



# Christ-Centered Healing Ministry

*“When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases.””*

Matthew 8:16-17, NIV

Rev. Tim Vink

Introduction By Rev. Dr. Nathan A. Dixon

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# FOREWORD

*"He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases." Matthew 8:17, NIV*

Jesus was full of surprises. A virgin birth, a dynamic ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit that crossed cultural and religious lines, death at the request of the national Jewish leaders after only three years of public ministry, and then the greatest surprise of all: resurrection from the dead.

So maybe it shouldn't surprise us when North American churches and Reformed traditions in the 21st century seem too tame or too small to contain the real Jesus of the gospels. He was controversial then, and he is still controversial today.

That's all the more reason to pay attention, to take a closer look at 75 passages in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that reveal the divine healing ministry of Jesus. This is perhaps his central work recorded in Holy Scripture on the way to the cross, healing multitudes of people and delivering them from evil spirits when needed. A Christian can be comforted that this study will have a thoroughly Bible-based, Christ-centered focus. This is about substance, not style.

Jesus' healing ministry is probably the number one evangelistic method used in the New Testament. It brings good news to people of this world who battle rampant sin and sickness. Healing also draws crowds again and again. In Matthew 8:17, cited above, a crowd shows up by Peter's home in Capernaum and dozens receive healing that very night from Jesus. From seashore to hillside, home to temple, Jesus heals all who come to him earnestly seeking divine healing. It is astonishing in all 75 passages in the gospels how reliable, predictable, and consistent Jesus is at healing

people, no matter what their need is. What an incredible surprise this grace is, the power to heal and cleanse from sickness as well as sin. It almost seems too good to be true, right? Who but God would ever be that good?

Jesus surprises us again when he quickly starts training his followers to do exactly what he is doing! Ordinary people now doing the extraordinary, too. Jesus apprentices us right into the Father's business. It is the nature of the "rabbi relationship" to do what you see the Master doing, to say what you hear the Master teaching. "Follow me" is the original and enduring command to all disciples of Jesus, to all Christians.

So this is your invitation to join with the first 12 disciples, then the next 72, and then thousands and millions of disciples of Jesus from every tribe and tongue through two thousand years... and follow him. Stick to the original blueprint. You are not a copy of a copy of a Christian near you. Instead, your call is to follow Jesus directly, become like your Master.

Christlikeness is the key to missionary impact in every generation, the growth of the church, and the healing of the nations.

For every stream of Christianity—Catholic and Orthodox, Reformed and Baptist, Pentecostal and charismatic—the healing virtue of Christ is flowing to you and through you, if you are only willing to receive more grace.

We've got a lot to learn from Christ our healer.

Tim Vink, M.Div.



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# INTRODUCTION

*"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power." 1 Corinthians 4:20*

This booklet is about to change your life, as you are invited on this journey to be engaged, equipped, and activated into the fullness of what God has desired for his kingdom. *Your Will Be Done* can help equip and encourage you to invite God's saving power through Jesus Christ into your lives, your church, and your community as you share the good news of the kingdom. I know you will be encouraged, equipped, and empowered to both expect and bring to pass greater miracles in your life, your church, and in your job. May God bless you as you experience how willing he is to save, heal, and deliver in both your present circumstances and for all eternity.

In union with the Holy Spirit, God has given us the power (*dunamis*) to save (*sozo*). These two New Testament Greek words are essential to understanding the signs, wonders, and miracles that Jesus said we will have the power to do. Jesus said, "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power [*dunamis*] when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:7-8, NIV). Luke 4:36 states, "All the people were amazed and said to each other, 'What words these are! With authority and power [*dunamis*] he gives orders to impure spirits and they come out!'"

The Holy Spirit brings power to believers. *Dunamis* primarily means "power, might, miracle, wonder." It is also used in relation to the proclamation of the Word and the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 4:20) and in relationship to the Holy Spirit and believers. The power that the Spirit gives believers equips them for ministry and to be witnesses. "*Dunamis*" is used more than 120 times in the New Testament (most of these are indicated in the chart below). It is the root of our English words dynamite, dynamo, and dynamic.

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<b>Dunamis</b>			
ability	1	power	77
abundance	1	strength	7
meaning	1	violence	1
might	4	virtue	3
mighty deed	1	wonderful work	1
mighty work	11	worker of miracles	1

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*Sozo* is a Greek word that primarily means "to save." It is a verb or action word meaning to be saved or rescued out from under Satan's power and restored into the wholeness of God's order. "*Sozo*" is used more than 110 times in the New Testament. In Matthew 1:21, it is used by the angel that tells Joseph to name God's son "Jesus," "because he will save his people from their sins" (emphasis added). Another similar use is found in John 3:17, where Jesus says, "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." When you put these words together with the well-known verse that comes before them (John 3:16), it is easy to confirm that those who believe in Jesus Christ are saved from perishing and are given eternal life.

These verses affirm the powerful truths that Christians everywhere confess: that through faith in Jesus Christ their sins are forgiven, and that they are granted eternal life. These truths are central to the good news as it is spread around the world. They are repeated over and over again as we celebrate being "saved from our sins" and "saved from death to eternal life." They give us great assurance that our future is secure. Sin and death have been defeated, and we will spend eternity with Jesus. Hallelujah! We join Christians everywhere in praising God for this good news! This is our ultimate salvation.

But maybe your experiences in life or your reading of God's Word have raised questions. As

you see suffering in the world around you, or when circumstances seem hopeless, you might find these questions in the back of your mind: "Lord, as your gospel advances, do you do more than save people for eternity? Do you also save people from their present circumstances?" These are good questions.

Let's look again at our Greek word, *sozo*, in connection with Jesus' life and ministry as he preached the good news of the kingdom. Its many uses will encourage you to invite God's saving power into your present reality, even while you celebrate your ultimate salvation. (Each underlined word is a translation of a form of the word *sozo*.)

- In Matthew 8:25, the disciples cry out to Jesus to save them from the storm, and he does.
- In Luke 8:36, the people describe how the demoniac, who had a legion of demons inside of him, had been cured by Jesus.
- In Luke 8:48, Jesus says to a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years, and who had touched the hem of his garment and was healed, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."
- Jesus says to Jairus, upon hearing the news of his daughter's death (Luke 8:50), "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed."
- In Mark 10:52, a blind man receives his sight, and Jesus says to him, "Go, your faith has healed you."

These examples and others show that God's saving power includes healing, deliverance, and raising people from the dead. God not only cares about our eternal salvation but also about saving us from present circumstances. This is good news! When you minister healing or deliverance to a person, you have rescued him or her from the power of Satan in that area of the person's life, thereby weakening Satan's kingdom and strengthening the kingdom of God.

#### **sozo**

- Saved from sin and eternal punishment
- Saved from sickness and disease
- Saved/delivered from demonic oppression
- To raise from the dead

Therefore, *sozo* = to be saved completely from:

<b>Destruction/Damnation</b>	<b>Diseases</b>
Luke 8:12	Matthew 5:24
Luke 19:9-10	Matthew 8:16-18
Acts 4:12	Matthew 9:22
Romans 10:9	Mark 6:56
Ephesians 2:8	Mark 10:52
<b>Demons</b>	<b>Danger/Death</b>
Matthew 15:21-28	Matthew 8:25
Mark 9:25	John 11:13
Luke 8:36	Luke 8:50-55
Luke 9:10-16	2 Timothy 4:18
Luke 13	Jude 1:5

Your inheritance as a saint is received in full in the new heavens and earth after Jesus' second coming. But we can receive down payments on that future here and now. "Let your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

See also Titus 2:11: "For the grace of God that brings salvation (soterios = *sozo*) has appeared to all [people]!"

With both *dunamis* and *sozo*, we have been given authority through alignment with Jesus, who has all authority in heaven and earth; God has given us power to save and to be saved!

For reasons we know only in part, God has handed down a somewhat revised set of rules, delegating greater authority to more people. He has apparently decreed that plain folks like you and me are now a central part of an accelerated plan for total transformation of the world.

—James Rutz, *Megashift: Igniting Spiritual Power* (Empowerment Press, 2005), p. 2

*Your Will Be Done* seeks to equip you and empower you to transform the world. As you begin to practice the things that are outlined in this booklet, you will start to do things that you thought were once out of your reach. You will experience a spiritual freedom you once thought impossible, and you will experience an adjustment of focus as God widens your view

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and takes you to higher places in him. God  
desires to do his will through you!

