and educate Christian women in better serving the Lord.

SIS operates solely on your gifts. When you give, you help SIS with:

- Publishing this newsletter
 - The Hour of Praise Power Bible Study
 - The Seniors Food Program
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 - The Thanksgiving Basket giveaway
 - The Christmas Blessing for Nursing Home residents
 - The EMPOWERED Video Series
- And much more ...*

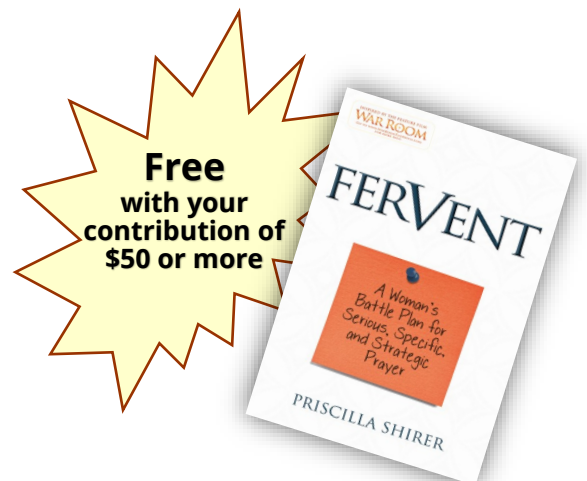
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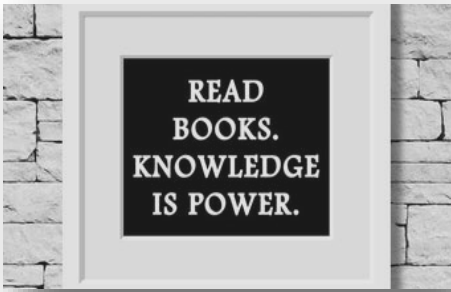
Those who contribute \$50 or more will receive our special thank you gift - **Fervent** by Priscilla Shirer. (First time contributors only)

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What's Your Spiritual Season?

Continued from Page 1

Harvest season doesn't always look bountiful, even though it is. During the time that I was going through a divorce, I was experiencing one of the worst times of my life. I was actually in a harvest season however. God was *growing* me; enlarging my *knowing*; and *showing* me His Will.

I was *growing* throughout this difficult time because God was strengthening my relationship with Him. By enlarging my *knowing*, I learned things about the people in my life - those who were meant to be in life, and those who were being removed because their reason or their season had either been fulfilled or was over. God was *showing* me His desire - the plans He had for me, "plans to prosper me and not harm me, to give me a hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)

During our spiritual harvest season, God makes provision for us, so that we can bless others. And while we would always love to be in a position of reaping the harvest, seasons change.

Winter Season

Spiritual winter seems like a dreary, cold, and lonely place to be, and sometimes it can feel very long and very dark. Winter season is a time when you may encounter tremendous opposition, and constant setbacks. You may be ill, or struggling financially, or continually battling with people—you are under pressure, and the attacks from the enemy seem unrelenting,

God uses our winter season to strengthen, build up, and mature us, and He allows us the time needed to do a self-examination of our heart and our motives. Also, it is important to identify from where your winter the attacks are coming so that you don't blame God with words like, "God made me sick, or God took my job away. Instead of blame, faithfully call on the Lord during your winter season. He is *"our refuge and our strength, a very present help in times of trouble."* (Psalm 46:1)

Spring Season

Spiritual spring is a time of cleansing, and restoration, especially from the difficult days of a spiritual winter. This is a time of transformation; a time of pruning; a time when God is refreshing and renewing us, and giving us a fresh anointing.

The prophet Isaiah wrote that God is doing a new thing, and asked "do you not perceive it?" In order to perceive the renewal that occurs in our spring season, we must be willing to receive what God is doing in our lives.

Don't be concerned if some things, or some people don't bloom or rebloom in your life. They were only meant to be in your life for a season. The season may have come to an end. As a result, those people or things cannot contribute to the "new thing" that God is doing in your life. Trust God!

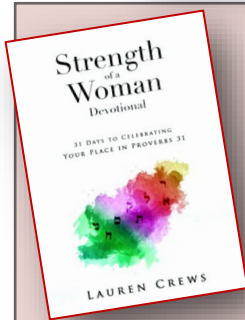
Summer Season

Our spiritual summer is where our strength is manifested. Spiritual summers are long and hot, and requires us to continually drink from the fountain of "living water" Jesus provides.

Some simply dry out and don't make it through their spiritual summer because they can't take the heat. Satan ramps up the attacks during our spiritual summers. Without Jesus to replenish us, we will wither and die from those attacks. However, true believers come out of their spiritual summers stronger than they have ever been.

What spiritual season are you in? Whatever your season, know that God is with you - He will never leave you nor forsake you.

