

HEALING

COMMISSION, CONFRONTATION, AND COMPELLING WITNESS

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with
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COMMISSION

The Beginnings

CHAPTER I

A young girl, wheelchair bound for over three years following a severe mauling from a dog attack, came to our crusade in Melbourne. After being encouraged to act on her prayer of faith, she was dramatically healed. In Perth, a young man, on crutches for a month because of torn ligaments in his leg, was similarly encouraged to act on his prayer of faith and he was healed. In Redlands, a man severely injured in a fall was healed when he began to act on his prayer of faith. These people were dramatically healed in front of hundreds of onlookers. Each was a visible demonstration of the power of God.

I've seen hundreds of people in a wide variety of physical and emotional conditions wonderfully touched by God since I began to vigorously pursue the clear Bible command to "heal the sick." A woman in El Centro was healed of nerve loss she suffered from an attempted suicide as have many others with similar damage, i.e. loss of feeling (from C-sections, injuries or surgery) and nerve related disability in limbs, fingers and hands. Several times I've seen God heal people from pain and loss of function in their bodies and limbs due to rods, pins or plates placed in them by doctors. Two cases I particularly recall were an Oregon man who lost knee function and a Utah man whose back had been immobilized for 12 years. Both were immediately restored and able to move freely and function normally. I've seen accident victims of all kinds healed from pain which lingered long after the injury had supposedly healed. In Oceanside a young marine with a severely wrenched hip was not only healed, but wonderfully saved. In that same crusade was a man who had been injured in an industrial accident. A crane had fallen on him and crushed his leg. Although doctors had placed a metal plate in his hip, his leg was crooked and he was still in severe pain. Not only was he healed of pain and deformity, he was recovered of his backsliding that same night.

Numbers of people suffering severe heart problems, and 'fighting' diseases such as cystic fibrosis and even bullet wounds have seen their infirmities also respond to prayer and faith in Jesus. In Farmington a woman whose heart transplant left her suffering from partial paralysis and weakness came to the Lord and was gloriously healed. In the 1995 Perth crusade a woman with cystic fibrosis was so touched by the power of God that she ran (for the first time since she was a small girl) all around the auditorium, finally reaching down and lifting one of the monitors up in her arms to demonstrate the dramatic change in her body. A year before, in Salem (Ma), a man with cancer, who was not expected to live more than a short time, came to the crusade. He was, much to his amazement, dramatically healed. He still calls from his new Fort Lauderdale home begging us to send a pastor and plant a church in that city. He, like many other cancer victims, has completely recovered.

Tumors, cysts, infections, growths and abnormalities of the womb have often been instantly healed when people have repented of hate, bitterness and unforgiveness. I remember two women whose thyroid tumors disappeared the moment they repented of slanderous talk, hate and bitterness. Several times I have seen amazing hearings in people with bullet wounds. A Poway (Ca) man confined to a wheelchair after a bullet struck his leg in a robbery; a Barstow (Ca) woman suffering severe pain and liver damage from seven bullets in her back; an Albuquerque (NM) woman full of pain from a bullet wound; and a Prescott (Az) man whose pancreas and stomach had been partially destroyed and his left arm and hand partially paralyzed by a gunshot wound were all dramatically healed. I've marveled as injuries, herniated discs, mental and emotional problems and diseases by the score were gloriously healed by God these past several years in crusades, rallies, conferences and regular church services.

Importantly, these miracles were not the result of my 'gift of healing.' My healing ministry is the result of definite spiritual dynamics that bring people to faith in Jesus. With this, the promise of healing in the atoning blood becomes a reality. I have not always known this, except in an intellectual way, because much of my Bible school training was set against miracles and healing. The 'gift of healing' was widely believed and taught as a special gift ministry set in the church that operated only through those specially chosen. Without question the 'gift of healing' is a valid and powerful ministry. When, for example, an evangelist, as God leads him, 'calls out' or deals with specific problems, issues and individuals, he can enhance revival meetings and stir faith. What I see in my ministry is not this special gift. Rather it is the foundational truth that Jesus paid the price for our healing in His atoning blood on Calvary. Healing is available to all believers and ministry in this dimension is commanded. What I now know has come to me over years of ministry and I am convinced beyond any doubt that obedience to God's command to 'heal the sick' is an indispensable part of world evangelism.

Until recent months I received only a glazed look when I spoke to many ministers concerning this ministry. This blank stare was, I feel, due to the implied responsibility that falls on each minister. Their spiritual reputation and authority is at stake. Their ego is at risk. The possibility of failure looms and their congregations expect to see results. The 'gift of healing' mind set excuses ministers from contending for healing, leaving it to those specially called and gifted. I often hear it said, "that's not my ministry." However, all are called to "heal the sick" and cast out devils," and recently many young pastors have come to crusades eager to learn, wanting to improve their ministry and to see the demonstration of God's power. Now I am often able, at the conclusion of a crusade, to turn those people still waiting for prayer to these ministers with a significant degree of success.

Early Experiences

Wickenburg is a small Arizona town famous for dude ranches and the legend of the Hassayampa River. Drinking from this river, dry most of the year, supposedly makes one a liar for the rest of his days. I'm not sure of that but there were plenty of sinners (liars and other kinds) in town when I went there to pastor my first church. While pasturing there, a woman with crippling arthritis and her husband made contact with us through a revival meeting. They had a Branhamite background and seemed to be really good people. She and her husband owned a small business and lived in an attached house. Confined by her arthritis to the house, her husband ran the business up front. She requested I come by to pray and read the Scriptures for her, which I was glad to do. They owned a large dog that would go literally insane the moment I drove up even though he had no way of hearing or seeing me arrive. He was so ferocious that her husband would have to leave the business and tie the dog up in another room before I could enter the house. Although my experience was limited at the time (my first pastorate), especially with the demonic world, I was smart enough to know that things do not just happen. Bible school had left little room for understanding real ministry. I discovered in talking with this couple that their marriage relationship was far from normal and seriously in trouble, along with a number of other spiritual factors. I was able to comfort her through the reading of the Bible and prayer. Her severe case of arthritis was not healed. Knowing what I do today about bitterness, curses and sinfulness, I feel confident that much more help could have been afforded this couple.

My ministry carried me on to another small town, Emmet, Idaho. It was there I encountered one of my first, unquestionable cases of the demonic and occult. A woman called and asked me to pray for her demon possessed sons. I traveled to the small town where they lived and proceeded to deal with the two sons. It was soon obvious that all my commanding and shouting at the demons (all I knew to do) was going to accomplish little. I left without victory. The details of the demon possession are enlightening. Her sons had left home some years before to attend college and had apparently been converted in some legitimate religious group.

Upon hearing of their conversion she clipped some horoscopes from the newspaper and mailed them to her sons as encouragement. Receiving these, the boys became interested in the occult. Eventually their collection of occult books filled suitcases. Suitcases they brought back home with them. From these details I gained a valuable insight connecting demonic power, false religion and physical objects, especially occult books.

Later, while pasturing in Eugene, Oregon, I again encountered the demonic. A woman called me to her home because she felt an evil presence. She told me that her dog had suddenly begun to run around barking furiously. Finally, he stopped at the entrance to her attic and stood there barking. She knew there was something evil in her attic. I inquired, before going in, what she had in the attic. She told me that it was unfinished and contained only old clothes, books and other items in storage. Also her daughter had left a box of personal items while she and her husband, who was in the military, went to Germany. We entered the attic. It was just as she described. We both felt the evil 'whatever' was related to the box of things her daughter had left. We opened it and, along with some memorabilia, found a Ouija board - The same one this woman had started playing with her daughter before she freaked out and quit. It was winter time and a fire was in the fireplace, so I suggested we burn the board, which we did. I was astonished at the intensity, even fierceness, of the flame as it burned. This is something I have since commonly noticed when occult objects are burned. Again, I was impressed by the connection between the demonic and the occult.

While pasturing in Eugene sometime later I realized for the first time a powerfully significant truth concerning demonic oppression and the human will. A twenty-six year old woman got saved. Her background was tragic. As a child she had been passed from one foster home to another. No-one would keep her for long because periodically she became possessed by a destructive demon that caused her to cut up her clothes and destroy valuables in the home. One day, nineteen years old and facing another move, she was sitting on her bed fearfully facing the unknown. At that crisis moment she cried out, "God, you've got to help me get rid of this thing." As soon as she spoke these words, "Something," she said, "left my body, went out of the room and down the hall. And it has never returned." She told me this story seven years after it had happened. She was now, not then, saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. I began to understand something about demonic action. It is not automatic or arbitrary. The devil must somehow gain access to people's lives and that involves their will. He must maintain their cooperation, or at least passive acceptance. This is tremendously important because action is important in healing, while mere words and Bible quoting often accomplish nothing. An unsaved nineteen year old girl took action and was delivered. When the human will is actively engaged in resisting the devil, he must "flee from you," and release you from bondage.

We moved to Prescott in 1970. I had only glimmers of what was involved in the world of the demonic and very little insight to healing. Soon after arriving in Prescott I was called by a man who told me his wife was demon possessed and was asked to come and pray. I went to his home in a quiet, residential area of Prescott. The moment I stepped into the house his wife let out a bloodcurdling scream and raced to the rear of the home, her husband and I in hot pursuit. She bolted into the bedroom, dove into the closet and barricaded herself at the rear of it refusing to come out. All the time piercing the air and neighborhood with unearthly screams. I was sure the police would arrive at any moment. In desperation, I commanded the demon to be quiet. Not much success. So I asked the demon when he came into this woman. The demon, not the woman, responded, "When her mother was four months pregnant." Her mother had tried to abort her by witchcraft at four months. I then asked the demon its name. The demon responded this time in a very seductive voice calling her brother's name. I am convinced an incestuous relationship had occurred. All this took place between screams.

Still desperate and fearing the arrival of the police, I began to look around the room. A huge crucifix was at the foot of the bed and the moment my eyes fastened on it this woman jumped out of the closet, ran to the bed, grabbed the crucifix and in a very sensual way began to stroke it. My eyes then focused on a 'Bleeding Heart' picture, and she ran and grabbed it. It had become obvious that she was going to scream and

arouse every neighbor for blocks, so I asked them to come to my office the next day, and we made an appointment. They never came. Fortunately, I was not arrested. Unfortunately this woman was not delivered. At the time I knew little of the power of abortion and incest to open a life to the demonic. What I definitely learned however, was the old Hollywood movie picture of the priest or saint rushing into the room of the demon possessed with a crucifix or some other religious object, waving it in front of the person or the demon and seeing the demon flee, was a total hoax. It was in no way related to the reality of life. This demon loved religious objects and was not forced to flee or even quiver at their presence.

The Eighties

Our fellowship was experiencing a time of rapid growth in late 1970's and early 1980's. Jack Harris was, at that time, ministering in crusades on the foreign field and was seeing great results in converts and miracles of healing. Still influenced by Bible school traditions, fearful of excesses and thinking of healing only as a 'gift,' I was, nonetheless, thrilled with the results. As I watched these things I was moved with a growing sense of excitement over the great vehicle miracle crusades provided for preaching to masses of people and something else began to happen. I came to the conclusion that this ministry would work for anyone. After all, I knew Jack and the other men involved in miracle ministry as no-one else knew them and was sure they were doing what anyone else could do. I finally decided that I would try it.

The opportunity came in Oton, a small town outside of Iloilo City in the Philippines. Jack was ministering in a crusade and had phenomenal crowds and miracles. Over 7000 people were gathering nightly with hundreds converted and healed. Jack developed a severe case of pink-eye and I decided to preach the crusade that night. Just as we started, the heavens opened and it began to rain tropics style. It poured. We hustled into a nearby home and between filling the living area and the carport (where people could still see and hear what was going on inside) we gathered about 125 people. I preached the message God had given me, called for converts and then for the sick. I prayed a mass prayer (a small mass to be sure) and no one was healed. In fact, no-one felt even remotely better. This event did such a 'psyche' job on me that I did not again minister in a crusade setting for seven years. I know now it was a 'psyche' job of hell to defeat the ministry God was wanting to place in our fellowship.

Thankfully, and to His glory, God does not simply quit or give up on His purposes. In those seven years I noticed God did bring significant deliverance to people whenever I preached faith sermons. Then in Mexico I had a word of knowledge and some healing occur in a mass prayer during a conference service. Again, I became stirred about healing ministry. Early in 1988 I was to preach in Mexico City. Just prior to leaving Prescott I called for the schedule of services, and to ask what my part would be. I had assumed it would be a conference setting, but learned to my amazement, that I was the featured speaker in a crusade. Rather than shift or change my role in the meetings, I decided to preach the crusade. The first night, after preaching and calling for salvation, we got about 35 people who needed healing into the altar area. I instructed them in the dynamics of the mass prayer. First, lay your hand on the part of your body where you are sick. Second, repeat the prayer of faith in which I lead you. Third, when we finish praying lift your hands and begin to worship and thank God. Fourth and last, as you praise God, check your body and see if you are healed. After instructing them, I led them in a mass prayer and then in praise while those sick checked themselves for evidence of healing. I then asked for testimonies. One man, thrown from a horse twelve years earlier, suffering pain from a head injury, was healed. A severely crippled woman, suffering for five years from painful arthritis in her hands, was healed. There were ten other significant hearings. This provided me a great insight. I knew the 'psyche' job seven years earlier was the devil's work. I knew that I had done nothing special. Without question, what I had done was not operate in any special 'gifting,' but simply obey the revealed will of God to preach healing in Jesus name. As a result of this crusade, I determined to bring healing into our church in Prescott and to those throughout the United States.