Prepare now to experience God in new ways,  
for he has given you *power to save!*

Nathan A. Dixon, D.Min.



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# CONTENDING FOR THE GOSPEL

Recovery of the gospel is foundational for society's revival and reformation. Every church and church leader needs to be continually renewed by the good news that the kingdom of God is at hand. This is Jesus' central theme, mentioned 82 times in the four gospels. The apostle Paul carries the theme forward in the book of Romans: "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Romans, 1:16, NIV).

The gospel has implications of ultimate significance for every woman, man, and child. It carries the power of God, our almighty Creator and Savior, in verbal form into our earthly context. According to the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13), the gospel message of the kingdom has exponential potential. If we truly desire relevant, enduring, powerful life changes within the ministries and marketplace around us, we must rediscover the gospel in its full depth and breadth as the height and width of the love of God.

## The Six Hinges of History

When the gospel is lacking, we are left to depend on our own human effort and human wisdom. We fail to fully experience when the power of God is on the move, cascading and rippling salvation out from the Lord Jesus into all parts of human life.

The gospel is the authority of God in action, built upon the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, upon Pentecost, and the second coming of Jesus Christ, who has been given all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). Through that authority, we are activated to make disciples and teach them all that the Lord has commanded us. Then we will see powerful, lasting, missionally engaged Christianity—backed by the authority of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit in this age of reconciliation and grace—reshape our churches and our cities. For gospel revival and reformation to break out, we desire to see Christians full

of the Holy Spirit and full of the Word at the same time.

Six "hinges of history"—the six chief elements of the gospel story—are listed below, along with their implications for ministry. They are hinges for all people in all places. Picture them as six doorways in the "Grand Gospel Hallway," with treasures behind each door.

### THE LIFE OF JESUS (ACTS 2:22): ACCREDITED

- Jesus' incarnation preceded his ministry to the crowds, and this is the pattern for our incarnational ministry as well. (See "The *Hijos* of God" on page 41.)
- Ordinary people are apprenticed in kingdom proclamation and demonstration for healing, deliverance, and empowered ministry, following Jesus' example (Matthew 10:7-8).
- Leaders engage in strategies for church growth, including church planting, and stewardship of all things under Christ as continuing high priorities of kingdom ministry.

### THE DEATH OF JESUS (ACTS 2:23): ATONEMENT

- Christ's death and resurrection established ultimate triumph over evil powers and principalities (Colossians 1:13; 2:15).
- When we accept Christ's atonement, God washes away our sins. Forgiveness of sins is necessary for all people, along with new birth (John 3:3, 16-17; Acts 2:38).
- Reconciliation of humanity in Christ takes place across all barriers and divisions (Colossians 1:20, 2:13; Ephesians 2:14-15).

### RESURRECTION OF JESUS (ACTS 2:24-32): AUTHENTICATION

- This ultimate miracle confirms that the gospel is true (1 Corinthians 15:12-19).

- It is the first fruits of our own future bodily transformation (1 Corinthians 15:20-21).
- Christ is alive, which is evidence for the truth and supremacy of the gospel over man-made world religions, whose founders are deceased.

**THE ASCENSION OF JESUS** (ACTS 2:30, 33-34):  
AUTHORITY

- Our humanity is represented permanently in heaven by Jesus on the throne.
- In spiritual warfare, victory is ensured (Ephesians 1:20-22; Colossians 1:16-18).
- Following his ascension, Jesus calls and sends to the church "equipping leaders" (Ephesians 4:10-14).

**THE OUTPOURING OF HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH JESUS**  
(ACTS 2:33-34): ABILITY

- The saving presence of God is in the world now, through the third person of the Trinity, in the born-again saints, to counteract the absence of God (sin) (John 14:16).

- The fruit and gifts of the Spirit for ministry formation (sanctification) continue and overflow today (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
- The authority of Scripture rests in the agency of the third person of the Trinity (2 Timothy 3:15-16; 2 Peter 1:16-21).

**THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS** (ACTS 2:34-35;  
ROMANS 2:16): ACCOUNTABILITY

- There will be a final judgment of all humanity by Jesus, with reward for the redeemed and justice for the unrepentant sinner; the devil and his angels will be cast into the lake of fire (Acts 17:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Hebrews 10:27; Revelation 14:9-11).
- There will be resurrection for all the saints and eternal condemnation of all the wicked (John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53).
- There will be a new heaven and a new earth; all things will be restored (Acts 3:21; Revelation 21-22; 2 Peter 3:13).

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## FIVE WAYS WE CAN FUMBLE THE GOSPEL

Football championships (and everyday games) are won and lost on ball control. Turnovers are game changers; they are shifts in the game's momentum that can affect the outcome for all.

In the clash between the people of the kingdom of God and the fallen angels of the kingdom of darkness (Ephesians 6:12), these adversaries try their very best to strip the gospel from the hands and hearts of the saints. "We have this treasure in jars of clay" (Romans 1:16). We are carriers of the gospel of God, which saves and forms us as a people through the power of God. But the devil and his angels come against the people of God as they advance with the gospel, and try to pry it from their hands: turnover, setback, slowdown. They try to move God's people from being on the offensive against evil to being on the defense again.

As Colossians 1:6 (NIV) says, "All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth." This gospel is founded on Jesus Christ, the one full of both grace and truth (John 1:14).

Here are five ways the adversary tries to "strip the ball" from us, to reduce the gospel in some way so that the power of God is limited through the people of God.

- Reduce the grace side of the gospel of God. Deemphasize the good news that the kingdom of God is at hand by making legalistic additions to the gospel with human-made rules, or by returning to human effort to try to accomplish God's purposes independent of his love, guidance, and power through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 1:6-15; 2:11-21; 3:1-14; Romans 1:17).
- Reduce the truth side of the gospel of God. of God and the Lord's standards of right and wrong that flow from his character to all people, places, and times. Seek to make the gospel a license for further sinning instead of

recognizing the genuine wrath and justice of God against sin and its personal cost to the Son we follow (Jude 3-4; James 2:18-22; 4:8; Galatians 5:13-18; 6:7-10; Romans 5:20-6:2; 6:6; 8:13).

- Reduce the "now" aspect of the gospel of the kingdom of God being at hand in favor of the "not yet" aspect. The radical edge of the central message of Jesus about the kingdom of God is that it is *already present* in the person and ministry of Jesus. His words and deeds—especially with regard to healing and deliverance as described in more than 75 passages of the four gospels—demonstrate that the kingdom of God is already here, though not yet in the fullness it will be at the "sixth hinge" of history: the second coming of Jesus.

This was the astonishing factor for the people of the first century who were encountering and following Jesus: the reign of God is here and now! All who believe this good news from God can be forgiven now, healed now, delivered now—in extraordinary ways. To reduce the radical reality that the kingdom of God is within reach now, and instead emphasize future forgiveness in heaven, future freedom, and future transformation, minimizes the gospel by relegating it mainly to the future. Jesus reveals the Father and establishes that the saving presence of God is on the planet now, in astonishing ways (Mark 1:14-15; Matthew 9:33-10:8; 12:28; Luke 5:17-26).

- Reduce the complete gospel of Jesus Christ to a smaller emphasis of our own making, which is sometimes called "having a canon within the canon." (The canon is the collection of books that make up the Bible.) We shrink the "yardstick" by being reductionist in our view or practice of the gospel by tradition or ignorance or deliberate preference. Paul speaks of presenting the "full counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) and "fully proclaiming the gospel of

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Christ" (Romans 15:19). While it is possible to enter the gospel message at any of the six compelling "hinges of history," we are not to stay limited to just one, two, or three essential aspects of the gospel and make those our whole frame of reference. There are incarnational, atonement, and transformational realities to the six elements of the gospel, as shown in Acts 2:22 and all of the apostolic preaching in Scripture. The kingdom of God has upside-down, inside-out, and down-side-up dimensions. To make our life or church mainly about one or two of these is to belittle the actual life and works of the Son of God (Acts 2:22-36; Romans 2:16). Good entry points through one doorway of the gospel (the cross) include evangelistic tools like "Steps to Peace with God" or the "Four Spiritual Laws," but these do not encompass the gospel as a whole. There are five other doorways that may help others come to Christ, and then they will learn "the rest of the story."