READ
BOOKS.
KNOWLEDGE
IS POWER.



STRENGTH OF A WOMAN

31 DAYS TO CELEBRATING YOUR PLACE IN PROVERBS 31
BY LAUREN CREWS

Strength of a Woman is a fresh, unique look into the old familiar proverb that has come to characterize a "Proverbs 31 woman." For many the idealized woman presented in this passage of scripture seems like a high goal to aspire to, or an overwhelming role model that none can actually emulate.

One of the goals of this book is to bring to the passage the author's rich knowledge of the original Hebrew language. Each chapter focuses on a verse, which is introduced by a Hebrew letter that adds nuance and meaning to the way the verses would have originally been understood. Rather than being intended to be a strict checklist of traits that a godly woman should have, the original language shows us that God already sees women who have submitted to and follow Him as Proverbs 31 women.

The scripture is not necessarily a pattern for a woman who is married and raising children, but it can apply universally to all women of God, regardless of their station in life and where they are in their journey with God. This can be freeing for women who have felt bound, restricted or even oppressed by the high standards that this passage seems to set.

In spite of this academic goal of the book, there is so much more to it. However the book was not a dry, strictly academic look at a passage of scripture, but an engaging, personal book full of relatable examples of women who, like me, have struggled in life but have found that they can thrive when they lean into God's faithfulness. The style is very conversational and devotional - not dry at all - so it is an easy read.

In every chapter - for every letter and characteristic of the woman in the proverb - a real-life example of a woman who has demonstrated that characteristic in her life story is presented. The glimpses into the lives and stories of real women are the real jewels of this book. The stories are so varied, the women so different, that I found myself able to identify with many of them, and I could see women I love and ache for in the stories of many others.

A real strength of the book is that each chapter has personal questions to help the reader consider how the characteristics covered can apply personally to them, and a brief prayer at the end of the chapters to encourage the reader to pursue God's guidance in recognizing that characteristic in her own life. There is also a companion study guide book to go along with the original book, so that it could be used in a small group study. The examples of women who are living today as Proverbs 31 women makes this book compassionate and encouraging to Christian women who are struggling with the difficulties of everyday life. It is well worth reading, and has something to offer to both the more academic reader, and those who are looking instead for encouragement and hope.

Strength of a Woman is available at Amazon.com, Goodreads.com, and Christianbooks.com





Cold and Flu Season is Here. Protect Yourself!

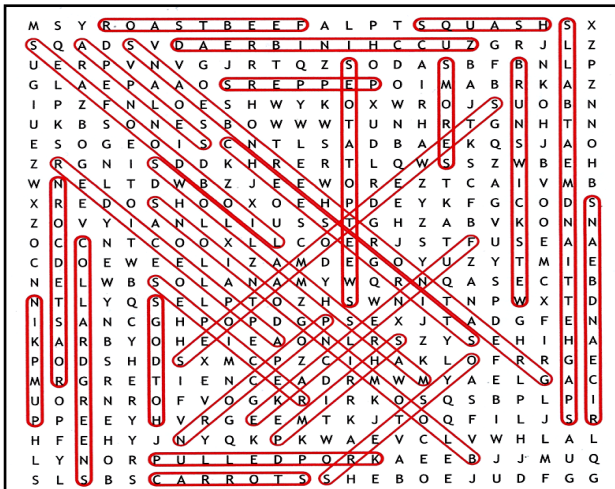
The single best way to reduce the risk of seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get vaccinated each year. However, good health habits like avoiding people who are sick, covering your cough, and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like flu. There also are flu antiviral drugs that can be used to treat and prevent flu.

These tips will help you learn about what you can do to protect yourself and others from flu and help stop the spread of germs.

- Avoid close contact, and especially with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick.
- Stay home when you are sick. Stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others.
- Cover your mouth and nose. Use a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. Flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, or talk.
- Clean your hands. Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub. Clean hands save lives!
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs can be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Practice other good health habits. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

- At work, routinely clean frequently touched objects and surfaces, including door-knobs, keyboards, and phones, to help remove germs. Make sure your workplace has an adequate supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs, and disposable wipes. Train others on how to do your job so they can cover for you in case you or a family member gets sick and you have to stay home. If you begin to feel sick while at work, go home as soon as possible. *Information for this article came from the Centers for Disease Control CDC.gov/flu/prevent/actions-prevent-flu.htm*

Solution to What's Cooking for the Fall?



This is an event for women seeking Jesus!