Back in Prescott I preached and prayed the same way I had in Mexico City. Twelve people were dramatically healed. I then went to a rally in Denver. On the plane while traveling to Denver, I felt God give me a Word of Knowledge that he was going to heal crossed eyes and a shoulder injury. The rally was attended by about 650 people. After preaching, calling for salvation and then assembling folks in need of healing at the altar, I instructed them in a mass prayer. Lacking boldness and confidence to specifically call for particular diseases as a Word of Knowledge, I mentioned what God had spoken to me on the plane as I instructed the people in prayer. After prayer there were a number of notable miracles. Several deaf ears had opened, a woman with a crippling and painful arthritis of ten years was healed, and a number of other people with various infirmities were healed. Also, two people with crossed-eyes were healed. One was healed as he stood in the altar and prayed the mass prayer, and the other was healed as he stood in the congregation and prayed. The Word of Knowledge had triggered his faith. The shoulder injury was also healed. It was a man who had been seriously hurt in a sports accident two years earlier. He had recovered, but until that night in Denver the pain had never left. In that rally I gained another valuable insight to healing ministry. I knew a 'gift' ministry, either in healing or Word of Knowledge, could trigger and enhance people's faith.

From these experiences, I determined that a portion of our fellowship's energies would be focused in crusades. I was eager to share what I had learned with all of our pastors and began to do this by conducting, with the help of other men, 'Schools of Healing' in conjunction with miracle rallies and crusades. One of our first crusade efforts was in Oceanside, California which is one of the finest venues anywhere in the world for attracting large numbers of sinners. This has become an annual outreach for Prescott and many of the southern California churches. We also do an annual crusade in Las Vegas, Nevada. It is a yearly highlight for the Prescott people who spend their weekend outreaching and participating in this great event. For several years there have been outstanding results in Guam. Crusades there have been especially fruitful in producing converts as well as dramatic and exciting hearings.

Commission

Anyone interested in how to organize and promote a crusade could learn much from the Guam congregation.

Many other cities have hosted crusades with great success. Most of the time, now, we follow-up the crusade with revival meetings in the local churches. The outstanding results in converts adds greatly to my firm conviction that healing ministry is crucial to world evangelism.

COMMISSION

Heal The Sick

CHAPTER 2

I studied for the ministry at a denominational Bible School. There, in regard to healing, heavy emphasis was placed on two stories - Job's sickness and Paul's thorn which were portrayed to such a degree that they obscured the powerful healing ministry of Jesus and his clear command to "heal the sick." Our confidence in ministering to the sick and afflicted was taken away even though it is a significant part of Pentecostal doctrine. Healing was portrayed as the result of some special occasion in God's plan we could not figure out.

Theology Of Suffering

These two stories, plus ridicule and tales of excesses in modern healing ministries, were enough to strip us students of any assurance in praying for the sick. The Calvinistic leanings of many of the professors took away the reality of victorious Christian living and replaced it with a theology of suffering. Most instructors taught that suffering (financial or physical) was the pathway to Christian virtue and pleasing God. This was taught in spite of its obvious contradiction to God's goodness, love and compassion as revealed in the Scriptures, a goodness, love and compassion which they taught in every other area of life and ministry. We were taught it was OK to pray for the sick but God's will could not be known especially if we were called to the bedside of someone terminally ill. We could not be presumptuous and pray for their healing but only for their 'comfort?' The same theology exists today. Ruth Anderson, in *Things to do for the Terminally ill* suggests, "Pray out loud. If the person knows death is imminent, don't pray for healing. Let your prayer reflect our faith in the resurrection (War Cry, 6- 1 0-95)." My experience, however, has been that significant numbers of the elderly are healed by the Lord. Apparently He does not view these people as worn out relics waiting only to pass on into eternity. The theology of suffering ignores the aggressive way Jesus dealt with sickness, conveniently excuses lack of victory in a believer's life, and justifies a minister's lack of power in ministry.

The theology of suffering always coexists with a powerless and ineffective church which apologizes for its lack of power with mystery and intellectualism. And it produces a powerless and ineffective church. One writer commented on this mind set of suffering.

The will of God has been a deep shadow ... obscuring ... blessing with its decrees of sorrow The will of God is associated with sick rooms, poverty, loss, bereavement, funerals, the open grave. The will of God, to such [as are schooled in this mind set], is always dressed in black. And this conception of His will gives us sickly Christians, weak faith, empty joy, puny conquests When we say in prayer, 'Thy will be done,' are we always impressed with its significance? God's will is not ... vindictive ... His will is a blessed companion, which illumines our way, cheers our spirits, makes glad our lives and brings fruitfulness to all that we do (Pentecostal Theology, p. 372-373).

This thinking robs evangelism of its most effective and compelling witness. Healings are powerful, authenticating both the message and the messenger of the gospel.

Occasionally we get news coverage of our crusades and almost without exception the reporters manage to interview everyone not connected to the crusade. A Redlands newspaper published an article which treated healing skeptically following our crusade. They quoted as an authority the daughter of a denominational pastor. She just happened to come to the crusade because she saw a "large crowd" and "wanted to know what

was happening." Her comment to the reporter reflects the deep rooted theology of suffering in the religious world. "You can be spiritually healed," she said, "but you can't come in a wheelchair and just prance out of here ... If that's all people had to do, there would be no sick people in the world." Advocates of suffering always leap to extraordinary conclusions whenever God's will to heal the sick is proclaimed. She, along with the reporter, apparently missed the entire crusade. Comments like hers are typical. Often people will say something like, "If healing is valid like you say, then why don't you just go into the hospitals and heal everyone?" A variation of the same theme would be, "I have an aunt (uncle, father, etc.) who's sick and in a wheelchair. Why don't you come and heal her?" As the reporter and so-called authority failed to see (and hear explained at the crusade), Jesus' ministry of healing involved several structural or procedural dynamics. Very clearly healing took place in an atmosphere of preaching and proclaiming the 'Kingdom of God.'

When Jesus commissioned the disciples, he told them to heal the sick in the houses into which they were received, saying to them "The Kingdom of God has come near you (Lk 10:9)." Of great importance in healing is the issue of faith. Jesus says, "Your faith that has made you whole", to the woman with the issue of blood, to the leper who returned and gave thanks and to blind Bartimaeus. People came to Jesus for healing and requested it. Even the man at the Pool of Bethesda was not healed until Jesus had asked him, "Do you want to be made well?" In fact, as far as we know, He healed only the one in that vast place filled with the infirm. Paul, preaching at Lystra, perceived a lame man who had been listening to him had faith to be healed. Paul then commanded him in a loud voice to stand to his feet (which he had never done) and the man leaped to his feet and walked (Acts 14:8-10). All things are possible to those who believe (Mk 9:23); if we have faith in God anything is possible (Nu 11:22-24); and Jesus makes clear that faith is necessary even if it is only the size of a mustard seed (Lk 17:6). We pointedly preached in the Redlands' crusade about man's condition before God and laid out God's requirements of repentance and faith. We included God's promises to the believer and how Jesus had paid the price for sin in His atoning sacrifice. Healing was never presented as 'just prance in sick and prance out healed.' The issue today, as always, is one of believing God. God helped only one widow woman, and healed only one leper (Naaman) in the days of the prophet. The issue was not need. It was faith. Having a need has never been enough.

Many prayers are not prayers of faith. Many will add, "If it be thy will," to the end of their prayer. This is the standard Bible school prayer. This is actually a prayer of unbelief Taught commonly in Bible schools the "if" nullifies faith in almost every realm. The Bible clearly teaches the will of God and His commission to heal the sick. Believer's are to use this knowledge and move in authority against sickness and disease. Jesus, "called His twelve disciples together and," after giving them power and authority over diseases, "sent them to preach and to heal the sick (Luke 9:1-2)," saying to the them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you (Luke 10:9)." To the healed leper Jesus said, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well (Luke 17:19)." Once you discover the believer's authority in Christ, it changes how you pray.

The Spiritual Nature Of Disease

In the Bible record of healing, we see clearly the intertwining of the spiritual, physical and demonic. Luke's gospel documents Jesus casting out an unclean spirit, rebuking a fever (physical disease), and speaking to and commanding demons which came out of people (4:31-4 1). Jesus is dealing with spiritual forces as personalities, not as germs. He deals with them as enemies, not as benefactors. Matthew calls these spiritual powers tormentors, not comforters (18:35). They are realities, not superstitions. They are direct demonic links to disease and are somehow able to exercise a tangible dominion over a person's body and life.

My son Greg was four years old when I was pasturing in Emmet, Idaho. He got an ear infection that would not go away. We were spending both time and money on doctors and he was no better. One night Greg was suffering again and I finally ran out of patience. I got mad. I was incensed at the torment that was in our home and Greg's life because of this ear, and remember saying to myself, "This is the devil!" I called

for Greg, laid my hands on him, rebuked the devil, and prayed for his healing. To my amazement he was instantly healed. I formed two opinions about sickness, particularly ear infections in children. First, sickness has a spiritual nature. It is something more than a germ, bacteria, hormonal imbalance or genetic defect. Second, using authority brought victory over this demonic realm. This was startlingly different from what I had been taught. I had been taught to pray "if it be thy will" and then wait for a mystical moment when God would sovereignly move. Very clearly that was wrong. By aggressively confronting sickness I found instant and complete victory through the authority of Jesus Christ. Had I used the Bible school "if," Greg would still be sick.

I realized that I had dealt with the spiritual nature of sickness in Greg's healing. My conclusion concerning the spiritual nature of disease has been greatly strengthened over the years. Not long ago Valerie Symens from our Prescott congregation met an eighteen year old Midwest girl. This girl was walking in an area of Prescott where there had been a murder and in concern for her, Valerie wanted to tell her she would be safer walking in another area. In talking to her, Valerie discovered that the girl had environmental disease, a problem with the immune system which meant she had to avoid crowds and public places or she would experience violent and dangerous reactions to odors and pollutants in the air. This girl's parents had spent \$50,000 in four months on doctors and treatments trying to find relief for her any possible way, but she was no better. Valerie witnessed to her and then gave her my phone number. She called and asked to meet with me, which she did. I found a connection to occult religion in her life which we renounced in prayer. She called again the next day to inform me she had suffered the most miserable night of her entire life. But she wanted to meet with me again. In our second meeting she remembered more connections to the occult, contacts with spiritual healers, and some other issues. We prayed again. She was completely healed and began to attend church - something she had never been able to do. For her, sickness was a spiritual issue, not an organic one and had to be treated as a spiritual issue. I was not surprised to find this desperate fancily had, like so many others, spent a large amount of money for healing. Their quest had led them into many non-medical areas for relief, to the occult and magical healers. The answer, however, was in Jesus. He alone finally and completely set her free from disease.

It was not surprising as well to discover her immune system had been affected by non-physical factors. Medical researchers have confirmed in many different ways that chronic 'feelings' of hopelessness or unforgiveness can affect the immune system. Holding, retaining, grasping and nurturing bitterness and resentment releases a hormone which suppresses the activity of the immune system and makes man susceptible to disease. Upwards of 85% of those visiting doctors do so because of guilt and shame. People working with chronic pain sufferers, especially lower back pain, point out that much of the pain is related to stress. Current research is bringing to light many such connections between health and spiritual factors. I am convinced that it is the spiritual issues which are most important in healing.

The Role Of The Devil

The great healing evangelist to Africa and many other nations, T. L. Osborn, tells in his book *Healing The Sick* of the night his ministry was transformed. At a revival meeting in Portland, Oregon, the minister explained the issues of disease.

Here is what the evangelist had explained:

Every disease has a life - a germ causes it to grow. That evil life in the germ did not come from God because it kills and destroys human life. It is from Satan. It is that evil life, or spirit of infirmity, that gives life to the disease, or growth, just as your spirit gives life to your body.

Just as your body, when the spirit leaves it, dies and returns to the dust, so your disease, when the spirit of infirmity is cast out, dies and disappears.

We all matured from a tiny germ. The life of that germ came from God. The body, living by the germ or spirit of life which God caused to exist, developed until it became a complete human body.

So long as that life, or spirit, remains in the body, the body continues to live. But as soon as the spirit leaves the body, the body is dead; it decays and returns to the dust.

Many human sicknesses and diseases begin from a tiny germ, an evil satanic life, sent to live in and possess the h body and destroy it. As long as that life, the spirit of infirmity, exists in the body, the growth or disease lives and continues its destructive work.

But as soon as the evil spirit the evil life, or spirit of infirmity, has been cast out of the body in Jesus' name, that disease or growth is dead. It will decay and pass from the body.

This is the process of healing (p. 219-220).

It is my firm conviction that the devil is the author and perpetrator of all disease. Disease had its opportunity in the Fall of Man and exists as incipient death. Prior to the Fall there was neither disease nor death. No injury, accident or illness was able to strike man until he fell and became vulnerable because of sin.

With the Fall came the curse and accident, injury, sickness, weakness and infirmity, all foreshadowing death which came upon all. Physical death is a shadow of spiritual death. All sickness is energized by a spirit of death. Man is a spiritual being. He is not primarily a physical being with a spirit but rather a spiritual being inhabiting a physical body. This is not merely semantics. This thinking will change the way you deal with the sick.