- Reduce the supernatural reality of the gospel in favor of the natural realm. Jesus is Lord of both the visible and the invisible realms, the

physical and the spiritual dimensions of life (Colossians 1:15-20). All other world religions, being man-made in origin, could reduce any of their supernatural elements and not really lose anything of essence. But to take the supernatural out of any of the six hinges of the gospel is to utterly displace God's gospel with another that is no gospel at all. The incarnation and life and ministry of Jesus are full of the supernatural. The cross of Jesus—where God turns the very worst thing to happen in human history into the very best—is all about a supernatural transference of sin onto him and righteousness upon us who believe (atonement). Christ's resurrection and ascension, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, and the second coming of Jesus all have incredibly far-reaching transformational implications for human life: they are supernatural in essence, being all about God's love and power that goes beyond what we can ask or think. To minimize the supernatural reality of the gospel in favor of a more comfortable, Western, rationalistic worldview is a departure of a high order from the revelation of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:34-37; John 3:2-3; 7:37-39; Acts 10:38; Colossians 2:8).

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## FOLLOWING JESUS, THE HEALER

Do you believe that Jesus healed the sick, drove out demons, and forgave sin in his earthly ministry?

Do you believe that Jesus can do the same today?

Do you believe that Jesus will heal your diseases, rid you of demonic oppression, and forgive your sins, here on earth as it is in heaven?

Do you believe that Jesus will save, heal, and deliver others as you lay hands on them and pray for them?

I've seen and heard hundreds of testimonies like this one:

On Thursday, April 22, 2004, Amy Evans, a five-year-old who was suffering from bronchitis, experienced God's healing. She was in a traumatized family, and her dad was in jail again for drugs, but as she was sitting on the kitchen counter, Jesus healed her bronchitis and fever.

How great it is to hear the testimonies of those who have experienced God's healing! As I think about my own testimony of learning to follow Jesus, the healer, over many years, I realize that I have experienced God's healing power in my life in so many ways.

I come from a solid Christian home and grew up in American Reformed Church in Luverne, Minnesota. I am forever indebted to the love of God for bringing eternal life to great numbers of people in my family tree on both sides. We knew a lot about salvation and redemption, but we didn't know as much about the Lord's willingness to heal our sicknesses, or about the personal nature of the Holy Spirit. We had the Father, Son, and holy Scriptures, and yet we were missing out on a significant part of who God is through the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

I spent four years (1983-1987) at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, as a religion/world missions major. At age 16, I started preparing to be an RCA pastor but also worked on making broader connections with lots of kingdom citizens outside the RCA.

In Amsterdam in 1986, I served with Youth With A Mission, doing street and nightclub evangelism. On a daily basis I saw all the gifts of the Spirit in operation for mission. It was deeply transformational, and I was baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit.

During my Fuller Seminary years, 1988-1991, I took a course titled "Healing and World Evangelism." The course, which included study of healing ministry underway in Los Angeles area churches, was co-taught by missiologist C. Peter Wagner and by John Wimber, who was influential in the Vineyard church movement.

I began to study healing and deliverance and to experience them periodically over the next decade; still, there weren't many mentors nearby and there wasn't much expectation around me that this would go places.

My ministry journey continued, and on January 31, 2002, a vision was fulfilled that I had had years before in Amsterdam. It was the vision of a healing ministry that would begin publicly when the Spirit led me "outside the stadium." Then the fog surrounding my understanding of healing began to lift, and I made a commitment to follow Jesus in a public healing ministry. I served with the Healing Rooms of Tulare, California, which was founded by about 30 churches in Tulare that partnered to restore the truth and ministry of healing to the body of Christ. Hundreds of healings followed, along with deep training and practice. There was a major increase of healings, miracles, and deliverance in my life, my family, and my ministry.

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## How Jesus Trained His Disciples

Jesus' "demonstration" method of training his disciples in healing ministry is outlined in Matthew 9:35–10:8 (NASB):

Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. Seeing the people, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: "Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give."

To summarize:

I do it; you watch.

I do it; you help.

You do it; I help.

You do it; I watch.

You do it; someone else watches.

Jesus emphasizes that harvest workers who heal the sick and drive out demons are desperately needed. He says to pray for kingdom workers

who have the character and competencies of Jesus as apprentices, who share in his compassion and courage.

## The Biblical Perspective on Salvation, Healing, and Deliverance

The Greek word *sozo* means saved, healed, delivered (Mark 5:23, Acts 2:47). Luke 8 uses the verb *sozo* five times in one chapter (in verses 12, 24, 36, 48, 50).

Jesus saves us from destruction in hell due to our sins, from danger, from demons, from disease, and from death.

There's a progression in Scripture from lesser to greater covenants (Exodus 15:26, 23:25; Deuteronomy 7:14-15; Psalm 103:1-3, 107:19-20). Healing is clearly promised and experienced in the Old Covenant, and even more so in the New Covenant, which is founded on better promises, better hope, and a better mediator (Hebrews 8:6)?

Healing is in the atonement of Jesus (Isaiah 53, Matthew 8:14-17). Jesus' sacrificial death is the divine basis and provision for healing and all the benefits of salvation for the saints, reversing the curse of the Fall. His provision is enough!

In the clash of two kingdoms (Mark 1:1, 14, 32, 39, 41; Ephesians 6:12-18; Acts 8:4-8, 10:38), healing and deliverance ministry exhibit the "already and not yet" tension around this battle of the ages. Lost people and lost dominion are restored in Christ to his new humanity in great measure. Follow the Lord's Prayer pattern: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Salvation and sanctification: Part of our spirit, soul, and body is being redeemed and made like Christ's (1 Thessalonians 5:23, Romans 8:28-31). The sin/sickness connection in Scripture is strong (James 5:14-18, Luke 5:22-25, John 5:8, 14), with both coming "from the Fall side of the page," not the gospel side.

Jesus reveals the Father. He makes the will of God in healing known (Hebrews 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20; John 14:6-13; 4:34; 5:19-

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20, 30, 36-37; 6:28-29, 38; 7:16, 29; 8:26-29, 40, 55; 10:15; 17:14). Nothing—neither my experience, nor bad teaching in the church, nor culture, nor someone’s Christian life (Joni Eareckson Tada’s, for example)—will overshadow for me what Jesus reveals is the will of God.

### **Testimony**

On Thursday, August 7, 1986, 11-year old Nathan Dixon experienced God’s healing. He was taken into surgery to remove a brain tumor the size of a golf ball that was resting on the optic nerve above his right eye. The doctors made Nathan’s parents aware that as a result of the tumor, Nathan could suffer paralysis on his right side and blindness. Because the pituitary gland would have to be removed, there also was a possibility that he would suffer from dwarfism and be unable to have children. God moved in the operating room through the hands of Nathan’s neurosurgeon, Dr. Douglas Anderson; 85 percent of the tumor was removed. The remaining 15 percent would be destroyed through radiation. While Nathan was waiting in recovery, he removed his oxygen mask and called out to the nurse, saying that he was thirsty. Nathan was not paralyzed and he was able to see. With the help of growth hormone, today Nathan stands 6’4” tall. He and his wife have two beautiful children, Makenzie and Josiah.

### **Removing Cultural Barriers and Hurdles for Healing**

#### **Where does sickness and death come from?**

Disease and death were not part of God’s original plan for the world; they are the result of humanity’s fall into sin (Romans 5:12), and they will not be present in the new heaven and the new earth (Revelation 21:4). So now, grace overtakes the Fall; the power of God confronts the power of Satan, and God is infinitely stronger. “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

#### **Is there a split between the natural and supernatural realms?**

No. It only seems that way because our physical senses limit our “sight.” Jesus’ central preaching theme was that the kingdom of God is “at

hand,” or within reach. He brought the kingdom of heaven with him, and heaven continues to invade earth. The unseen, eternal realm is actually more real than the physical universe that we see with our eyes or perceive with our technology (2 Corinthians 4:18, 5:1-10). The supernatural kingdom is God’s natural realm, and believers are the new temple of the Holy Spirit, so when his domain extends over earthly regions and needs, these are made right and natural and normal again. For example, your created, physical body fights disease every day, according to God’s design. The spiritual realm shapes the physical realm daily. Don’t mistake God’s “super power” of invisibility for inactivity. This is Emmanuel, God with us.

