

## **MASSAGING YOUR PAINS AWAY**

Galatians 5:19-21 ... "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: .... sorcery ... that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

I have quoted today's passage from Galatians, only to set apart the word "sorcery." You may wish to read the entire passage from your Bible, which outlines numerous specific sins that God condemns.

My wife and I frequently treat or relieve the physical pains of life (and old age) by massaging one another. I have a history of back problems, and her back massages often reduce my pain. She suffers from shoulder pains. A headache can sometimes be less troublesome with a massage. Arthritic hands can be helped with massage. Even if massage does not cure the problem, it can bring temporary relief.

Physical massage is a great tool for relieving the common pains from hard work. However, there is a form of massage employed by some of our friends, family and neighbors, that might be hazardous to your life.

First, if you resort to massage in an attempt to cure an infection, kidney problems, cancer, heart disease or other serious medical problems, you will likely die from your ailment. Serious illnesses require a doctor's attention and, usually, medications; perhaps surgery. Massage is no substitute for proper medical intervention. We believe that God has ordained improvements in medicine and blessed doctors with the knowledge and skill to help us when we are seriously ill.

Second, if you seek the help of someone who provides a massage in conjunction with spiritism, you are subjecting yourself to evil forces. No good can come from that. I am shocked when I learn that Christians subscribe to what is, effectively, witch doctors or shamans for their health care. They may, indeed, have some supernatural powers, but those powers are not from God, they are from satan. I would never let such a person into my home, or to touch me, and you would be wise to take the same precaution. Our passage today addresses this in the context of sorcery.

Our IP friends and family often have access to herbs and organic substances that can sometimes be an alternative to modern medicine for treating certain superficial problems. They might be helpful, but not if they are created and used together with some form of pagan belief system or ritual. If you are in the practice of employing a pagan practitioner for your medical intervention, you are playing with fire. You are trying to split your devotion between God and a belief in such things, which has no good ending.

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