Oral Roberts' was one of the healing ministries that received a good amount of ridicule when I was in Bible school. His story is enlightening. The Washington Times (June 26, 1995, p. 25) reports, "As a teenager Mr. Roberts dreamed of being a lawyer and eventually governor of Oklahoma, and it was not until he contracted tuberculosis that he discovered the healing power of faith in a tent revival As Mr. Roberts tells the story ... the Rev. George Moncey, a traveling evangelist, laid his hands on his head and commanded the disease to leave him and he felt his lungs open as a flower. 'I actually yelled, 'I'm healed! I'm healed!' Then I cried [sic], laughed and praised God..... The actual words of Rev. Moncey, recorded in Oral's own book Expect a Miracle, My Life and Ministry were, "You foul tormenting disease, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, come out of this boy! Loose him and let him go free (p. 33)."

This is a dramatic testimony. There may or may not be germs, bacteria, parasites and deformity present but the power of disease is spiritual. Its energy, its power to make ill and eventually destroy is spiritual. If that power is destroyed, cast out or neutralized, so is the disease. Jesus can in the same circumstance forgive sin or command healing. Both are as easy and both accomplish the same thing. Once again, all sickness has its roots in the activity of the devil who exploits man's fallen nature and involvement in sin.

God gave man dominion with a condition. Disobedience brought death. A clear connection exists between sin and sickness, which is incipient death. "Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die (Ge 2:15-17). '"

We find the connection again in Moses' account of Miriam's leprosy.

When the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam and there she was, a leper. So Aaron said to Moses, 'Oh, my Lord! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned. Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!' So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, 'Please heal her, O God, I pray I' Then the LORD said to Moses, 'if her father had but spit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut out of the camp seven days, and afterward she may be received again.' So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey till Miriam was brought in again (Num. 12:10-15).

She is shut out from God because of sin, sin manifest in the physical disease of leprosy. God makes this

connection over and over, showing that the devil is at the root of disease. "The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish (De 28:2 1 22)." Again, "The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart. And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save you (De 28:2729)." And again, "The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head (De 28:35)." And one more time, "then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues; great and prolonged plagues; and serious and prolonged sicknesses. Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed (De 28:5961)."

Many stress the story of Job but miss the source of disease. "So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head (Job 2:7)." This theme is repeated in Luke 10: 10- 16. "Now [Jesus] was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise her self up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified -God So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound; think of it; for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?" Clearly the source of infirmity was the devil.

Consider the following story in Mark's gospel.

And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. And He asked the scribes, 'What are you discussing with them?' Then one of the crowd answered and said, 'Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.' He answered him and said, 'O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.' Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, 'How long has this been happening to him? And he said, 'From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.' Jesus said to him, 'If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.' Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!' When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, 'Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!' Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him- And he became as one dead, so that many said, 'He is dead.' But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, 'Why could we not cast it out? So He said to them, 'This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting (9:14-29).'

The source of infirmity is spiritual. The power is from the devil and it seeks to destroy. Jesus deals with the disease as a personality and rebukes it.

All of these graphic and detailed accounts directly tie man's spiritual nature and the devil to sickness and disease. One of the greatest revelations a young minister can have is to understand that healing is not

simply something God does. It is His nature to heal. He gives specific promises of healing through the work of Jesus on Calvary. The Bible promises healing by the prayer of faith and anointing with oil by the elders, by a sound heart, by preaching the gospel, and by laying on of hands. It is imperative that the promises of God be preached to the needy.

And the LORD will take away from you all sickness, and will afflict you with none of the terrible diseases of Egypt which you have known, but will lay them on all those who hate you (Deu 7:15).

A sound heart is life to the body, But envy is rotteness to the bones (Prov 14:30).

Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed (Isa 53:4-5).

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 'He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.' So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen (Mark 16:15-20).

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven (James 5:13-15).

These specific promises, the commission to "heal the sick," and the nature of God our Healer allow confidence in ministering to the sick.

CONFRONTATION

A Spiritual Adversary

CHAPTER 3

The necessary revelation is simply, "God wants me well." One writer put it: "The devil wants you begging; Jesus wants you living. The devil wants you crawling; Jesus wants you walking. The devil wants you whining; Jesus wants you dining. The devil wants you down; Jesus wants you up." The enemy is the devil. God is not punishing with sickness. At the root of all sickness is the devil. He gives energy and power to all disease and infirmity. The Bible is God's self-revelation. In its pages we learn how to relate to and approach God in obedience to his revealed will and not according to our feelings, moods or human reasoning.

The lack of power in many churches is because many are unaware of who God is and how to approach Him. They have lost the revelation of The Lord Our Healer and the truth of Jesus' dynamic healing ministry someone has counted twenty-seven miracles attributed to Jesus in the Scripture as well as ten occasions of general healing in large numbers of people with a wide variety (every kind) of diseases. Jesus, never passive about sickness, treated it as the enemy. There are two primary hindrances to treating. First is ignorance concerning the will of God. Lilian Yeomans said, I believe that one of the greatest hindrances to healing is the absence of a certain definite knowledge as to God's will. There is lurking in most everyone a feeling that God may not be willing, that we have to persuade Him to heal us." Secondly, we tend to be very passive about disease and infirmity. There is a reluctance to believe and aggressively pursue healing.

Jesus makes aggressive action a necessary ingredient for kingdom living, saying "...from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force (Mat 11:12)." Likewise in Luke, "The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it (16:16)." Aggressive, or violent, action in the company of faith pleases God and he anoints it. See how "... God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him (Acts 10:38)." Importantly, Jesus heals because he is God 'The Healer.' He does not heal as some special event but because it is His nature.

The language and context of Isaiah's great Messianic prophecy clearly point to Jesus actually carrying our sicknesses and diseases. In His death, and shed blood, is provision for physical healing as part of salvation. "Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed (Isa 53:4-5)." Matthew applies this prophecy directly to the healing ministry of Jesus. "They brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses (Mat 8:16-17). Peter also uses this scripture, only he applies it to believers. "[Jesus] bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed (1 Pet 2:24)." The story of the leper ties the nature of God together with his willingness. Jesus, LC moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I am willing; be cleansed (Mark 1:41).'"

The most significant insight concerning healing comes in the revelation of God as Jehovah-Rapha, The Lord Our Healer.

Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea ... And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water ...

when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters ... and Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them. And there He tested them, and said, 'if you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you (Exo 15:22-26).'

The redemptive name, 'The Lord our Healer,' has been replaced in many churches with a theology of suffering that evades responsibility, trusts in formula prayers, is filled with unbelief and waits doubtfully in inaction. Biblical healing, however, is always actively pursued and the result of dominion over the power of the devil. It is aggressive faith that pleases God. Aggressive faith is possible only through understanding God's will is to heal the sick. God has, "qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins (Col 1: 12-14)."

The Blood

The blood of Jesus is the token or proof of the covenant God has with man. We have redemption through His blood. This blood is known and recognized throughout the spiritual world. Just as the blood of Abel speaks out of the dust of the earth, Jesus' blood speaks of the final complete victory of Jesus over the powers of hell and the devil. It is proof that man is qualified to receive from God because of Jesus' atoning death on Calvary. This reality was powerfully demonstrated one Easter Sunday. My son, Greg, preached and was using the elements of the Communion Table to stir faith in the congregation. He had begun to minister to the sick and the mother of one of our members came for healing. She had arthritis. When she realized she was healed, she said to Greg, "I have a deaf ear, too." The usual method we used at that time was to demonstrate both their deafness and, after prayer, their healing by having them plug their good ear and repeat things whispered or spoken behind them where they could not see or read the lips of the speaker. We would get just behind them and whisper things like "praise God," "hallelujah," or start counting "one, two, three." If they were able to repeat the phrases we moved back and repeated the procedure. We used to do this before prayer to provide proof of their deafness but I have stopped doing this because in several cases the deaf spirit left (played opossum), and when I tested them, they could already hear. Later, after the service, the deaf spirit would return. Now I demonstrate only their healing. If, after prayer (casting out the deaf spirit), they are able to repeat the phrases it is a great demonstration of their healing. Most times I am able to move several yards behind people and demonstrate their ability to hear clearly out of an ear that moments before had been totally closed.

That Easter morning as we began to demonstrate her healing, she could at first hear clearly and then she couldn't. Then she could, and then she couldn't, and finally she was unable to hear my whispering behind her. I felt inspired, in desperation perhaps, to whisper, "the blood of Jesus sets me free." The ear instantly 'popped open' and she could hear normally. This was astounding to me as well as to all those watching. Very obviously the blood of Jesus was a key to her healing. Now, after prayer, I frequently demonstrate this demonic response to 'the blood of Jesus.' Often people will hear me say, 'the blood of Jesus,' but be unable to hear anything else. It makes a great demonstration and shows clearly that deafness is a spirit. The spirit of deafness may be stubborn and resist leaving, but demons recognize 'the blood of Jesus' as the final authority, the proof of their defeat nearly 2000 years ago.

Action Is Necessary

That Sunday I felt inspired to speak the words, "the blood of Jesus sets me free." I had already discovered it was often necessary to pray more than once. That is, to persevere. I will almost always pray three times for people. Done properly, you can press the battle in prayer and not get distracted by the devil's

games. In a significant number of cases it is the third prayer that brings healing. Persevering that Easter Sunday morning led to an inspiration or 'word of knowledge' that brought the healing. In other cases perseverance will lead to insight concerning spiritual problems that must be dealt with for healing to occur.

The recent Redlands crusade's most notable miracle came because someone persevered. A severely crippled man, on crutches, came for prayer. He had been injured in a fall and was in pain. After prayer he was significantly better and said so, but he wasn't totally healed. I asked him, as I often do, to stand to one side and watch while I went on ministering to others. I do this for several reasons. One, as he watched, his faith would grow. Secondly the crowd watching would not perceive a defeat which could prompt unbelief to grow. Third, it must be remembered that the crowd is an important part of the crusade and their interest must be maintained. It is easily lost in long drawn out personal interactions. As this man stepped aside, Larry Monteith, one of our evangelists, began to talk with him and encourage him to act out his faith. Larry got him to move, to test himself for pain, to move some more. Without my further involvement he was totally healed and able to put down his crutches. Larry recognized, as I have for many years, the importance of acting on faith. This miracle, perhaps the most significant of the crusade, did not occur in the 'limelight' but off to the side as someone worked with a man not totally healed but 'touched.' The passive approach to healing in most churches would have left this man 'feeling better' but not healed. The passive 'waiting on God' theology taught in many churches is a substantial hindrance to healing. It teaches that faith is an intellectual exercise.

Faith, indeed, is something you believe. But it is also something you say and something you do. Faith must be demonstrated. Following prayer meeting one morning, one of our pastors, Jim Duran, came to me for prayer. He had severe pain in his back and was unable to straighten up or walk very well. I got one of our evangelists, Harry Hills, to help me and together we prayed for Jim's back. Nothing happened. Jim was still in pain. A lot of pain. Desperate, I said, "Move your back." Jim tried, we prayed again. About the third time Jim tried and we prayed, the pain left and he was completely healed. It was obvious to me, and those watching, that action was a necessary ingredient to Jim's healing. This is true in many, many cases. The old theological cliché, "I'm waiting on God," simply implies unbelief. The man at the pool of Bethesda waited 38 years, and had he not acted on Jesus' command, he would still be there. This 'waiting' mentality is as detrimental to healing as it is to receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

God has determined that the human will must be involved in faith. The young Oregon girl whose demon of destruction had ruled and ruined her life was delivered the moment she involved her will with the will of God. The devil, a master at deception and exploitation, seizes any opportunity to afflict and dominate human life. He is especially proficient at exploiting injury and trauma. Often people will heal but where the devil has gained an advantage because of bitterness, anger or unforgiveness, the deformity, loss of feeling, or pain remains. In a Tucson rally I prayed for a young man who had broken his ankle two years earlier. Even though the bones had healed, he still suffered from pain. After prayer he was not healed. Having seen this kind of result many times, I asked him, "Who has really upset you or hurt you?" He replied, "My father." I led him in a simple prayer of forgiveness, casting out hate and pain. I then asked him to put some weight on the ankle and the moment he did the pain left. This is quite common in cases of broken bones and traumas such as knife, bullet and surgical wounds.

Faith involves more than intellectual assent or a casual "I hope so." It involves confession and speaks in this way.

Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, Who will descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).' But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom 10:6-10).'

Faith also involves believing action. This is shown repeatedly in the gospels. Those 'not yet healed' were told to 'go' and do something. As they obeyed, they were healed. When Jesus saw the lepers, "He said to them, 'Go, show yourselves to the priests.' And so it was that as they went [not yet healed], they were cleansed (Luke 17:14)."

CONFRONTATION

Sin, Idolatry And The Occult

CHAPTER 4

Paul treats sin almost as a personality. In Romans 7, he says, "Sin revived [it came alive] and I died." And, "Sin, taking occasion (seizing an opportunity) by the commandment produced all kinds of evil desire." He continues saying sin (an entity) does wickedness in him and another law (power or authority) brings him into captivity (Rom 7:7-8,17,23). In Paul's view the devil by sin is able to exploit, gain dominion, manipulate and extend its power over men.

The Occult And Sin

Stewart Cameron, now a pastor, suffered one of the worst cases of eczema I've ever seen. Sometimes parts of his skin were so inflamed and cracked it would look like raw flesh. Doctors had been totally ineffective in dealing with his condition. During my second tour of pasturing in Australia, Stewart came to me for counseling. I had begun to understand the impact of family curses and had discovered a relationship between witchcraft and skin conditions such as eczema. While we were talking, Stewart recalled he possessed some medals his grandfather, a mason of high degree, had given him. We prayed and renounced the curse of masonry. Many, perhaps, don't realize that at initiation and then through each degree of masonry literal curses are taken involving the member and his family. Stewart went home, got rid of the medals and recovered from his eczema. This story, however, was far from complete and as it worked out, I gained additional insight into the power of sin.