#### **What is a typical misunderstanding of human nature in the Western church?**

We often think of ourselves as soul and body—two distinct parts. But we are *spirit*, soul, and body—three parts (1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 4:12, 1 Corinthians 14:14). We are spiritual beings who have a soul (mind, emotions, and will) and live in a body. This has huge implications for the Christian life, healing, other gifts of the Spirit, and spiritual warfare.

#### **Didn’t healing cease with the apostles or the New Testament church?**

No. That’s not true biblically or historically. It is more likely that I don’t have a mother. The cessationist lie is bad theology and blind allegiance to a stronghold of Satan. The Bible is no replacement for its author (the Holy Spirit), and the needs of people are not met by knowing the Bible alone (John 5:36-40). Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8), so he is still healing people today through the Holy Spirit.

#### **What about Job, and Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” (2 Corinthians 11:16–12:10)?**

Here’s the Book of Job in a nutshell: Satan made him sick and God healed him. This glorified God and he blessed Job more than ever. Paul’s thorn in the flesh is an expression from the Old Testament (see Judges 2:3) that refers to harassing and persecuting God’s people. Paul’s thorn is named in 2 Corinthians 12:7 as a fallen angel, a messenger of Satan (not sickness!) who afflicts him, mainly through the exact situations de-

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scribed in 2 Corinthians 11:23-27. In verse 26 the word “danger” is used eight times. Paul’s thorn in the side was persecution, not sickness. Read 2 Corinthians, chapters 10 to 13. The context for these four chapters is Paul’s defense of genuine apostolic leadership over counterfeit leadership. True apostles suffer more, sacrifice for others more, serve others more, and strengthen others more (2 Corinthians 12:12).

**If I’m not healed when I pray/am prayed for, is it because my faith is weak?**

No. This is divine healing, not faith healing; the focus is different. It may help to realize that miracles are immediate but healing is often a process over time. Faith and trust in God are commended in Scripture in reference to many healings, and so we take that to heart as well. If you have enough faith to be born again, you have enough faith to connect with God for healing. Faith is a relationship, not an event, so Jesus encourages us to persist in faith in God in spite of what we see as obstacles and delays. Doubt is our real enemy, and faith is our ally.

We can counter our doubts with revelation/illumination from Scripture, testimonies, and teaching, and so grow in faith in God’s provision for healing and deliverance through diligent study of Jesus in the Word. Someone’s faith is usually operational in healing, but also operational is the faith of friends, the one praying, or, in the case of someone who is deceased, anyone but the one who is about to receive the mir-

acle. (See *A Dirty Dozen Doubts* and *A Clash of Kingdoms* on page 20.)

**Didn’t Jesus perform miracles to prove he was God? Shouldn’t I just admire Jesus as unique in this ministry of healing and not think he can be my example?**

Jesus said just the opposite in John 14:12. He proclaimed and demonstrated the kingdom of God, teaching his followers to do the same (Matthew 10:1, 8; Acts 4:29-30, 5:16, 8:4-8; 1 Corinthians 2:4; Hebrews 2:3-4). Jesus is the Christ, the anointed one. He performed miracles and healed just as Christians do today, through the power of the Holy Spirit in and upon him. He didn’t embody two natures, and switch from a human nature to a divine nature to do miracles (the “two-channel” theory), but, in the incarnation, emptied himself of his divine prerogatives, becoming our servant and example, even unto death (Philippians 2). Since the Fall, the great need of history is the saving presence of God on earth. Jesus was all that! And now in the plan of God, Christians have that saving presence because they have the Holy Spirit in them, the third person of the Trinity. John 14:16-17 (NIV) says, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.” The Holy Spirit is just like Jesus and lives in my innermost being, in union with my spirit, my new creation. Because I have a “full-grown Jesus” living in me, I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.

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## THE FATHER WANTS YOU WELL

I've come to the conclusion, as I continue to engage in healing ministry, that the Father desires that you be healed. I am reminded of the story about blind Bartimaeus:

Then they came to Jericho. And as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a large crowd, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road. When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him here." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage, stand up! He is calling for you." Throwing aside his cloak, he jumped up and came to Jesus. And answering him, Jesus said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" And the blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, I want to regain my sight!" And Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and began following Him on the road (Mark 10:46-52, NASB).

In this great passage of Scripture, Bartimaeus, the blind beggar, cried out to Jesus, and those who were walking with Jesus in a very real sense told Bartimaeus to shut up and be quiet. But he cried out all the more. As he cried out, Jesus stopped and said, "Call him here." And the same ones who had told him to be quiet went to him and said, "Take courage, stand up! He is calling for you." I believe that there is something in the heart of Jesus that when we earnestly and fervently cry out to him, he is faithful and just to hear us. There is Bartimaeus, standing before Jesus, with a desire in his heart to see. As he stood there, blind, Jesus could clearly see what was wrong with him; but he asked, "What do you want me to do for you?" and Bartimaeus said, "Rabboni, I want to regain

my sight!" And Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well."

Too often we fail to verbalize our deepest desires to Jesus. We fail to have the persistence and faith of Bartimaeus, who didn't say anything about his pedigree or where he was from, but simply cried out to Jesus, in the midst of those who tried their best to silence him, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" The Father wants you well today, and I encourage you to get to that place in your life where nothing stops you or gets in the way of you crying out to Jesus for wholeness; for he hears your cry, and is calling you to come to him.

In his book, *Power Healing*, John Wimber shares a personal note about a time in his life when he realized that it was the will of the Father that he be healed. It was October 1985, and he was in England for three weeks teaching at conferences in London, Brighton, and Sheffield. While there, he says, "Many people were healed. One was not—me." He went on to talk about how for the past two years he had been suffering from minor chest pains every four or five months. He suspected that it had something to do with his heart, but he did nothing about it, and nobody knew about his condition, not even his wife. No longer able to hide his condition from his wife, Wimber went to the doctor and began a series of medical tests that culminated in the diagnosis of a damaged, possibly seriously damaged, heart. The doctor told Wimber that he needed to control his blood pressure by taking medication and reduce his salt intake in addition to walking daily and losing weight.

Having heard this, Wimber concluded,

...in my heart I did not comply with God's direction that I seek him for healing. People prayed for me, but I lacked faith to receive divine healing. These words may sound strange, but I in fact found it difficult to receive divine healing. Why? Because all

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my life I have been a compulsive person, always working and eating more than I should, and I felt it was just that my body had finally started to break down. In other words, I felt subconsciously that I deserved my condition and that to pray for healing was to pray against what I deserved. I had eliminated the possibility of God's forgiveness and grace for healing in my life. This also meant that I found it easier to hear and follow doctors' orders than receive healing prayer because I felt the medical treatment and regimen were discipline for my wrongdoing.

I know many of you read this and say, "That's just how I feel!" The sad reality is that many of you have concluded that you don't deserve to be healed, or, like Wimber, you have eliminated the possibility of God's forgiveness and grace for healing in your life. Romans 8:1-2 says, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death." Knowing in the head is not the same as believing in the heart, and we must come to the point in our Christian journey that we know in our heart of hearts that the Father wants us well, and nothing stands in the way of that because God has set us free with his forgiving love.

Late one night, John Wimber was awakened by the Lord concerning his healing:

In my mind I sensed him asking me a simple question: "John, who is God—you or me?" He then told me that all of my life I had resisted his grace because of pride and independence, and as long as I insisted on making my own way, I could not receive his mercy. Then he showed me two areas of my life where I had resisted his grace. The first area was my judgmental attitude toward Christians whose ministries made bold use of media, especially fund-raising. I had been (and still am) offended by many of the fund-raising practices used by television personalities. He said that my attitude toward these people was covering my deeper problem of pride and self-sufficiency. Furthermore, he said this created stress in me,

because I felt personally responsible to raise money for the ministry rather than rely on him. The second area that God spoke to me about was my health. He said that I had a choice—to die or to repent of my self-sufficient attitude to receive his grace. Here I was, a man who prayed for others' healing and trained thousands to pray for others' healing, and I was too proud to receive God's grace! God also gave me a passage of scripture (Romans 4:19-21) and a promise. His promise to me was that in the same way that Abraham waited for his child I was to wait for my healing. In the meantime, he told me to follow my doctor's orders.