Saturday October 21, 2023
Liberty Live Church | Hampton, VA
9:00am - 3:45pm

Use this link for more information
<https://www.lifeway.com/en/events/going-beyond-live/going-beyond-hampton>

About Priscilla Shirer - She is a wife and mom first, but put a Bible in her hand and a message in her heart, and you'll see why thousands meet God in powerful, personal ways at her conferences and through her Bible Study resources. She is the New York Times Best Selling author of more than two dozen books and has had featured roles in movies like War Room (2015), I Can Only Imagine (2018), and Overcomer (2019). Priscilla and her husband of 23 years, Jerry Shirer, lead *Going Beyond Ministries* through which they provide spiritual support and resources to the body of Christ. They count it as their greatest privilege to serve every denomination and culture across the spectrum of the Church.



Sisters in the Spirit Newsletter

This is a free monthly publication of Sisters in the Spirit Ministries, Inc, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded to empower Christian women in better fulfilling their God-given purpose.

Editor: Dr. Katrina W. Brown

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The LAST Laugh



Do your part!

A guy named Joe found himself in dire trouble. His business had gone bust and he was in serious financial trouble. He became so desperate that he decided to ask God for help. He started to pray...

"God, please help me. I've lost my business and if I don't get some money, I'm going to lose my house as well. Please let me win the lotto." Lotto night comes and somebody else wins it.

Joe again prays... "God, please let me win the lotto! I've lost my business, my house and I'm going to lose my car as well". Lotto night comes and Joe still has no luck.

Once again, he prays... "My God, why have you forsaken me? I've lost my business, my house, and my car. My wife and children are starving. I don't often ask you for help and I have always been a good servant to you. PLEASE just let me win the lotto this one time so I can get my life back in order." Suddenly there is a blinding flash of light as the heavens open and Joe is confronted by the voice of God Himself: "Joe, meet Me halfway on this. Buy a ticket."

The secret to happy marriage

A woman and her husband had been married for 60 years and had remained faithful and loving this entire time. However, the woman did have one secret; a shoebox in her closet. The shoebox itself was not a secret, but the wife had told the husband that he was never to open or ask about the box, so the contents remained unknown.

The wife fell ill one day and the doctor said she may not make it. The husband took the box and brought it to her bedside and asked if he may open it. With her permission, he took the top off and pulled out \$95,000 and two crocheted dolls. He asked what all of this was. "Well," the wife began, "my grandmother once told me that the secret to a successful marriage was to never get angry at your husband. Instead, when you're angry, you should crochet a little doll".

The husband began to weep tears of joy that she had been angry so few times. "That's wonderful, dear", the man began. "But what's with the \$95,000?" "That's the money I made from selling dolls."

Change or get out

Several centuries ago, the Pope decreed that all Muslims had to convert to Catholicism or leave Italy. There was a huge outcry from the Muslim community, so the Pope offered a deal. He'd have a religious debate with the leader of the Muslim community. If the Muslims won, they could stay in Italy; and if the Pope won, they'd have to convert or leave.

The Muslim people met and picked an aged and wise Mufti to represent them in the debate. However, as the Mufti spoke no Italian and the Pope spoke no Arabic, they agreed that it would be a "silent" debate. On the chosen day the Pope and Mufti sat opposite each other. The Pope raised his hand and showed three fingers. The Mufti looked back and raised one finger. Next, the Pope waved his finger around his head.

The Mufti pointed to the ground where he sat. The Pope brought out a communion wafer and a chalice of wine. The Mufti pulled out an apple.

With that, the Pope stood up and declared himself beaten and said that the Mufti was too clever. The Muslims could stay in Italy. Later the cardinals met with the Pope and asked him what had happened. The Pope said, "First I held up three fingers to represent the Trinity. He responded by holding up a single finger to remind me there is still only one God! Then, I waved my finger around my head to show him that God was all around us. He responded by pointing to the ground to show that God was also right here with us. I pulled out the wine and wafer to show that God absolves us of all our sins. He pulled out an apple to remind me of the original sin. He beat me at every move and I could not continue!"

Meanwhile, the Muslim community gathered to ask the Mufti how he'd won. "I haven't a clue," the Mufti said. "First, he told me that we had three days to get out of Italy, so I gave him the finger. Then he tells me that the whole country would be cleared of Muslims and I told him that we were staying right here!" "And then what?" asked someone. "Who knows?" said the Mufti. "He took out his lunch so I took out mine".

Waiting on the Lord

A man jumps off a cliff with faith that God will save him. The man hits the ground full force and is left barely alive and bleeding out. A doctor passing by notices the struggling man and says, "Sir, I'm a doctor, please let me help you!" To which the man replies, "Get away from me! I have faith that God will heal me!" And the doctor walks away.

Another doctor walking along sees the man and rushes to help, to which the man still replies, "Get away from me! I have faith that God will heal me!" And the doctor walks away. A third doctor ran up to help, but was met with the same rebuke and shortly after the man breathes his last.

As the man wakes and finds himself looking at the face of God, he becomes angry and asks, "God, I have been faithful to you; why did you not heal me?" And God replies, "Dude, I sent you three doctors."