Stewart decided to witness to his grandfather. This led to a dramatic confrontation. As Stewart was witnessing, the demeanor of his grandfather suddenly changed. He turned to Stewart and said, "I will never accept the blood of Jesus." His grandfather became so violently agitated that Stewart's parents took it upon themselves to separate, and keep separate, the two of them making sure Stewart and his grandfather were never alone together and allowing no further witnessing by their son. Sometime later this grandfather became ill and was hospitalized. He grew steadily worse and Stewart wanted to see him but was forbidden to do so. Finally, Stewart, on his lunch hour when no one dreamed he would come, made a visit to his elderly and seriously ill grandfather. Once again he witnessed of the 'blood of Jesus' and won his grandfather to salvation. Quite clearly, secret societies may appear religious but are defiantly opposed to salvation by the blood of Jesus. Equally clear is the reality of curses. Sin somehow has legal access and can exercise dominion by means of occult objects through the generations to other family members. Its power is broken by the 'blood.' Paul writes, "He [God] has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love [Jesus], in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins (Col 1: 13-14)."

In sickness we have an intertwining of the human and spiritual life with the demonic. Jesus made a notable connection between sin and sickness in the story of the paralytic. "They brought to [Jesus] a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you (Mat 9:2).'" He could be of good cheer because his 'sins' were forgiven. Two factors in this story have bearing on healing. One is the connection with sin. The disciples recognized and knew this because they were raised to think that way. See the story of the man born blind to see this way of thinking. Clearly, Jesus informs them, you cannot always make direct cause and effect statements. Nonetheless sickness is in the world because of sin and some specific illnesses are the result of some specific sins. Disease

is energized and given opportunity because of man's sin nature. This truth is lost on today's generation. The second factor is Jesus has power over both sin and disease. He can forgive and/or heal. This makes the necessary ingredients of a crusade apparent. Men must be brought to a place of repentance or open-heartedness with God. If they repent, turn from their sin and receive forgiveness they are well on their way to being healed. The dynamics of guilt and shame for sin are rarely incorporated in the modern preacher's therapy oriented message. Instead, people are buoyed up with self-esteem and platitude preaching and are never brought to a place of repentance. It is one of the main failings of modern ministry. The greatest sin in this is that people can leave the crusade not only unhealed but unforgiven.

Sin

The summer of 1995 we held a crusade in Prescott prior to the Bible Conference. Following the preaching and call for salvation, I asked for people suffering back pain to come forward for healing. I have a great confidence that God will heal from this condition and often call for these cases to help trigger faith in those watching. I prayed for a number of people and for some other conditions and had wonderful results. However, after the meeting was over a woman came saying she had back pain and wanted me to pray for her. I asked her why she hadn't come earlier. She replied, "I was embarrassed to come because I am wearing shorts." Knowing I was dealing with a person of religious background I asked where she went to church. She told me she attended one of the local charismatic churches and had been doing so for about five years. I asked her to sit in a chair for me while I checked to see if perhaps one of her legs was shorter than the other. Having prayed for hundreds of backs, I was sure she would have a shortened leg, and she did. I led her in a prayer. We renounced hate and bitterness, involvement with magical healers and chiropractors and cast out the pain. Nothing happened. The leg did not 'come out.' The pain did not leave. Absolutely nothing happened. I asked her, "Are you married?" She dropped her head in obvious shame and said, "No." Then she quickly added, "We are planning on it in about a month." Immediately her leg came out and the pain left. This was amazing but not surprising. This woman, who had been attending a Pentecostal church for five years, was living with a man to whom she was not married. Living in sin! This was a clear demonstration of the impact sin has on our physical body and its hindrance to healing Jesus wants to give and has paid for with his blood.

The Bible plainly details a number of sins which bring curses (a significant hindrance to the natural growth and vitality of the body) upon men. Miracle crusades are not magic shows. They are a confrontation with the powers of darkness. Thirty-four years of ministry have taught me that human beings are complex creatures and healing involves many details of a person's life, the hidden and secret parts as well as the open and known parts. Only when these are dealt with is healing possible. Some evangelists have gotten themselves in big trouble by advertising healing in a guaranteed way leading people to believe it was an elixir or formula. It is not. People came to Jesus and desired healing, which they received. Jesus is the healer and people must come to Him on his terms. Sin is a powerful dynamic that opposes health and salvation. An exhaustive list of sins and their connection to health is not possible here. But, there is enough Bible evidence to link illegitimacy, incest, idolatry, robbing God's title and murder to physical woes in this life.

MURDER: "So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 'When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth (Gen 4:11-12).'"

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTH: "One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD(Deu 23:2)."

IDOLATRY: "'Cursed is the one who makes a carved or molded image, an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen! (Deu 27:15).'"

SEXUAL PERVERSION: "Cursed is the one who lies with any kind of animal.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 'Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 'Cursed is the one who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen! (Deu 27:21-23)."

STEALING GOD'S TITHE: "You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation(Mal 3:9)."

Even casual reading of the Old Testament reveals God's great displeasure in sexual sin. "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. 'Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion (Lev 18:22-23). " It is also a fraud against the body of another person made in God's image and belonging to Him. I am convinced many involved in perverted behavior such as homosexuality are not healed because they are unwilling to repent. This was demonstrated to me during a crusade in England. A young man, totally deaf in both ear, whom I suspected of being homosexual, came for healing. I tested him and prayed for his ear to open. I then tested his hearing again. I was whispering things like "praise the Lord" and "I'm healed" to no avail. He could not hear. Suddenly I felt inspired to whisper, "Are you a homo?" He immediately got a shocked look on his face, turned to look at me and shook his head. He, like many homosexuals and sexual deviants, W in a mockery of the gospel, resist the grace of God (healing) because they resist the Spirit of God calling them to repentance.

Illegitimate birth and abortion have serious spiritual and physical consequences. My experience and medical research bear this out. Many illegitimate children are brought to me suffering from deafness in one ear and respiratory problems (allergies, sinusitis and asthma dominate the list). Many of these also suffer from rejection or a fear of being rejected. Most receive instant respiratory relief when that fear is cast out. It might seem the fear of rejection cannot be, in the very young, related to the physical problems. Questioning parents, however, has led me to believe that factors surrounding conception have an impact on the babies health. In a significant number of cases I found the pregnancy unwanted. Apparently, by a mechanism we don't understand, this spirit of fear is able to exploit the sin (fornication) or rejection of the parents and lay hold on the child's respiratory system.

Sometimes these illegitimate children are not healed (especially from deafness) until the curse of illegitimacy is renounced and broken by the parents. An eleven year old boy, deaf in one ear, was brought forward by his mother for healing in our Phoenix crusade. Experience had shown me several times that children, deaf in one ear, have been conceived out of wedlock, so I asked his mother if that had been the case. She said it had. We prayed, broke the curse of illegitimacy, and cast out the spirit of deafness. The boys ear instantly opened. We were able to demonstrate this miracle for the congregation. His father was watching all of this and was so moved by it that he came to the platform. Weeping as he spoke, he confirmed the miracle. This kind of confirmation is a great help in crusades.

Abortions are now out of control in this nation and elsewhere in the world where the premium is on having boys. Many Asian nations, for example, routinely abort female fetuses. I know, in spite of what the media says, it does affect the mother and the entire nation's spiritual health. Ministering in southern California, a woman suffering a powerful demonic manifestation came for healing and deliverance. After talking with her for a few minutes I felt inspired to say, "Dear, you've had an abortion, haven't you?" This question brought about a considerable confrontation. I don't recommend this line of questioning except when definitely led by the Holy Spirit. She has since written me a long letter. In it she explained the torment she suffered as a result of that murder. Many women in today's world are similarly affected and this is being brought out more and more in medical research. Abortion is one the primary sins where demonic activity (pain, sickness, mental breakdown, rage and weakness) occurs on anniversaries of the act. This occurs often nine months, five and ten years later.

Idolatry And Witchcraft

Idolatry is a curse on any nation and on individuals as well. The sin of idolatry is linked to the generations. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth- you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me (Exo 20:45)." Repeatedly God's children are told to "tear down the idols." Obedience leads to blessing and disobedience to destruction. Put another way, obedience leads to healing and disobedience opens the way for sickness.

The Scripture specifically deals with objects and fetishes. Ezekiel warns,

Thus says the Lord GOD: 'Woe to the women who sew magic charms on their sleeves and make veils for the heads of people of every height to hunt souls! Will you hunt the souls of My people, and keep yourselves alive? And will you profane Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, killing people who should not die, and keeping people alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies? Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, I am against your magic charms by which you hunt souls there like birds. I will tear them from your arms, and let the souls go, the souls you hunt like birds (Ezek 13:18-20).'

Ezekiel says objects are used in the "hunt for souls" which is an enlightening view of false religion, objects and occult power. Idolatry is also corrupting to behavior. "Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, 'lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female (Deu 4:15-16).'" The idolatry of Horeb was immediately followed by moral corruption. After Gideon's victorious battle he was asked to rule over Israel, and he refused. He did, however, collect the gold earrings from the plunder which he made into an idol and immediately "all Israel played the harlot (Jdg 8.27)." Needless to say idolatry is in direct conflict with the work of the Holy Spirit.

The story of Asa whose anger at God provoked him to jail the prophet of God illustrates clearly the relationship of witchcraft, sickness and healing. "And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was severe; yet in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians [magical healers]. So Asa rested with his fathers; he died in the forty-first year of his reign (2 Chr 16:12-13)." The Bible links his trust in foreign nations and foreign gods to his sickness. In the case of Jehoram the idolatry of his father Ahab, his own idolatry, and murdering his own brothers resulted in his entire household being smitten with disease.

And a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus says the LORD God of your father David: Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father, or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot like the harlotry of the house of Ahab, and also have killed your brothers, those of your father's household, who were better than yourself, behold, the LORD will strike your people with a serious affliction; your children, your wives, and all your possessions; and you will become very sick with a disease of your intestines, until your intestines come out by reason of the sickness, day by day ... Then it happened in the course of time, after the end of two years, that his intestines came out because of his sickness; so he died in severe pain. And his people made no burning for him, like the burning for his fathers. He was thirty-two years old when he became king. He reigned in Jerusalem eight years and, to no one's sorrow, departed. However they buried him in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings (2 Chr 21:12-15, 19-20).

He died after two years of sickness and the Bible adds, "to no-one's sorrow."

Objects

In dealing with believers in many nations over the years I have found many that incorporate fetishes and religious objects ignorantly into their faith. They do so to their great hurt and hindrance in receiving from God. I recall two cases that crystallized my thinking on idolatry. The father of one of our members was visiting our church one Sunday and came forward for prayer. He had been born again seven years earlier and attended faithfully a Pentecostal church in another city. He was deaf in one ear. He was not healed or helped initially, and I noticed a chain and medal that was on his neck. It was a Catholic medal with a cross on one side and the inscription, "I'm a Catholic, Call a Priest," on the other. Now here was a born again believer ignorantly wearing a piece of jewelry that has occult significance. He told me it held no meaning for him at all. He took it off and the ear was instantly opened. This happens in nearly every crusade. It cannot be coincidence that when the medal, talisman, scapular or religiously blessed (actually cursed) object is removed, the sickness leaves.

The other case occurred in the Philippines where we have one of our finest churches in Davao. Several of our pastors were doing a Bible conference and I was preaching a crusade at night. It was during the crusade that I saw an astounding healing from blindness. We had use of the downtown plaza each evening and had been having outstanding conversions and hearings. On the final night the government usurped our use of the plaza and we were forced into a gymnasium some distance away. This severely cut down our crusade crowd. Especially the number of visitors. I was not excited at our prospects as the service began because crowd size and visitors are important dynamics in crusades. They are not like church services. After preaching, I decided to pray for people individually because we had a relatively small number of non-church people present. While I was ministering, a seventy-six year old woman was led to the platform by the younger members of her family. As she waited she was apparently listening while I ministered to others. As her turn approached, I dealt with a man who was wearing several Catholic objects. I had begun to mock these things from time to time and make a show of their ineffectiveness. The man, or I, threw these objects down and he was healed. This elderly lady had heard all this but had seen nothing because she was totally blind. After a fruitless prayer I asked her about any objects she might have on her. Without any hesitation she reached into the blouse of her dress and pulled out a packet that had been sewn into the lining. It was a talisman and contained only God knows what. Now prayer had instant results. She could see! It was a glorious and outstanding miracle. It more than made up for the disillusionment I had at the beginning of the service. This seventy-six year old woman, healed, led her family down the steps from the platform, out of the gymnasium, onto the sidewalk and down the street on their way home. I was so inspired over this miracle that in my motel in Manila a few days later, I put together a new sermon dealing with idols using the story of Gideon tearing down the altars of Baal. I did this for the express intent of getting Malaysians, those in my next crusade in Kuala Lumpur, to throw down their talismans and be healed by Jesus Christ.

Let me say once again, these objects have spiritual significance. The majority of the world wears them because they live in fear of evil spirits and view these idols as protection rather than what they are in truth, a curse. Many, many people in America wear them in ignorance. In California I dealt with a man in much pain wearing a body brace because of a serious back injury. He was wearing a string of beads about his neck. He told me he had gotten them in India. To him they had no significance. What they were in fact was a talisman, blessed by some heathen priest for warding off evil spirits. He removed the beads and was instantly healed, confirming in front of hundreds the curse of evil spirits connected to religious objects. It is not a wonder that God hates idolatry.