John Wimber's story is so profoundly like many of our own stories, for God had assured him, as he assures us so many times, that he would be okay. On the Sunday morning following Wimber's vision he woke up with intense chest pains and was ultimately placed in the intensive care ward. After undergoing extensive testing, the doctors found out that his heart wasn't as badly damaged as they had thought; rather, he was suffering from ulcers. It was at that moment that the Lord again reassured Wimber that he would be healed. In our own situations, God wants us well, but it often comes at a price of obedience to Jesus' life and message.

Remember the Syrian soldier Naaman in the Old Testament? He had to humble himself and heed the prophet's message to wash seven times in the Jordan River. After a wise word from a servant, he took action on the simple step of washing in the river, and the seventh time he did this, his leprosy was completely gone.

The Father wants you well, and he also wants to use you to heal others. "They will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well" (Mark 16:18). As we take heed to do the Father's will, our goal in praying for the sick is that they are healed, and as a result the kingdom of God is advanced.

I've heard Dr. Roger Sapp, an internationally known healing minister, explain how the Lord worked with him in his early years of ministry to learn to receive healing from chronic, severe sinus infections. One time, in a personal time of

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prayer for healing, the Holy Spirit whispered this question, "Roger, why don't you receive me as your healer in the same way you have received me as your Savior?" The Lord took a familiar lesson about trusting the cross of Jesus alone as enough for his forgiveness from sin and applied it to receiving grace to be healed. After a week-long battle of the will to trust Jesus as his healer,

the sickness left and never returned. That one change in thinking opened up the way for far more people to be healed as well, so Sapp dove into every healing passage in Scripture (1,004 of them) to learn what else he might be misunderstanding. I've been with him when 85 to 95 percent of all who came forward for healing received it.

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## THE DIFFICULT SIDE OF HEALING

With all the excitement and joy that comes with healing, there is indeed a difficult side of our experience with healing. The truth of the matter is not every person who receives ministry for healing will be healed this side of heaven. I've been a pastor for decades, and I have led many funerals, still preaching the whole gospel, including the second coming of Jesus, the resurrection of the dead, and the new heavens and new earth. But questions remain in our hearts: Why was he not healed? We believed God for her healing, so why did she die?

What do we do when healing doesn't occur? As a minister of healing, your heart often becomes vulnerable as you struggle with empathy and compassion to deal with the sometimes overwhelming outcome. The weightiness of these things is compounded when your theology of healing believes it's *always* God's will to heal. The fact that people will perish does not contradict the biblical fact that "God wills that none should perish." And the fact that not everyone is healed does not contradict the biblical fact that "by his stripes we are healed."

As Romans 1:16 says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation [sozo: complete wholeness of body, soul, and spirit] to everyone who believes." I will not compromise this message in response to disappointment or missed opportunities. The reality is that not everyone is healed; yet in the midst of this reality we celebrate because we serve a God who heals, and who has called his elect children to do likewise!

In a candid interview with healing-ministry leader Dr. Randy Clark on the subject "Why Healing Doesn't Always Happen," Clark tells a story of how his son who suffers from a learning disability asked him, "Why is it that you prayed for those two girls who had dyslexia, and they were healed; yet you've prayed for me hundreds of times, and I wasn't healed?" Clark responded, "I don't know." The reality is, we don't always know why healing doesn't occur. Often-

times we are quick to say that they didn't have enough faith, that there is sin or rebellion that they haven't confessed. But that is not always the case. To say that these things are true when healing doesn't happen places a condemnation of guilt and judgment on people, which is contrary to the gospel and the forgiveness of sins.

Clark gives his best reasoning by saying, "There is a direct connection in my mind between the ways of God relating to salvation and relating to healing. Not everybody that hears the Word gets saved, and not everybody who hears the message of healing gets healed. Not everybody who appears to have been saved, based upon the fruit later, really did get saved, and not everybody who thought they were healed, in a moment, three or four days later, really were healed and maintained healing. We don't always understand why...God never said I had to understand it to do it, to believe in it...My faith is waiting for my understanding." I believe that when healing doesn't occur, it is our duty to preach the rest of the gospel, and remind the people of God that God still heals, and that healing doesn't exist in our timing. For when he said, "Let there be light..." time as we know it began to exist. Those times when healing doesn't occur can be the church's finest hour, for it is a time when we must display and express the genuine love (*agape*) of Jesus Christ.

At the end of the age, when the "already and not yet" kingdom tension is fully resolved in the new heaven and the new earth, there will be no more sorrow or crying or pain or death (Revelation 21). No more disease or demons. The will of God will be fully done, and the provision of Jesus for our total healing will be ours. But remember, we can receive much of that inheritance "already."

Sometimes our difficulty with healing is in the timing or delay of it, while a battle rages in the physical and the spiritual realms. The four gospels and Acts show repeatedly "all were healed" by Jesus or the disciples, even great

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crowds of thousands. But saints in the Old Testament, and later in the New Testament, struggled to receive healing too.

John Wimber, in his book *Power Healing*, mentions four specific instances in the letters to the churches where the sick were not healed immediately, and in two cases possibly were never healed.

“The first case involves Epaphroditus, a leader in the church at Philippi who had traveled to Rome to visit Paul in prison and contracted a serious illness (we do not know the specific nature of the illness). Paul wrote back to the Philippians: ‘Indeed he [Epaphroditus] was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow’ (Philippians 2:27). Paul’s concern reveals a love for his friend and a desire for his healing. Based on this, it seems likely that Epaphroditus received healing prayer that had no immediate effect.” (Remember that healing can often be progressive, whereas miracles are immediate displays of power and a clear sign that the kingdom of God is near.)

“The second case involves Timothy. In 1 Timothy 5:23 Paul advises Timothy to ‘stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.’ Why did Paul give this advice? Most likely because to that date healing prayer had not been effective for Timothy’s illnesses.” (Jesus is Lord of both the natural and the supernatural realms. Doctors and medicine can be of great value!)

“The third case involves the Gentile Christian from Ephesus, Trophimus, who was Paul’s traveling companion on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:4) and, unwittingly, was the cause of Paul’s later arrest in Jerusalem (Acts 21:27-29). In 2 Timothy 4:20 Paul writes, ‘I left Trophimus sick in Miletus.’ There is the possibility based on the Greek word, translated in

this verse as ‘sick,’ that Trophimus had overworked and weakened his body. If healing ever came to Trophimus, it was delayed, and had not come when he wrote 2 Timothy.”

“The fourth case involves Paul himself. In Galatians 4:13-14 he writes, ‘As you know, it was because of an illness that I first preached the gospel to you. Even though my illness was a trial to you, you did not treat me with contempt or scorn.’ Some commentators have suggested Paul’s illness was an eye affliction, while others have suggested malaria or epilepsy. Regardless of what the specific illness was, Paul was not healed at the time.”

According to Wimber: “What makes these four instances of God not healing even more remarkable is that they involved men who were highly esteemed, gifted, and mature Christian leaders. Explanations such as personal sin, defective faith, or ignorance in those who were sick or those who prayed over them for healing are not plausible for these men. Paul continued to have success in praying for the sick, even though in these four instances there was no immediate healing.”

In Acts 28:8-9, all the sick on the island of Malta were healed through Paul.

Wherever we end up on the spectrum of reasoning regarding why healing doesn’t always happen on earth, it is our duty to preach Christ. The Lord himself knows weakness, sorrow, pain, and death. He never leaves us or forsakes us. We must minister pastoral love to those who suffer, whether from disease or disability, from accidents or persecution. All the gifts of the Spirit are made to operate in “love mode” only. Compassion for people and passion for Christ, who ultimately heals all, must mark the maturing Christian. Bring peace to troubled souls still caught in the great struggle of the Fall and redemption (Ephesians 6). God is sovereign over it all.

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# RESOURCES FOR FURTHER GROWTH

There are hundreds of well-written resources, videos, blogs, and audio testimonies/teachings on healing. Check out the bookstores at local healing rooms or go online.

## Websites

All Nations Ministries

[www.allnationsmin.org](http://www.allnationsmin.org)

Healing Rooms Ministries International

[www.healingrooms.com](http://www.healingrooms.com)

Tulare Healing Rooms

[www.healingroomstulare.com](http://www.healingroomstulare.com)

Healing Rooms, Santa Maria Valley, CA

[www.healingroomssmv.com](http://www.healingroomssmv.com)

## Books

*Biblical Healing*, T.L. Osborn (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 2004).

*The Essential Guide to Healing: Equipping All Christians to Pray for the Sick*, Bill Johnson and Randy Clark (Minneapolis, MN: Chosen, 2011).

*God's Generals: The Healing Evangelists*, Roberts Liardon (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2011).

*Healing Unplugged: Conversations and Insights from Two Veteran Healing Leaders*, Bill Johnson and Randy Clark (Minneapolis, MN: Chosen, 2012).

*The Hidden Power of the Believer's Touch: The Healing Anointing of Every Believer*, Mahesh Chavda (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2005).

*The Hidden Power of Healing Prayer: The Healing Anointing of the Laying on of Hands*, Mahesh Chavda (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2005).

*One Hundred Divine Healing Facts*, T.L. Osborn (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 1983).

*Megashift*, James Rutz (Cedar Hills, TX: Empowerment Press, 2005).

*Power Healing*, John Wimber and Kevin Springer (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1987).

## Means of Grace for Healing


- Speaking the truth, rebuking symptoms in Christ as a persistent act of the will. Speak a positive confession: "This healing is mine because of what Jesus did on the cross."
- Laying on hands, anointing with oil (symbolizes the real presence of the Holy Spirit) in the name of the Lord Jesus. This is ordinary ministry practice for the saints, a "fundamental of the faith" (Hebrews 6:2). Impartation and instruction go hand in hand.
- John Wimber's five-step ministry model for ordinary Christians (see page 33).
- Believing the gospel when it is preached in a complete way, hearing and appropriating the good news of the kingdom of God. The Father is willing to help us.
- Inviting elders to pray and anoint with oil, according to James 5.
- Receiving communion, the meal that heals, by understanding the body and blood.
- Word of command within divine revelation.
- Praying in tongues. I've seen the immune system strengthened and prayers answered.
- Deliverance from demonic attack or attachment.
- Capturing doubts with Scripture promises and truth in order to release faith in the Lord's provision for healing.


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- Intercession for one another, even at a distance.


### The Promise and Challenge

“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father” (John 14:12, NIV).

### Three Keys to Empowerment: Father, Son, Holy Spirit (John 14:1-21)

 Intimacy with the Father: hearing and seeing what God is doing in real life situations and then doing his works with him. Jesus reveals the Father best; he makes God’s will known and visible to all in Scripture by what he says and does. Trust the Father to make you well (John 14:9-11).

 Following Jesus, the Son: in the details of Scripture, he is our example (John 14:12). Jesus brought his world with him when he came to earth, and so you too can be an ambassador of the kingdom of God and bring his reign and domain from heaven to earth. Since Jesus often healed when moved with compassion for people, cultivate that sensitivity for others as well. Since Jesus often healed in the marketplace, don’t eliminate any areas from his right to rule, and make space for his grace every day. Be a diligent apprentice of Jesus according to his biblical training example. Trust that the provision of Jesus is enough for us—by his stripes we are healed.

 Yield daily to the Holy Spirit (John 14:16 describes the Spirit as “another Counselor” (*allos parakletos*) meaning “just like” or “the same.” I have a big Jesus in me, full-grown, in

the person of the eternal Holy Spirit. I am the temple of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18; Acts 2:38, 4:29-31). Have God “inside-mindedness,” not just God “outside-mindedness.” Begin every morning submitting your whole spirit, soul, and body to the Spirit’s presence and power. Then, go glorify Jesus! Fullness in the Spirit is measured in overflow, not just in-filling. Baptism (immersion) in the Holy Spirit has been a birthright and blessing since Pentecost so that we can be authentic witnesses in word and deed.

Additional “streams of living water”:

- Impartation (laying on of hands) from gifted leaders in the body sent by Christ to equip you for works of ministry (Ephesians 4:11), especially apostles (2 Corinthians 12:12).
- Testimonies and teaching on healing (sound doctrine) absorbed regularly. Explore environments of faith where miracles and healing are occurring, like healing rooms, church gatherings, small groups, mission fields, and the marketplace.
- Pray for healing as part of a team so the gifts distributed in the body are more developed.
- Cultivate the gift of prophecy/words of knowledge and your ability to hear the Lord’s voice.
- Fast and practice intercessory prayer, including spiritual warfare training.
- Walk worthy of your calling in Christ, forgive all who offend or harm you, and separate from all known sin.

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## A CLASH OF KINGDOMS

Healing and deliverance provide believers the opportunity for a direct assault on strongholds of the kingdom of darkness in order to set people free through Jesus' love and power. It is the power of Satan against the power of God—the consequences of the Fall against God's grace—and God is infinitely stronger. It may help in this spiritual conflict with the flesh, the world, and the devil, to remember that the enemy does not put into practice what Jesus taught in Matthew 7:26 about what kind of ground to build on. So, no matter how long it has been standing, the stronghold has a foundation of sand. If you bring the wind of the Spirit and the waves from the river of life that is flowing in you against it, the stronghold will come down (John 7:38).

Many ask, "What if healing does not come right away or at all when we pray or command healing with authority?" This dilemma seems to stop many disciples from starting to minister healing and deliverance in obedience of faith. They apparently want full assurance of success each time or they hold back. This is more than doctors and medicine can promise based on scientific observation of the natural world, but most Western-culture Christians are still more comfortable with that—with trying things in the physical realm in order to get well or free. Surgeries and medicines abound, at the cost of time, pain, and money. (And yet "physical realm" efforts leave 70 to 80 diseases incurable.) We thank God for doctors, nurses, hospitals, and medicine and for the money to purchase them. These are blessings, and since Jesus is Lord of the visible and invisible realms, we really don't have to pick one approach or the other. God uses both to bless people.

Like all ministry, learning and developing a ministry of healing takes time. We can't just jump from a first-time prayer of healing for someone (kindergarten) to a veteran healing ministry where hundreds of healings and deliverances occur in and through a believer each month

(master's degree). The disciples grew through Jesus' show-how method of training, progressing from watching in faith to helping or doing smaller missions in pairs, to solo miracles, to huge healing ministries. Early on, they did not always succeed. But they learned each time they put the Master's commands into practice (Matthew 10:7-8). Eventually, we see times when the early church leaders healed *all* who came to them, just like Jesus did (Acts 5:16, 28:9).

For healing to manifest in someone's life on earth, the healing equation needs more than A) God's will to heal and B) our faith. The equation here on earth is not  $A + B = \text{healing}$ . That puts weird pressure on already-sick people to somehow measure their faith, which gets their eyes off Jesus even more and makes it harder for them to receive healing. Another error is to shrink the will of God based on our experience and say that obviously God does not want to heal all, some, or any. But Jesus reveals the Father best, and in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Jesus heals all who come to him.

To complete the equation, we need another category in the healing equation: C) the clash of kingdoms.  $A + B + C = \text{a better understanding of healing}$ .

- A. The revealed will of God. The Father wants people well; Jesus reveals the will of the Father perfectly (John 14:6-14; Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:15, 19, and dozens of other verses show the perfect obedience of Jesus to the Father, and the healing of all who came to him).
- B. Our faith. Even a mustard seed of faith (trust) in the Father who wants people well can produce plenty of healings in us and others. This is not just an individual sport; a team is often involved (two by two; faith is not just exhibited in the one receiving the healing). We have enough faith to start, and we can grow it by seeing God's heart and actions and

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promises in Scripture again and again. God is a steady, reliable person for our hearts to trust.

- C. The clash of kingdoms. Healing can sometimes be delayed or not realized on earth. This is the place to dig more if healing does not come the first time we pray for someone with faith in the Lord's revealed will. The clash is between the kingdom of heaven (already here but not fully realized on earth) and the kingdom of darkness. The whole counsel of God would seem to speak to these kinds of issues hindering the manifestation of healing in lives now on earth. And this is not unlike our struggle with sin or addictions at times, or how salvation is delayed for years for those we are praying for and witnessing to, even though God's will is plain concerning sin and the Father's desire to save.

### **Testimony**

"For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10, KJV).

A woman visiting from Montana had a two-year-old daughter whose feet turned inward so severely that she would constantly trip over them whenever she tried to run. After hearing the testimonies and the teaching, the woman said in her heart, "I'll take that for my daughter." When she went to pick up her little girl from our nursery, she found that her feet were already perfectly straight. No one had laid hands on her or prayed. It just happened with God's supernatural intervention when her faith was ignited through the power of a story" (Bill Johnson in *Release the Power of Jesus*).