Magical Healing

My thinking regarding magical healers, and chiropractors in particular, was triggered one day when I was working with a young minister, trying to get him experience in healing ministry. We were working with a teenage girl brought to us by her mother for lower back pain. As I had already observed, people with lower

back pain often have one leg that is shorter than the other, and this girl was no exception. He was praying and not having any success, so I asked, "Let me pray for her?" and he, gladly, allowed me to step in. The girl was seated and I began to check for a shortened leg. While I was doing this I asked the mother if her daughter had been to a doctor or received any treatments for her back condition. She replied, "She's being treated by a chiropractors" I was holding the girl's heels, and looking at the noticeable difference in the lengths of her legs, and the moment her mother spoke those words the leg (came out.' The girl was healed, as she demonstrated by moving her back without pain. This type of reaction is the same for people involved or treated by witchcraft, witch-doctors, Indian religion and reflexologist, leading me to conclude that chiropraxy is also a magical healing art.

It is necessary to see this clearly, because chiropractic 'medicine' has undergone a massive media makeover in recent years. Many people, disaffected by the medical profession and because of its non-invasive approach to healing, seek chiropractors as part of a 'holistic' approach to health. An approach our 'quick-fix' and 'have it your way' generation finds appealing. Moreover, the American legal system has quashed decades of the American Medical Association's resistance to chiropraxy as unscientific and non-medical making it possible for chiropractors to be listed as primary care providers in hospitals. No longer are they viewed as magical healers but as legitimate medical doctors. There are well over 30,000 'licensed' chiropractors in the United States alone where over 163 million visits are made to their offices each year.

In spite of the massive media campaign to the contrary, chiropraxy and its related healing arts (reflexology, naturopathy and homeopathy, in particular, and a great variety of occult practices which hide under the chiropractic banner) are neither scientific nor Christian. Its roots are in occultic religion (chiropraxy) practiced by the ancient Egyptians, Hindus, Chinese and Greek societies, the flow of chi and acupuncture (based on the meridian points which correspond to the ying and yang of eastern religion and the flow of good and bad 'energy'), and the knowledge of the 'Innate' which is a 'fellow within' or guide like personality associated with occult power. All who are trained as chiropractors pick up this spirit, the Innate, and as a consequence pass it along in their practice. The founder, David Palmer, was himself a confessed practitioner in occult religion and passed, or transmitted, his 'psychic powers' to his son. Ankerberg and Weldon (Can You Trust Your Doctor, 1991) quote from the well-known chiropractor and developer of 'Touch for Health,' John F. Thie.

The modern 'Chiropractor believes that the innate nature that runs through the body is connected to universal [cosmic] intelligence that runs through the world [i.e. 'God'], so each person is plugged into the universal intelligence through the nervous system (p. 207).

They quote Palmer's son.

Occult power really exists and is the most forceful end result bringing things into the world. Everyone may absorb as much of it [occult power] as he will from divine energy. All nature shows that it is to be used for securing the needed things of life. One must learn to absorb and use it as surely as one must learn to draw if one would paint or to use one's legs if one would skate (p. 21 1).

Continuing, they comment on the 'Innate.'

The Palmers call this psychic energy that is used in the occult by a specific term, 'Innate.' innate was a mysterious, divine life force within all men that flowed from the brain through the nerves to the organs of the body ... all manifestations of occult or psychic power fall within the domain of manifestations of the innate ...

The most recent study of chiropractors done by the prestigious Consumers Union, publishers of Consumer Reports, comments

But chiropractic is not just a set of techniques for manipulating the spine; it is a belief system that credits the spine with a major role in health and disease ... the problems we identified two decades ago still exist (June

1994).

Chiropractors are trained in the 'Innate,' pick up this spirit in their training, and pass it along to those they treat. Treatment by a chiropractor is not a simple adjustment or subluxation but an impartation of occult power. Many times people will not be healed of a wide variety of maladies until this involvement c occult is renounced and their faith focused on Jesus Christ. Chiropractors use magical arts that are not new, not scientific, and not Christian to treat people who often end up being their lifetime patients, constantly needing an adjustment. Although massive amounts of money and publicity have been invested by chiropractors to change the public's perception, I remain convinced that there is simply no difference between them and any other magical healer.

At Marah

Bible interpretation is governed by specific rules. One of these, the 'law of first mention' says the initial mention of a theme, symbol or revelation in the Bible is of primary importance in determining its meaning or usage. It is therefore significant that God reveals Himself as Jehovah-Rapha at the bitter waters of Marah (Exo 15:22-26). Early in Israel's exodus they come to have a bitter experience. I have long understood, and medical science is confirming this on nearly a daily basis, that emotions, especially bitterness, hate and unforgiveness, play an important role in sickness and disease. Torment, physical and emotional, is related to unforgiveness. Jesus says concerning the unforgiving servant, "His master was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses (Mat 18:33-35)."

In Hebrews bitterness, resentment and strife are linked to feebleness and lameness. We are encouraged to, "Strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled (Heb 12:12-15)." This spirit of bitterness is able to infect or poison other people. It is attributed to Esau, a profane man who was ungrateful for God's providence in his life. The profane or carnal man is often ungrateful and bitter over life expressing it in slander, evil speaking and lies which poison his life and others, and open an avenue for demonic activity.

James writes about words and says, "The tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!" And, "No man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." And then concerning bitterness he adds, "If you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic (James 3:5,8,14-15)." Anger is another strong emotion which allows a beachhead for demonic activity. Paul writes to the Ephesians warning them to, "Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil (Eph 4:26-27)." When these hateful emotions rule in life, the door is opened for emotional and physical infirmity

Emotions And Infirmity

For many people their healing revolves around emotional issues. The vast majority of women with scoliosis have been sexually molested as children or young girls. Renouncing bitterness and unforgiveness brings dramatic healing in most of these cases. Many female disorders are closely related to emotions associated with unforgiveness, bitterness and resentment. The devil exploits these women through hatred of fathers, husbands and sometimes men in general. Renouncing the hate often brings complete and instant healing from various kinds of cysts, ovarian and fallopian tube infirmities and dysfunction. Oftentimes lumps in the breast dissolve following prayers of forgiveness.

In Perth, Australia, I dealt with a woman about hate and bitterness toward her husband. Another woman, awaiting prayer for lumps in her breast, was listening and recognized the problem of hate in her own life. While standing in line she prayed from her heart, forgave her husband, and the lumps disappeared. This all happened before I got a chance to pray for her and demonstrate this powerful truth to the congregation. Similarly, a man with a tremendous knot on the top of his spine came to me for prayer. He was full of hate which manifested itself in slander and evil speaking. The moment we finished a prayer of repentance, casting out hate and bitterness, and forgiving those Who had hurt him, the knot disappeared.

Medicine has linked cervical cancer to promiscuous behavior. Psychiatrists have linked compulsive promiscuity to anger and hatred of men. It is not surprising that when hate is renounced, forgiveness is offered and the cancer rebuked in prayer, healing occurs. Not only do the lusts and torments leave but so does the cancer. Cancers are often associated with hate, self-hate and self-pity. Cesarean births, named for Caesar who was supposedly the first child so delivered, involve a cutting through the abdominal and uterine walls. This surgical procedure is extremely popular in the United States and leaves not only a considerable scar but often lingering pain and discomfort. This often comes as 'anniversary pain,' usually nine months, one or five years after the procedure. This can be healed in most cases by leading the woman in a prayer renouncing resentment and anger toward her husband.

I recently talked with one of our missionaries who told me of an interesting and enlightening healing in his church. He was in revival and a woman came for healing from an issue of blood. The first night they were not successful, nor were they the second night, but the evangelist felt he had a word of knowledge and, feeling compelled by the Holy Spirit after the service, asked the woman, "Have you been raped?" She immediately began to weep and said that she had indeed been raped. She proceeded to share her experience and even named the person who had so horribly violated her. The evangelist then asked if she would be willing to forgive and pray again for healing, and she was. This time she was healed immediately. She came to church the next night, again confirming the miracle. This dramatically illustrates, once more, the spiritual nature of disease and how the devil exploits circumstances (especially traumatic ones) to maintain a hold or bondage on people. Jesus' rebuke to the ruler of the synagogue, who was indignant over his healing on the Sabbath, was that Satan had held that daughter of Abraham (child of God), "bound - think of it - for eighteen years (Lu 13:16)." It is important to note that forgiveness does not mean you condone wickedness or even place yourself in the same situation again. It does mean you release the judgment to God and place your faith and trust in Him.

Many other emotions have impact in a person's physical body. As already mentioned, asthma is almost always related to fear and fear of rejection. Dominion over fear gives dramatic improvement in these cases. It is interesting to note the Latin root of the word "worry" means to strangle or choke. Often to build faith in a congregation I'll ask for those suffering from sinusitis, allergies or other respiratory problem to stand for prayer. Usually ninety percent or more of those who stand experience instant relief after casting out fear and fear of rejection. Self-pity is a powerful emotion often related in cases of diabetes and cancer. I have seen remarkable results in diabetics when the issues of fear of rejection, self-hate and self-pity are dealt with in repentance. People are often unaware in our 'feeling' and 'experience' oriented time that emotions cannot be allowed rule in life. Dominion over these strong emotional issues is associated with dramatic healing.

COMPELLING WITNESS

The Confirming Element

CHAPTER 5

My firm conviction is that healing provides confirmation of the gospel message and messenger. This generation, mirroring that of the First Century, is immune to philosophy and platitude. It demands reality. For many years we have preached a 'changed life' as the valid proof of salvation. Healing validates the gospel. Jesus healed in His generation as a sign of His authority. If we don't believe Him., Jesus says, "believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him (John 10:38)." In most of the world demonic activity is in evidence everyday and as occult, experiential religion gains credibility the demonstration of God's power becomes more significant. We must have a tangible reality of the power of God.

Evangelism

Healing from disease, fear and oppression comes in the practical demonstration of faith in the reality of Jesus' authority that is both judicial (legal) and powerful (mighty). It does not come merely in intellectual understanding. Without the power of God being a reality in lives, there will be no whole-hearted loyalty to Christ or His kingdom. The impact healing has on evangelism was one reason I was eager to share my Mexico City experience with the fellowship. I saw very clearly how healing moved the people watching as well as those healed to faith in God. I knew it would do the same everywhere.

Very clearly God intended to work with and confirm the gospel and his ministers by a supernatural demonstration of power over sickness and disease. He intended that the devil would be clearly portrayed as the root of all affliction. By healing He would show His dominion. The experience of the New Testament church was that God confirmed their ministry with accompanying signs. Mark concludes his gospel with, "they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs (Mark 16:20)." Jesus aggressively confronted the demonic in his ministry because God was with Him and God was in partnership with the New Testament church in evangelism. Luke writes how God, "anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him (Acts 10:38)." John plainly describes Jesus' conflict with the devil. "He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil (I John 3:8)." The hearings of Jesus in Luke chapter 5 dramatically make the connection between healing and the 'presence' of the Lord. "Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them (Luke 5:17). " Healing is not the work of the devil but the result of the presence of the Lord, our healer, to heal. The same is true in our ministry as we aggressively confront the devil.

Religious onlookers (Pharisees and teachers of the law in Luke 5) always present a special problem for the ministry of healing. The confrontation with religion can result in an acute crisis, as the apostles found out. Threatened and beaten, they were thrown into prison (tantamount to a death sentence) after healing the lame man. This confrontation was provoked by the dramatic evidence of power to heal in Jesus' name. After being released from prison they gathered for prayer and said,

'Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.' And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all (Acts 4:29-33).

Healing was plainly part of the apostles ministry. Equally clear from the scripture is the fact that the disciples did not intend to lay healing aside. They prayed for it. The result was an even greater release of power, grace and boldness in evangelism.

The writer of Hebrews understood healing was a confirmation of the witness of Jesus Christ. The gospel is confirmed by three things. Jesus brought it, the apostles saw it and the Holy Spirit validates it with signs. Look at the Scripture. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him [the apostles], God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his own will?" Miracle healing is the will of God. Healing does not usurp or seize from God his initiative or volition. It is not presumption. Healing is already the will of God and He does not have to be appeased, persuaded or prevailed upon because it is His nature to heal. He is Jehovah-Rapha.

Demonstration

Demonstration is part of God's plan. God allows men to test him in the tithe, that is, men can for some reason put God on the spot concerning His tithe. "Test me," He says, "see if I am able" to provide, and God, of course, is able. It has also been my experience that God is pleased to demonstrate the spiritual nature and his power over disease. Years ago I was with Harry Hills in Bullhead City conducting a 'School of Healing.' As we prayed for the sick, we had little success dealing with lower back pain when we simply prayed. If, however, we sat these people in a chair and demonstrated their legs were unequal in length and then prayed we had outstanding results. This kind of demonstration became especially effective stirring faith in a congregation. I now will take time early in a crusade to sit people with back pain down and call for new converts and skeptics to come and watch as the short leg 'comes out.' It is then easy to have these people stand and demonstrate their healing by bending or twisting their backs. It is especially wonderful when people watching see this dramatic demonstration of God's power. The healing is confirmed, not by the leg growing out, but by the recovery from pain and disability.

By praying for back pain this way, we clearly demonstrate the spiritual nature of man and disease. Bones are 'solid.' Yet something happens and the bones are changed after prayer is made over bitterness, anger, witchcraft or some other spiritual issue. Dealing with back pain this way has become such a tool that I rarely hold people's legs to show people the difference in lengths for very long because I know they'll be healed before I can gather new converts and skeptics to watch. In Anchorage, Alaska, a man with a pronounced limp and serious back pain came for healing. He had broken his leg and it had healed nearly an inch and a half shorter than his other leg. Walking caused him the pain. I asked him to sit down in a chair. I knelt down and lifted his heels off the ground to check his legs. I couldn't help but marvel at the difference in length. Suddenly his short leg simply 'grew out.' He was healed before I even had a chance to pray! Nonetheless, with a high degree of success, many different back and leg conditions can be demonstrably healed using this method in prayer.

Failing out or being 'slain in the Spirit' may occasionally have a spiritual benefit. In praying for the sick, however, I would rather they not fall down. Generally I will hold people by the hand, lay my hand on their shoulder or perhaps even behind their back or neck if I suspect they might fall. If they do fall, I want them to

be helped up as soon as possible. Too often the devil is out to 'psyche' or 'con' people into believing that all the work is done. Often the devil simply plays 'opossum' until he gets people away from the crusade. Then he manifests anew and convinces them they can never be free. It is diversion the devil wishes to employ and confrontation he wishes to avoid. It is best to continue working with people until the issues have been satisfactorily resolved and you are satisfied a genuine healing or deliverance has taken place. It is not to anyone's advantage to fall, get up thinking they are healed, and leave the meeting without the necessary repentance, faith and demonstration of healing. The devil must be confronted and dominion gained. Sometimes not everyone is healed. The dynamic involved is faith. In these cases understand that we are called to "heal the sick, cast out demons and preach the Kingdom of God." We are not called to explain everything. God is present and He rules.

Other Gods

A charismatic couple had attended our church in Prescott for awhile when one day the wife called me about strange manifestations in their home. I asked, "Like what?" She replied that they had a cuckoo clock and occasionally the cuckoo would come out and cuckoo. That seemed pretty normal to me. She said, "It doesn't have any works." Immediately I agreed that it was strange. I visited their home and discovered a number of jade statues which they said were worth about \$3500. I suggested they break them up. They did and the cuckoo stopped its cuckoo. Objects have always been associated with the occult and demonic. A talisman, from the Greek word for consecration, are consecrated for religious use and used to ward off evil spirits. In Greek culture they were used in initiations to the mystery religions. Often they are carried on a person but they can also be household decorations or pictures. Often crystals, jade or other stones carved into statues, many traditional crafts and engravings or carvings from many countries are prayed over (consecrated) by spiritualists or priests. They are invested with spiritual power in direct opposition to God's command. Many times these are purchased for the express intent of protecting the home from evil. Often believers receive these objects as gifts. Unaware of their spiritual nature and personality, they bring them into their homes or wear them.

In Melbourne I prayed for a man who had been deaf in his right ear for thirty years. I got him to remove a Saint Christopher medal from his neck but he was still not healed. I asked him, "You wouldn't happen to have any scapulars on you, would you?" He reached into his wallet, removed two of them, threw them down on the ground and was instantly healed. Here is another arena in which I have found God is pleased to demonstrate his authority. Early crusades in Malaysia were filled with difficulty, partly due to the government's anti-Christian rule and partly because we could not find a way to make a mass prayer work. As a result I began to minister to individuals. One night a woman totally deaf for eighteen years was brought for prayer. She was such an excellent lip reader I was amazed she was deaf. Just talking with her you would never suspect it. We were in a crusade and over 700 people watched as God wonderfully opened her ears. She could hear! This was demonstrated to everyone and she left the crusade. The next night she came back. Somehow, overnight, she had lost her hearing. I asked if she was involved in witchcraft or had any idols. Her friend, standing nearby and holding her purse reached inside it and pulled out a crucifix. Her ears were instantly opened. This open demonstration of the power of God over other gods is important in getting and keeping converts in many nations of the world. Removing and sometimes even mocking religious objects is a powerful way to demonstrate God's rule over the multitude of gods worshiped in Asia and elsewhere in the world.

In Sam Sivarajah's church in Kuala Lumpur I prayed for a Tamil man suffering kidney failure and desperately in need of a transplant. He was from a Hindu background, and as he came for prayer I noticed he was wearing a very elaborate leather talisman. He did not want to remove it. I told him, "If you want my prayer you'll have to take that off. I'm preaching Jesus and not religion or any other gods." He still did not want to remove it so I asked him to stand aside and watch. After watching a number of notable miracles he

decided he wanted prayer. He removed the talisman and was totally healed by Jesus. It has been over two years since that time. He is still healed and not suffering any kidney failure. A very wealthy Hindu man suffering with great pain from serious back problems came to me for prayer also in Malaysia. As I sat him in a chair to check his legs I noticed a gold chain and a one inch long cylinder hanging from it around his neck. I found out later it contained writings blessed by a Hindu priest. I asked him, "Can I have that talisman? You can keep the chain." He said, "I wear it for protection." That was exactly the issue. Was he trusting Jesus or some other god? This is, I believe, the reason open demonstration pleases God. Most people in the world have a multi-faceted religion. Even though they speak about Jesus and may attend services, they often are practicing at the old altars. When they become focused in faith on Jesus they are healed. And those watching see the reality of Jesus' power. He gave me the talisman and was healed. Miracles are astounding proof to all that the answer for life is Jesus and why I contend for healing in my ministry.

COMPELLING WITNESS

The Art Of Healing

CHAPTER 6

The usual definition of homiletics is, 'The art and science of preaching.' This definition informs us that not only are there mechanics but an art involved in successfully delivering a sermon. Likewise, ministry to the sick involves mechanics or technique, and an art. Dr. Paul Brand, medical missionary to India for over a third of his eighty-plus years, tells how in his early medical training a wise old doctor taught him to look at his patient's face when he was poking, pinching and prodding their body during an examination. "Watching their face will tell you a lot more than just listening to what they say" was the wise doctor's advice. This is the art of ministering to the sick. John G. Lake agrees - there is an art in ministering to the sick. "I tell people that there is not only a grace of healing but an ART of healing," says Lake, "But if you are going to discuss it from the side of art, then the individual who understands how to open his nature to God, so as to let that life stream pass through from himself to others, is practicing the art of healing." Phillips Brooks great discourse on preaching contains a similar insight.

Preaching is the communication of truth by man to men. It has two essential elements, truth and personality. Neither can it spare and still be preaching ... distinctly and deliberately Jesus chose this method of extending knowledge of himself... [Preparation for the ministry] cannot be the mere training to certain tricks. It cannot be even the furnishing with abundant knowledge. It must be nothing less than the kneading and tempering of a man's whole nature ... (The Joy of Preaching, Kregel, 1989, p. 25-28).

Successful ministry in healing treats disease as a spiritual personality. People must also be understood in terms of personality. You must treat people as individuals and be sensitive to them. As Dr. Brand discovered, their facial expressions and body movements will tell you a great deal. Sometimes more than what they say. Asking the right questions is a grace and an art. With practice you become more effective. It is difficult, for instance, to get people to confess that they are full of hate. Most often they will tell you, without batting an eye, they really don't hate anyone. They've already forgiven that person or it really hasn't been a hurt. This reluctance to acknowledge spiritual issues is especially strong when the person that has hurt them, a parent or spouse, is nearby (Standing next to them perhaps or sitting in the congregation). If, however, the question is put to them differently (for example, "Who would come to your mind if I ask who really hurt you?") they will often readily respond. They are then well on their way to deliverance and healing. Sometimes the specifics are not necessary, but at other times it may be necessary to pursue things in more detail.

Mona's Letter

I received a lengthy letter from a woman who had come for healing in one of our crusades and had, what was without question, a major confrontation in her life. Her healing was not the result of simply prancing into a crusade sick and then prancing out healed. Healing does not happen because we have a slick program or flawless doctrine. It happens because people put their trust in Jesus. They believe, "as the Scripture says." Mona's letter was enlightening. In it we can see the dramatic spiritual struggle for her soul, a struggle that was hidden even from those who knew her well.

Mona had been in one of our churches for about two years. Although she was 'living for God,' it was a struggle and she had never really experienced a genuine joy of salvation. "I felt as if I didn't deserve his [Jesus'] gift," she wrote. She had talked with her pastor and been led in a prayer forgiving her stepfather who

had molested her. This had helped but she was still struggling. One day she was terribly injured in a freak accident. She had stopped her car and put it in 'park' while she got out to open a gate before driving into her driveway. Her daughter somehow slipped out of her car seat and managed to get the car into drive. The car pushed Mona through the gate and pinned her against the wall of her house. She suffered serious and pain and injuries. The pain refused to go away even after she was able to resume her life. Finally the pain became so acute it put her back in the hospital. Her doctor scheduled her for surgery but just as she was being prepped, her temperature shot up to 105. The surgery was canceled. For ten days she remained hospitalized, hooked up to an IV, and receiving morphine for the pain. No one could figure out what had happened. Her spleen and liver were enlarged and the pain was severe. She finally checked herself out of the hospital unhealed. She went home. The next morning she awoke with a sense of urgency about going to church for prayer. There she learned of a healing crusade. The fever left as suddenly as it came and her doctor scheduled her for surgery - The day of the crusade. She postponed it and came to the crusade.

Mona came forward that night for healing from back pain. I led her in a prayer but when I asked her to repeat, "Jesus, deliver me from these tormenting spirits," she fought this off and left. Her parents convinced her to return. That's when I said to her, "Dear, you've had an abortion, haven't you?" Mona wrote, "That hurt me more than you know." We prayed again. According to her letter, my last words to Mona were, "all this infirmity in your body is with you for giving [up] your [child] for that abortion." She left the crusade "in a hurry." Mona explained that to her the abortion had been buried. Not buried in Jesus, but within herself now, however, it was exposed. That abortion was causing her the greatest grief and pain. It was afflicting her with torment, guilt and shame. She could not gain any self-esteem or believe for the real benefits of salvation. Particularly healing.

The next day Mona was rushed to the hospital. On the way to the hospital she was gripped with fear, fear her liver was again enlarged. She was crying. Then, she wrote, "plain as day" she heard those last words I had spoken to her, and she began to pray. By the time they reached the hospital, Mona was healed. At the emergency room she was embarrassed because nothing was wrong with her; she was totally free of pain, but full of doubts. She went home. She mustered the courage to go to the revival which followed the crusade at her church. She asked her pastor about what had happened and he told her that if she was without pain she should simply "accept it." She had been in pain, it seemed, forever. Now in the service she sat without pain. She couldn't get it off her mind. She twisted and squirmed in the chair trying to see if there was any pain. There was none. She went to the altar and asked God in prayer to give her a sign that Jesus had really healed her. As she prayed, the pastor, moving among those in the altar came to her. He laid his hands on her and began to pray. Suddenly she felt a "rush of love and peace like she'd never felt before." A few moments later, as they were standing and worshiping God, the evangelist touched her forehead and she fell backwards. This would not have been my normal style. But I wasn't there. The evangelist touched her and she fell. She fell on her back -- on the place crushed in the accident.

As she lay there, Mona thought, "I can't get up without pain." But she felt Jesus speak to her, "You wanted proof your back was healed. Get up." She wrote me that she wrestled with this in her mind while she lay there on the floor. Finally she said to herself, "I'm just gonna get up ... no pain never felt this good in my life." So she stood up. As she did the evangelist said to her, "Sister, you've been delivered." Mona replied, "I know."

Mona's letter reveals how the devil was able to exploit conditions and circumstances based on past sin in her life. It illustrates the value of crusade ministry, follow-up revivals, team ministry, the word of knowledge, pastors, and evangelists. It specifically illustrates how wonderful healing can be in a person's salvation. It illustrates that it is always the will of God to heal, even as God is working with complex issues. Knowing this changes how one preaches and prays for the sick and helps achieve a greater degree of success. It is an art gained through experience and more than a couple of failures. People are very reluctant to let things long

buried within themselves be dug up so they can be buried with Christ.

Crusades, Revivals And Church Services

In ministering to the sick, whether in crusades or church services, I prefer to deal first with conditions or diseases which I feel confident God will heal and be demonstrable to those watching. This is important to building faith in those waiting to be healed and those watching but reluctant to come forward. Personally, I prefer to start ministering to people with deaf ears (one, not both), injuries (sports, automobile and industrial), cancers (accompanied by pain), women with growths in their breast and those with lingering pain from previous broken bones, injury, accident or surgery. I've also had astonishing results dealing with people whose nerves have been damaged causing a loss of feeling or mobility. These are almost always healed instantly, in a demonstrable way, in new converts and visitors. So I also prefer to start with visitors or new converts. Too often those long schooled in the traditional religion of suffering are filled with unbelief or religious and emotional baggage that hinders a quick healing. I try to avoid dealing with deaf-mutes immediately because of the difficulties in controlling them and in demonstrating their healing. The sensations are too radically new and sometimes frightening to them, making their reactions difficult to predict. Much time and effort must be spent giving directions so their healing can be demonstrated. Likewise, I rarely deal with stroke victims because I have seen little success in these as yet. Cerebral palsy and blindness are best left to later parts of the healing service when faith has been stirred to a greater degree in those watching.

In a healing service of any kind you are interested in faith. Not just yours. The faith of those sick and those watching is important. It is an important factor that you maintain their interest in healing ministry. God is interested in demonstrating his power but Jesus did not do many miracles in the presence of great unbelief. He was not stymied but did find their faith a factor and rebuked them for not having it. You cannot lose the crowd or leave it behind and be effective in healing. This means that you cannot get bogged down dealing with psychos, neurotic women and egomaniacs who simply love being in the spotlight. If you choose the wrong people to start with, you risk being distracted or sidetracked and the interest of those watching will shift to the latest ball game or juicy rumor. If you spend a long time dealing with one person who mocks or who is not healed after you've made a big issue of them, you will dampen the faith of those awaiting prayer, those watching, and it may just about devastate your own faith.