## **ROADBLOCKS TO HEALING**

### **1. Corporate Unbelief**

Nazareth folks exhibited corporate unbelief toward Jesus, and the result was devastating (Luke 4:14-30, Matthew 13:54-58, Mark 6:1-6). Specifically, this is an environment of human perspective that prefers the natural realm, the physical world we encounter with our five senses, over the spiritual truth and supernatural promise of the realm of heaven. The Nazareth people thought they knew a lot when they could name

Jesus' family members (the natural realm), and they took offense at him being anything more than that to them. Mark makes clear that Jesus (who had healed multitudes already, who perfectly knew and trusted the Father's will to heal all who came to him) *couldn't* do what he had been doing in Nazareth, since as a group they were filled with unbelief about who Jesus truly was.

They could not see the invisible with eyes of faith, preferring and trusting only the visible as their frame of reference. They knew facts, but not the Truth. Only a few individuals could get healed in that faithless, sterile environment. Much of Western culture is steeped in this kind of preference for the hard facts of science, trusting in medicine and doctors from the five-senses "real world" perspective. Worldview issues can take time to refocus biblically. People just don't want to "go there" since it seems so unfamiliar. Skepticism reigns instead of belief that Jesus is resurrected in glory, sitting at the right hand of the Father, full of grace and truth, the same yesterday, today, and forever in his character and ministry, and still bringing the supreme will of the Father to earth in saving ways through ambassadors of the kingdom of heaven.

### **2. Doubt**

Doubt is similar to corporate unbelief, but it affects individuals or communities of faith. The "sphere" or view of reality is also different. Unbelief traffics and trusts in the lower, temporary realm only (2 Corinthians 4:18). But doubt is able to affect the relationship with God in the heavenly or supernatural realm. Doubting people are interacting with the real Jesus, walking somewhat by faith and not just sight, and engaging the true promises and provision of God, yet they have trouble continuing to receive from God what is promised. God is willing to give wisdom to all people but doubt can block people from receiving that wisdom because it makes them unstable, unsettled (James 1:5-8).

Doubt is a corrosive enemy of faith that takes our eyes off Christ and the word of God and directs our attention to other circumstances. The time that Peter walked on the water with Jesus on a stormy night illustrates this well (Matthew

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14:22-33). Peter and Jesus manifest a superior reality for a time as they defy the natural world's law of gravity. Then Peter takes his eyes off Jesus and focuses on the wind and waves, and immediately he begins to sink as the law of gravity prevails. Jesus says in verse 31, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" Doubt is the enemy of people with little faith, who otherwise can and do receive from the Lord in many other areas of life. The text also mentions fear, which often plays a role in bringing doubt. False Evidence Appearing Real is one way to define fear. This is a tug-of-war between the truth of heaven and the facts of earth. We need spiritual illumination of reality beyond our five senses; Scripture can help slay doubt when it is used like a double-edged sword, dividing soul from spirit, separating our mind's way of thinking and feeling from the realities of a new creation and believers as citizens of heaven (Hebrews 4:12, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16).

God rebukes those caught up in corporate unbelief for their clear lack of trust in God and for fixating on the temporary things of this world, but doubt is treatable if we stay in a humble and teachable relationship with Jesus. For example, when doubt intercepts Peter's faith he cries out, "Lord, save me!" And Jesus does, immediately catching him from falling. "Lord, save me!" is a good prayer for us when we sense doubt trying to creep in to keep us from receiving supernaturally from the Lord. It gets our eyes back on the Lord. Another example is the man with a tormented son (Mark 9:14-29, Matthew 17:14-20, Luke 9:37-42). Jesus delivers his son when the man cries out, "I believe; help my unbelief!" This is another great prayer that shows how to receive even when we are fighting doubts related to feelings and memories, such as, "I've been prayed for before; how will this time be any different?"

The disciple Thomas also wrestled with doubts after he heard about the resurrection of Jesus, and that is "natural" in the sense that he had little experience with this kind of thing—resurrection—and knew it had to be supernatural. But here, too, Jesus comes to Thomas and graciously helps him along by letting Thomas touch the supernatural, glorified body that still bears nail holes and scars. Thomas is healed of doubt

by staying present to Jesus in a humble and teachable way. Yet Jesus does commend those who believe in his resurrection without experiencing him with their five senses first. Cleansing our lives of doubt in order to receive healing can take some time depending on various cultures and personalities. "Dirty Dozen Doubts" (p. 31) gives Scripture passages to meditate on and to use as the sword of the Spirit against this enemy hiding in our thoughts and feelings.

### 3. The Will of a Human Being

Scripture shows that Jesus did not heal all who were sick or demonized in Israel, but rather all of those who came to him, who sought him out, who listened to his teachings, who let him minister to them (Luke 4:40, 13:34, 17:12; Mark 1:40-41, 6:56; Matthew 4:23-24, 8:7, 8:16, 9:35, 10:1, 14:14, 15:30, 20:30-34). This pattern is also true of Jesus' kingdom followers: for the first 12 followers (Luke 9:1-2), for the 72 followers that Jesus sent out (Luke 10:9, 17), for the early church (Acts 5:12-16), and for Stephen (Acts 6:8), Phillip (Acts 8:6-8), and Paul (Acts 28:9). Those who rejected the good news, like the Pharisees or Sadducees, did not receive healing. Their human choice blocked the will of the Father being supremely manifested in that person or need, even though the kingdom of heaven was at hand. So while salvation (*sozo*) was perfectly provided in Jesus on the cross two thousand years ago, it must be sought and received voluntarily, as a response of faith and a choice of the will. The Father is active in drawing people and arranging providential "divine appointments." But then people must respond. This is why at times Jesus asks key questions: "Do you want to be made well?" (John 5:6); "What do you want me to do for you?" (Luke 18:41).

### 4. Pit of Passivity

Passivity is related to the human-will issue, but functions much like doubt does among people who know God personally. Due to human feelings or thoughts (rationalizations, emphasizing only one part of revelation to the exclusion of other revelation), people can focus so intently on the sovereignty of God that they will fail to align themselves with that will as it is revealed in their lives. That is a lordship issue, but it may be

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hard for them to connect the doctrine of submission to God to their lives. So while claiming a great preference for God's will in general, and usually from a distance (transcendent, not very intimate or immanently loving), the person remains passive and does not actually seek healing from Jesus, the healer, who is true to God's nature when he heals (Jehovah Rapha: "the Lord who heals"). This "religion of the head" afflicted the Pharisees and Sadducees too, as well as the Gentiles (Matthew 23:1-4; John 5:39-40; James 2:19; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5, 4:20). Hyper-Calvinistic teaching can produce this overbalance in believers and make them passive, waiting for God's specific or special will to be revealed in their individual cases. They don't want to be presumptuous, but a false humility masks the fears that make them passive. They "stand back" to see what comes. They are often unclear about what actually is a good and perfect gift from the Father and what is bad because it's from a fallen, earthly realm. Those on the charismatic side of the church can also fall into passivity as they wait for a specific "word of knowledge" to be called out before bringing their need to Jesus.

But God still works in us and around us for good (Romans 8:28). God can't love us any more than he does, and he won't love us any less. Clearly, sickness is not a good and perfect gift (Luke 6:9, 13:10-17). Demons aren't either (Luke 10:17-19, 11:20). God is not a child abuser. Read Matthew 7:7-11 and note Jesus' comparison of our earthly parents and our heavenly Father. You know the Father wants you to be well, so keep on asking, seeking, and knocking. Faith is an expression of our will, even in the face of condemning thoughts or negative feelings, so our choices matter in terms of who we trust in action! Let's be fully persuaded and get active by faith in God's promises as Abraham did (Romans 4:20-21).

### **5. Lack of Persistence**

The parable of the persistent widow coming to the unjust judge to gain what is rightfully hers (Luke 18:1-8) illustrates how persistence can be the key to receiving healing. Luke 18:7 says, "And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night?" God will rule righteously for his children,

because of what Jesus did on the cross two thousand years ago. As James 2:22 says, our faith is demonstrated by actions, made complete by what we do. While you are waiting for healing, remember that "expression deepens impression," so speak the truth out loud (Matthew 11:22-24).

Another example of this kind of persistence is the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30). It shows that persistence wins the heart of Jesus even for those outside the covenant of healing with God. She is commended for having great faith.