A church service is different than a crusade not only because of the venue and crowd but in the dynamics for visitors and church members. Mass crusades depend on large numbers in a suitable venue where there is room but not great numbers of unoccupied seats. Rallies and revivals depend more on individual prayer and so you must be selective in who you pray for first. Often people visiting your church service or revival are reluctant to come for healing in a public way. This reluctance can sometimes be overcome by praying for some of your church members who have asked for prayer (they often will prior to a service). When praying for these, remember you are looking for instant and demonstrable healing to encourage others, especially visitors. It is important to have an immediate healing. So choose who to pray for first. You know these church people. Don't pray first for the one who has never felt better any other time you prayed for them. They probably don't like you anyway! Pray for the one you feel will be healed. Then, when they are, encourage your visitors to come.

When people are not immediately healed, I will often pray for them again and usually a third time if necessary, especially if I have seen similar cases healed successfully. Rarely will I pray more than three times. If I'm not successful after the third time I ask them to stand aside and watch, particularly if they have felt something happen. This does three things for them. First, it is not viewed by them as a failure. Secondly, as they watch, their faith can build as others are healed. They may also, as I minister, gain insight to their condition that helps them to healing. Third, there may be other workers who will continue to help them through prayer and encouragement to act on their faith. If you get a demonic manifestation in praying for people whether in a crusade or church service, you can treat it as a deliverance. Generally, however, you will

not want any long or protracted exorcisms in a public arena. People are too uncomfortable with these. Deal with it later if it needs some attention and counseling.

Several times, as at Redlands, I have seen significant healings take place off of center stage as pastors and workers helped those not immediately healed. This applies especially if a team is ministering. Largely misunderstood and ridiculed when I first began it, the team ministry has been very valuable. It has helped me gain insight to the dynamics of faith, the issues of disease, and how to deal with different kinds of people. In learn ministry there is a pooling of knowledge, spiritual wisdom and experience. Often a word of knowledge will come from one of the team. It is possible for one of the learn to continue working with difficult situations or cases where people are not immediately healed - often with spectacular results. I remember two dramatic healings that took place when I was ministering with a 'team.' In Perth I prayed for a polio case. The boy was better, but not healed. Stewart Cameron began to work with him. Stewart got him to throw down a scapular and renounce the curses of idolatry and inherited sickness. Immediately the boy could feel blood flowing in his legs and began to exercise his crippled legs. In Las Vegas about three years ago a woman seriously ill with cancer came for healing from nearby Boulder City. There was no demonstrable cure or relief and I asked her to stand to one side while I prayed for others. My son was helping me in that crusade and he began to work with her. Before long, he had her walking in considerable freedom back and forth behind me on the platform. As the whole crowd began to watch, he took her over to the side of the platform and got her to walk, and then run up and down the stairs and wheelchair ramp. As she began to run the audience broke out in wild cheers and applause. All this occurred while I was ministering center stage. I'm not recommending a circus atmosphere with free lance healers scurrying about the platform. Nonetheless, a team approach, with qualified people helping on the platform, is a great asset to ministry. It's good to be surrounded by people of faith.

Crusades often involve mass prayers and the gathering of testimonies. At other times individuals will be called to the platform for prayer over specific illnesses. In either case it is critical to move large numbers of people quickly to the platform. Other men will have to help you keep the psychos and ego-freaks off the platform. I want genuine miracles for testimonies and desire to pray for genuinely sick people. I ask people working with me to ask four specific questions before they bring anyone to me for prayer or testimony. First, "what was [is] your problem, sickness or need?" Second, "Have you been to a doctor or are you under a doctors care?" In connection with the second question ask the third, "How long have you been sick [seeing a doctor or had the problem] and what does he say about it? What's the prognosis?" Finally ask, "How do [would] you know you are healed?" I am looking for genuine, authenticated miracles. I often ask a husband or wife, parent or friend about a person's healing. Testimonies help secure a person's healing, build faith in all watching, and will help you later in the crusade. You want those healed and those watching to bring visitors to the remaining crusade services.

Other Helpful Material

There are a number of resources available and worth obtaining relevant to healing. T. L. Osborn's *Healing the Sick* has been helpful to many of our pastors, is easy to read and answers most of the common questions related to healing. A recent book is *Healing Evangelism* by Don Dunkerley. Originally schooled in a social Gospel and Presbyterian church, Dunkerley makes some interesting doctrinal twists but is the only person I know who is saying things about healing which I discovered some time ago. The healing ministries of John G. Lake and John Alexander Dowie were extraordinary and are worth reading about. The John G. Lake book, *Dominion over Demons, Disease and Death*, and Dowie's, *A Life Story*, are excellent and available as Christ for the Nations (Gordon Lindsey's group) publications. Two classics are Price's, *The Real Faith* and Bosworth's, *Christ the Healer*. Bosworth's book was instrumental in leading Glen Cluck into his healing and gift ministry. Many other books and pamphlets are available. Many times in used bookstores in the United States, Canada, and England you can find books by T. L. Osborn or Oral Roberts which contain outstanding

material for anyone interested in Holy Spirit ministry including healing.

A number of tapes are available through the Prescott Potter's House tape ministry. Sermons I have preached that contain much of the material in this book and additional insight are available. *Faith* from Romans 10:6-13 (March 1995), *Quest for Power* from Micah 3:5-8 (September 1995), *The Arena for Healing* from Exodus 15:22-26 (September 1989), *Power of the Blood* from Exodus 12:21-28 (August 1994), *Idolatry* from Exodus 32:1-6 (June 1991) and *The Key to a Miracle* from Matthew 8:5-13 are all available and will help you understand the dynamics of healing. Three recent sermons, *Sickness and Healing* from Matthew 9:1-8 (July 1995), *Why Sickness* from Luke 4:38-41 (July 1995) and *Blood Bought Victory* from John 5:1-13 (July 1995) are crusade sermons preached in the tent in Prescott. Also available on tape are three Bible Classes I taught called *Dungeons and Dragons* in which I deal with healing and the occult. There is an abundance of material available to those interested in improving their ministry. In addition there is no substitute for being around the ministry of healing. Making oneself available in crusades and rallies both at home and abroad will greatly enlarge your ministry and confidence. Ultimately all 'ministry requires the step of faith to enter in and participate in the great things of God. I would encourage all to take that step of faith and 'truly pray for the sick.

KEEPING YOUR HEALING

I

KEEPING YOUR HEALING

God has not only guaranteed to heal you, He also guaranteed to keep you healed. But like the rest of God's promises, this promise is conditional. God has told us in His Word not only how to BE healed, but how to STAY healed. Some have failed to realize that there was any thing more to do after they have received healing, and although God had really healed them, soon found that they were no better off than if they had never been healed.

First let us remember that, while not all sickness can be attributed to demon possession nor even to demon oppression, God is not the author of sickness. Satan is responsible in one way or another for all sickness. Satan is an active, crafty, intelligent enemy. He gives no ground except what is actively taken from him by faith. And having given up ground, he is constantly on the watch for an opportunity, to take it back again. Jesus gave not only promises and commands, but warnings as well. One of these is found in Matt. 12:43-45. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walks through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he saith, I will return unto my house from which I came out, and when he is come he findeth it EMPTY, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

When you have been released from the power of Satan, whether it be from sin, from sickness, demon oppression, or demon possession, it is important that the house which is your body shall be not only clean, but occupied.

When Satan moves out, the Spirit of God must move in. Never let the demon find your house empty. If you have not yet been filled with the Holy Ghost, set out immediately, to be filled, and then STAY FILLED. Let the Spirit of God dwell in you richly, keeping you, directing you, possessing you, and using you for the glory of God. Then Satan cannot return,

"Neither give place to the devil." Eph. 4:27. The devil cannot move in unless we give him a place. Those who abide in Christ are safe from Satan's power. Be so filled with righteousness that there is no room for sin. So filled with the Spirit of God there is no room for any other spirit to dwell there.

Sin and careless living on the part of one who has been healed is an open invitation for the unclean spirit to move back into the house from which he was driven out. Jesus warned one whom He had healed, instantly and miraculously, in these words: "Behold, thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." John 5:14

Since the danger is not simply a matter of being no better, but even of being worse, when the first demon returns, bringing others with him. It is easy to see the importance of abiding in faith, feeding upon God's Word, keeping in communion with God through prayer, and of resisting the devil. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

The Christian need not be in subjection to sin. "Sin shall not have dominion over you" Rom. 6:14. By faith, the Christian has power to refuse the temptations of Satan, and his suggestions to sin. There is something more commendable than daily repentance from sin, and that is daily victory over sin.

It is also possible, by faith, to refuse sickness a place. There is something better than being healed "many times", especially of the same affliction. That is to get healed and stay healed.

If you ever receive healing for your body, it will be by faith. You will also stay healed by faith. Faith is joyful. The sick person who lacks faith is sorrowful because of his pain and sickness. The victory which he realizes is already bought, paid for, promised, and on the way. He will be rejoicing and praising God from his

heart, regardless of what he can see or feel. This kind of faith cannot fail to bring healing. Satan is aware of the fact that faith is his enemy, and constantly goes about to destroy faith. Whenever you feel any pain which remotely resembles the pain of your previous disease, Satan will immediately suggest to your mind that either you were never healed or that you are not completely healed, or that your healing didn't last. If you haven't heard from God for some time and his promises are dim in your mind, you may find it easier to believe Satan than it is to believe God. If you do, you may even agree with Satan, and say in your heart, "I just thought I was healed. I am no better." Your heart will be heavy and your faith will be shattered. Fear will come into your heart, and the door is open for Satan to afflict you again.

But if the promises of God are bright and clear in your mind, you still believe that God meant just what He said, you will answer Satan as did our Lord when He was tempted, "It is written", Mat 4:4; 4:7,10. "By His stripes you were healed", I Pet 2:24. As you review by faith the mighty promises of God, your heart will rejoice, even as it did when you claimed His promise and received healing, and there will be a praise in your heart to God for His mighty deliverance. Stand upon a promise in God's word, and praise God in the devil's face. This is resisting the devil. He never has been and never will be able to stay in the presence of this kind of faith.

Stay in an atmosphere of faith. After you are healed it is a mistake to go back into a "church" where the pastor and teachers do not believe the miracle working power of God. God describes these people and gives a warning concerning them in II Tim 3:5, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." There are a number of good churches, where the full gospel is preached, and where the power of God is recognized and works for the healing of sick bodies as well as sin sick souls. Identify yourself with one of these groups where you can find food for your faith, and where you can freely give your testimony for the encouragement of others who may also need deliverance.

Your testimony is important. Not only will it be a blessing and encouragement to others, but it will help you to overcome the devil. (Rev 12:11). As you give testimony with your lips to the truth and reality of God's promises, your faith will increase, Satan will be driven farther back, and his chance of again overcoming you will be lessened.

Resist the devil, keep full of God. Feed on His word. Believe God's promises. Seek an atmosphere of faith. Be faithful in testimony. You will not only be healed, but you will stay healed by the power of God. God has promised this, and God cannot lie.

II

WHY SOME LOSE THEIR HEALING

For many years I was bothered because I could not understand why people who received their healing and had all the evidences of perfect deliverance should have the diseases return.

I believe I have made a discovery. Their faith was not in the Word of God but in the sense of evidence.

What do I mean by the sense of evidence? I mean the evidence of their sight, hearing, and feeling.

They were like some of the sick folk who come to the Master. They had heard that He had healed some of their friends.

They said, "If I can get to Him I will be healed."

As they drew near, they saw other men healed. The blind were made to see, the deaf were made to hear. They cried out for their share of the blessing, and were healed.

There are many who come to us for healing because the Father has been gracious in healing others through our ministry.

So many have no time to be taught in the Word. They have no interest in the Word. They have no desire for the Word. All they want is healing - deliverance for themselves.

We pray for them, and they are healed.

In a little while they return and say, "I can't understand it. That healing did no stand! All the symptoms are back again."

Where is the difficulty?

It lies in this; They had no faith in the Word of God, as far as healing is concerned.

Their faith was in me, or in some other person, not in the Word of God. The Word declares, "By his stripes I am healed."

Take this as an illustration: A man came to me with a very bad knee. The doctors had told him that an amputation was necessary. He was instantly healed when prayer was made.

Five or six days later, while walking on the street, the old pain returned. He said, "This can not be, I am healed by His stripes. In Jesus' name, pain leave my knee."

That man stood on the Word of God and the pain left, never to return.

Others accept their sense evidence - what they can see, feel, of hear.

They lose their healing because there is no "depth of soul" - as Jesus put it in the parable of the sower.

III

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HEALING

"Son, you believed God and He healed you," Mamma said to me just after I was healed of tuberculosis and a stuttering tongue. "Now remember," she continued, "what you did to get your healing, you must continue to do to keep your healing."

That happened nearly 20 years ago. and I am still perfectly healed.

What are some of the things I have learned through the years to help keep one's healing?

First, make up your mind you are going to live a Christian life regardless of what happens to you.

I am serving God, not because He healed my body, but because He saved my soul and because I love Him and His way of life. Jesus is not only my personal Savior but my daily example and ideal. I am trying to follow His steps.

Second, cultivate your faith, and it will grow stronger.

The law of life is that everything reproduces after its kind. Truth begets truth, lies beget lies. faith begets faith: fear begets fear.

As one's faith increases, God's power in his life increases. This has continually happened to me.

Third, seek a harmony with those people who have strong faith.

Christ's mind is reproduced through the unity of two or more who are gathered together in Jesus' name (Mat 18:19,20). The union of two minds of faith brings forth a third mind which is a composite of the two. My faith is always stronger when I am with a person or persons who also believe right.

Forth, think positive thought about life.

I have never allowed my mind to entertain negative thoughts. For I firmly believe if I allowed myself to become negative in my thinking and believing, my afflictions would return to me. It took positive believing to get my lungs and tongue healed, it takes the same to keep them healed.

Fifth, in times of discouragement or loneliness or confusion, read your Bible constantly.

It always helps to read the Bible. It helps more when you are in need of strength or courage or stronger faith.

At a time when you are tried, even the touch of the Bible is wonderful. I often take it to bed with me and sleep with it cradled in my arm. The feel of it gives me confidence for I know it is true and eternal. Things may be going to pieces all around, but the Word of God is sure and steadfast. It is an anchor to the soul.

The passage I read over and over when I feel weak is Luke 10:19, "Behold, I give unto you power ... over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." This always reads well when you are accosted by the enemy and have feelings of inadequacy. When I feel bad in body or mind or spirit, and the devil would have me believe God was making me feel that way, I turn to Luke 9:56 and read it until Satan no longer can cause me to believe that. "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

Anything that would destroy me, such as sickness, oppression or fear, are not sent by God. He came to save, not destroy.

And when I still need help along this line, John 10:10 supplies it fully. "The thief (Satan) cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.

God wants us to be happy, normal and enjoy life more abundantly.

When I can't pay my bills or acquire financial security, 3 John 2 always helps me. "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper." This is a verse I often read a dozen times without stopping.

God is interested in our material needs and gives us His promise. "My God shall supply all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19.

Psalms 1, 23, 37, 91 are especially inspiring to me when I need strength and confidence, and I read them often. Matthew 8 is another chapter I frequently read, especially in times of personal sickness or when I need healing faith for others.

All of us see things we should have, but which appear hopeless to us. Mark 9:23 is my verse for this. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

Reading the Bible like this, and having it near me all the time, helps me to think and believe in a positive manner. It strengthens my determination and increases my faith.

Sixth, go often to the house of God and hear a good anointed minister

Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."

In a sense, you "hear the Word of God" as you read it. Nothing, however, can take the place of "hearing."

When the preacher is anointed by the Spirit of God, and is on fire, he handles the Word very skillfully. He seems to say just the right thing to help you believe and release your faith. He puts you in a better attitude, a faith attitude. When you leave God's house for your home or job, you carry a new stronger determination and a greater truth.

I especially love the services of the church, and have found no substitute for the blessings of strength and help they bring to me.

Seventh, connect yourself with a cause that is greater than you are.

After my salvation and healing, I gave myself so completely to God that I lost my life. In losing it, I found it again. Many times I have quoted the poem that best illustrates how I feel about this

I had walked life's way with easy tread.

I had followed where comforts and pleasures lead.
Until one day in a quiet place,
I met the Master face to face
With station and rank and wealth for my goal,
Much thought for my body, but none for my soul.
I entered to win life's mad race.
When I met the Master face to face.
I met him and knew Him and blushed to see.
That His eyes full of sorrow were fixed on me.
And I faltered and fell at His feet that day,
While my castles melted and vanished away.
Melted and vanished, and in their place,
Naught else could I see, but my Master's face.
And I cried aloud, O, make me meet,
To follow the steps of They wounded feet.
My thought is no for the souls of men.
I've lost my life to find it again.
E'er since that day in a quiet place,
I met the Master face to face.

Once there was a little boy who had a great desire to be a concert pianist. His parents, being poor, could not afford to send him to the great teachers.

Finally, however, when the child had progressed beyond all the local teachers, his parents look him to an old white-haired retired professor whose pupils had made him famous.

"I am too old to undertake this child's future," he declared as he refused the parent's plea.

"Would you please listen to him just once?" they pleaded.

The boy had played only a few seconds when the professor jumped to his feet, clapped his hands and cried, "He's got it. I will take him."

During the next few years the old professor carefully taught and guided the boy. He taught him not only the rudiments of music but the purpose of music itself.

Music is the story of love and hate, of power and weakness, of honor and dishonor, of war and peace, of laughter and tears. It is all these translated into the readable script of life.

The boy learned well. Then came the day of his debut. News had traveled far and wide that a great new musician was rising. That night the hall was filled with eager music lovers.

Before the concert was half through, the boy had captured the hearts of his audience. By the time he reached his climax they were cheering wildly. Men and women rushed to the stage and through their purses at his feet.

Not once did the young boy look at his audience. Instead he kept his eyes on the balcony. There the old white-haired music professor was sitting and nodding his head and saying, "You are on the right track my boy, just keep it up."

The writer to the Hebrew's said, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith". Heb. 12:2

Somewhere up on the balcony of heaven Jesus sits watching us. He is nodding and saying, "You are on the right track, just keep it up."

Keeping our eyes on Jesus, that is the secret.

IV

LOSING A BATTLE BUT WINNING THE WAR

Faith Accidents And Their Remedy

If you are faithful to the Lord and if you mean to do His will as best as you recognize it, by the light you have, yet fall sick after your healing - you have had a faith accident.

Accidents need not happen, accidents are caused - says the well-worn slogan. A teachable and humble person can search out the reason why the healing was lost and make amendment. The fact that the healing had taken place before is a proof of the person's ability to believe. One has to get back to the original attitude which produced the healing in the first place. One must search out what has happened between the time the deliverance was received and when it has been lost.

The Holy Ghost is willing to guide us into all truth and we can test our honest feelings about our faith. Are we slackened off in our trust of the Lord? Has anyone influenced us, have we changed and departed from the simplicity of childlike confidence in our Heavenly Father?

Have we made some compromises with the plain instructions of the Bible? Have we let resentment grow up in our heart like a big poisonous weed?

Be careful not to carry this self-examination too far and imagine evil where there is none. The devil is the accuser of our brethren and would delight to see us blaming ourselves for what God does not blame us and chasing after nonexistent causes. The Lord has justified us. We may be an unripe fruit and not very sweet, but so long as there is no definite sin in our life, we are accepted by the Lord. We ought to concentrate in our self-examination on fear and doubt or on some twist of doctrine that might have crept into our thinking.

Healing is not a reward for our good conduct. It is given purely on the merit of our faith. I have seen cruel men with many wives in Africa who had faith and were healed. Once I even prayed for a communist informer who had betrayed many Christians but he had faith and was instantly healed of his deaf ear.

What happens If You Feel The Old Pains Or See The Former Symptoms Reappearing?

You must realize that it is not God but the devil who tempts you, (James 1:13). Romans 11:29 says, "For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." This means that whatever God gives you is on a permanent basis. Having established the fact that the recurring symptoms are being planted on you by the devil, you now are: a) not afraid of them because they can be only temporary - in view of the permanent healing you had already received from the Lord Jesus; b) you consider them only illusions because only the Word of God is real, therefore you will not say, "My sickness has returned" which would be like a signature upon the receipt acknowledging a parcel from the postman, c) you rebuke the devil in the Name of Jesus but do not spend much time in this, nor repeat yourself often but rather d) praise the Lord for the victory and, c) act your faith by continuing your daily schedule.

What Happens If The Sickness Will Not Go Away After A Day or So?

The Bible says: "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matt. 9:29. etc.). We must not argue with the Scripture but humbly accept the fact that our faith was not enough and begin immediately to believe that "Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith..." (Heb. 12:2). and that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10: 17). The Scriptures encourage us to increase our faith by reading the Bible, meditation on the promises of God, listening to anointed teachers of the Church. and by all means going again and again to the Throne of Grace until our faith is of acceptable quality, allowing the Covenant to release the power of God.

"Ask and it shall be given you, seek, and you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9). Jesus says: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1)

The most common reason for lost healing is unbelief, and this develops by negligence and by adverse influences. Unbelief takes the form of fear and it needs to be searched out, for it is hidden away in the complexity of human nature. The Bible says: "the Spirit searches all things..." Therefore by God's help, the

reason for our faith accident can soon be discerned and put right. The healing, though temporarily lost, still belongs to us because God's gifts are given "without repentance." Once the faith-attitude is readjusted, healing returns.

What do we do in an accident? Nothing? Just bear it with patience and suffer quietly? No, we call the ambulance, send for the doctor, get the family notified. The injured need quick transportation to the hospital. perhaps need blood transfusions and certainly need a hygienic environment and professional care.

Why are we so slow to act this way when it comes to spiritual matters? Let us quickly take the needy, into a "faith hospital." By this we mean a good fellowship where they know the Full Gospel and there are experts in the apostolic doctrine. Spiritually speaking we need a hygienic place where the message of God's delivering power is not diluted. It is scrubbed clean of modernistic theology, compromise, and errors. Let us get the injured saint who is racked with pain in the trap of the devil to a fellowship where the Word of God is proclaimed, where skilled believers can remove the doubt and fear and cast the devil out. Let us administer quick blood transfusions from the Heavenly Lamb: let the Blood of Jesus "speak better things than that of Abel"; let peace, purity and child-like trust return: let the proud religious spirit be cast out and let courage and godly zeal be transplanted. Get the victim into an isolation ward where all negative speech is banned and only people of the faith can enter.

It is essential to separate the sufferer from harmful influences, even if it means a temporary suspension of his association with his local church, which has proved detrimental to his faith. After his restoration the happy believer can return to his church. With his blazing testimony he can become a missionary among his fellow believers and prove the Gospel of deliverance by his miraculously restored healthy life.

V

HOLD ON WHEN THE REACTION SETS IN

A point of contact is something to which you can hold when the reaction sets in.

Even if you were healed yesterday, I imagine that today the devil tried to make you doubt your healing.

Ninety-nine people out of every hundred who get something from God will experience this reaction - the reaction of being opposed by the devil.

The devil will whisper to you, "Look, you have all the symptoms of your old disease. You didn't get healed."

That's when you need to cling to your point of contact and say, "Devil, you will not put that disease or that sin upon me again. I let my faith go to God. "You hold to your point of contact and you keep your healing.

Let me give a personal testimony to show what the point of contact meant to me when I was desperately ill with tuberculosis. I didn't call it a "point of contact" at that time because I had never heard the term used. But now as I look back on it I can see that there was a point of contact. It did for me the four things which we have been discussing.

In 1935, lying in bed with tuberculosis in both lungs, I was getting ready to die. The doctors had given up hope. Then one day my older brother burst into the room and called out. "Come with me. God is going to heal you." He told about an evangelist who was holding a revival meeting who when he laid hands on the sick and prayed, many were healed.

When my older brother mentioned the laying on of hands, I remembered a Scripture which my parents had taught me: "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover: (Mark 16: 18). These vivid words stuck my mind with great force. I focused my attention on God. I began to think that if only I could get to that meeting and have the evangelist put his hands on me and pray. God would heal me.

So I agreed to go with my older brother and my parents to the meeting. As we drove the 18 miles in the car we had borrowed, the Scripture kept ringing in my ears and heart. I made up my mind that when the evangelist placed his hands on me and prayed, I would believe God at that moment for my healing. I set the

time and place for my healing. Although I didn't know what it was at the time the laying on of hands became my point of contact.

When we arrived, my parents placed me in a rocking chair with pillows at my back because my body was so sore. I waited until my time for prayer came, which was last. As my parents helped me to my feet and held me, the minister's wife put a little drop of olive oil on my forehead. But that was not my point of contact. I kept my eyes on the hands of the evangelist. I watched as he talked. Then he put his hands on my forehead, closed his eyes and began to pray. I heard him commanding the disease to leave my body, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth ... and then I heard no more! Because I had set the time for that moment ... that was my time!

I didn't know what a point of contact was, but I used one perfectly that night. I was conscious that I was sending all my believing toward God. My believing became a definite act of faith. A clinging light came over me. I saw no one for many minutes. I saw nothing but the light that engulfed my whole being. My soul began to sing. A deep fountain of power seemed to break up within the bottom of my being. It came into my lungs and suddenly my lungs were open and I could breathe. I could breathe all the way down without hemorrhaging. My body fell as light as a feather.

When I came to myself, I was on the platform running, jumping and praising God. I knew I was healed, for I had been bedfast for exactly 163 days and had lost the power to walk alone.

About a week later the reaction began to set in. I was back home. I knew I had been healed but the devil began to whisper to me, "Why are you so weak? Why do you have to rest every afternoon?" I began to wonder about these things and a cloud of doubt settled on my mind.

One day I was sitting alone in our front yard when mother walked up behind me and said, "You're discouraged, aren't you?"

I answered. "Yes I am. If I am healed, why am I so weak?"

She said. "Well, in the first place you have been in bed so long that you'll need some exercise before your muscles get strong again." And then she told me something which saved my life. "It may be a year, maybe six months, before you have all your strength back. The important thing is that the old tuberculosis germs are dead. Now hold on to your healing. It came from God. Do you remember how you felt when the evangelist put his hands on you and prayed?"

"Yes," I said. "I remember." And my mind went back to my point of contact. I could feel the minister's hands again. I could feel the power and glory and the Spirit of God that went through my lungs. I remembered my point of contact and I stopped doubting.

That was in the spring. Within 60 days I preached my first sermon and won two souls to Christ. But what would have happened to me if I had not held on to the point of contact through my mother's inspiration when the reaction set in? Probably I would have gone back to bed. Very likely I would have died.

In 1947, when I began my ministry of praying for the healing of the sick through faith in God, God revealed to me the term "point of contact." He showed me how it had worked in my own experience. He also directed me to tell the people how to use a point of contact for the healing of their bodies. I have found over the years that most of the people who are healed, consciously or unconsciously use a point of contact for the releasing for their faith. They focus their attention on God, set the time and place for their healing, release their faith in one definite act and hold on when the reaction sets in.