Here's another reason to be persistent: the spiritual battle in the heavenly realm can be a reason for delay of God's provision and answer to prayer (as in Daniel 10:12-13). Many healing testimonies reveal the need for persistence because more is going on than meets the eye. For example, blindness left a woman on the seventh night in a row of receiving powerful prayer in a healing conference. No changes were apparent for the first six days. Why was the healing not apparent on the first night? The healing minister was given a vision of the spiritual battle being won each day in seven parts until finally, with the seventh prayer session, manifestation of healing occurred. Others receive healings in stages, or one part of the body before others. It seems that healing can be gradual, progressive over time, for a variety of reasons. Sometimes God heals someone in both the natural and supernatural realms as a witness to others (it's not all about us). Get on the right road (to Jesus) and you will reach the right destination if you don't give up. By faith and patience we inherit the promises (Hebrews 6:12, 10:35-39).

### **6. Sense of Personal Shame and Guilt; Lack of Forgiveness toward Others**

The devil is a liar, murderer, and accuser (John 8:44, Revelation 12:10) and he will gladly try to keep the saints in condemnation if they allow it. Romans 8:1-2 declares our freedom in Christ with no condemnation, but if believers are caught in real or perceived guilt and shame it is difficult for them to receive grace and mercy from the Lord for healing. The enemy will play this card until defeated by the truth of Scripture

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regarding the double cure: all our sins are washed away in the blood of Jesus' atoning death on the cross, and Jesus gives us the gift of perfect and justifying righteousness that is "from above." Our sin is wiped out and our righteousness is filled up (Romans 10:3-4). We are a new creation in Christ, clothed in righteousness as a gift. In the same way, holding our, or someone else's, guilt or shame in our heart can create a barrier, a "stone in the bucket" that takes up space meant for grace and holds back the flow of life in that area (John 7:38).

In Matthew 18:35, Jesus warns of dire consequences on earth for those who refuse to forgive others when they have been forgiven much more. Mark 11:25 speaks of the need to forgive others in order for prayer to be effective. James 5:16 and 1 John 1:7-8 demonstrate how cleansing and healing can occur with confession and prayer. The paralyzed man let down through the roof for Jesus to heal had his sins forgiven and then received healing in his body. In John 5:14, Jesus heals a man and then tells him to stop sinning so that "nothing worse happens to you."

Get squared away with your sin and the sins of others against you by the provision of Jesus in salvation (sozo) and that often leads to healings of the whole person (spirit, soul, and body). Spiritual roots to disease can be found here too, as pastor Henry Wright points out in *A More Excellent Way*. Deal with the root and the fruit of disease will die out, too. You can always, *always* forgive others by trusting in the justice of God to deal ultimately and decisively with sin, either on the cross two thousand years ago or in the coming age in hell. Don't run hopelessly behind Jesus or run ahead of him by holding on to others' sins against you. Let them go on ahead to judgment day, so you can forgive others as you have been forgiven.

## **7. Larger Kingdom of God Purposes Involved**

Sometimes healing doesn't come right away because God is accomplishing a larger kingdom purpose. (This is not the same as the third doubt on the Dirty Dozen Doubts list on page 31, which focuses on some unknown, personal purpose for which God supposedly gave a sickness

or injury to his child.) For example, Lazarus in John 11 could certainly have been healed by Jesus, and people were asking for that. Jesus loved Lazarus and certainly knew the way to the house where he was staying. But Jesus delayed going to Lazarus, and Lazarus died. Two things become evident in the Scripture here: first of all, Jesus was preparing many people for a far greater revelation of his glory—they already knew he was the healer, now they would know he is the resurrection and the life. Secondly, many would put their faith in Jesus for eternal life through this delayed healing. Lazarus wasn't sick anymore when he was raised to life either, so the healing did come. God didn't give less, he gave more—but the understanding of Jesus' close friends was severely tested by this experience. It didn't line up with what they knew.

I have seen a similar situation in a dramatic case in California. God was bringing a son home to heaven and dozens of youth put their faith in Jesus for salvation through the death of this young man. Evan was healed in heaven—his real home—and God did more that we could ask or think at the time. He is king of his kingdom after all! I just follow Jesus. This principle of larger kingdom principles being involved is probably at work in the timing of healing for the lame man outside the temple (Acts 3:1-6). The man was more than forty years old and crippled from birth; every day he was put outside the temple to beg from people going into the temple courts. Surely Jesus had passed by this man, and neither had spoken. But then, in God's timing and provision, the man was healed through the ministry of Peter and John, and the impact was huge, with many coming to Christ in Jerusalem, stirring up the religious leaders.

Jesus says that the man's blindness was not due to his or his parents' sin, but so that the work of God might be displayed in his life (John 9:3). Our brokenness in a fallen world is God's occasion to put us in his workshop and go to work! The blind man had been blind a long time before the grace of God changed everything and he became a stunning testimony to all kinds of people in high and low positions. How and when God displays his work in our lives may have more to do with others than with ourselves. We are not the center of the universe, but Jesus

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is, right there at the right side of the Father in heaven. His ways may be higher than our ways, but Jesus is good all the time and the Father wants people well! Yet the overwhelming witness of the gospels is that when people come to a kingdom ambassador for healing, they receive it.

It is worth noting in Scripture that in many cases Jesus heals people differently. Sometimes a process is involved; the person is not just immediately “well.” The man in John 9 has to go to a particular pool to wash off the mud that Jesus had put on his eyes, and then his sight was restored. Jesus asks another man who is being healed from blindness what he can see. It is a two-stage healing. The ten lepers have to go show themselves to the priests, and they are healed on the way.

So not all healing is immediate; it is not always “right now or nothing.” In the old covenant, Naaman had to go wash seven times in the Jordan River before his leprosy left. Healing in the new covenant is also sometimes progressive, involving time, means, and even other people. Larger kingdom purposes are at work all the time as the spiritual realm is shaping the physical.

## **8. The Development Process of Disciples**

The Bible also shows that the disciples devel-

oped a healing ministry as they trained under Jesus. The first followers had healed no one before joining their hearts and lives with Jesus. They move through a predictable “show how” apprenticeship pattern with Jesus:

1. I do it, and you watch (Matthew 4:22-25).
2. I do it, and you help (John 6:1-13).
3. You do it with my help (Matthew 10:1-8).
4. You do it, and I watch (Acts 5:12-16).
5. You do it, and someone else watches (Acts 6:8, 8:6 and 2 Timothy 2:2).

This pattern fulfills John 14:12: “[W]hoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these...” The disciples had to grow into this experientially, watching and learning, often step by step. They got better at healing as they went, as evidenced by the man with a tormented son (Matthew 9:24), when they couldn’t get the deliverance and healing done, Jesus says, due to little faith and lack of prayer. Their faith needed to grow by steadily watching Jesus’ life and ministry, just as we have opportunity to do by revelation in Scripture. By Acts 5:16, we see that Jerusalem has become a healing center for the whole region, and all are being healed. Sometimes we disciples need to grow to have a larger impact on the needy crowds in a region through healing and deliverance. We start one by one, and take notice where the clash of kingdoms is very real.

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## DELIVERANCE FROM DEMONIZATION

The will of God is to deliver every person afflicted by demonic spirits (Acts 10:38; Matthew 10:1, 8; Luke 10:18-20, 13:16; Mark 7:25-30, 2 Corinthians 10:4-5). About a quarter of the time, when Jesus heals someone he needs to drive out an evil spirit to effect the healing. Sometimes this takes discernment and persistence. (In the case for one woman I prayed for, there wasn't a demonic issue that any member of our team could discern, and she felt freed just by knowing that this was true. It allowed her to get on with growing in Christ and other healing in her life.)

The spiritual forces of wickedness (Ephesians 6:12) are invisible to human eyes, but they are the saints' true adversaries who line up against us every day to challenge our salvation and sanctification momentum. We are to throw them to the ground so that in the end we are the ones standing in victory. Are you walking in your authority as a believer with dominion over the "snakes and scorpions" of the spiritual forces of wickedness? Are you facing in the right direction in your daily wrestling match? In Greco-Roman wrestling the goal was to throw your opponent to the ground from a standing position—the last one standing wins. (See the emphasis on the word "stand" in Ephesians 6:13-14.)

Remember Jesus saying that he saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18)? It's like he was saying, "The Father and I once threw that rebellious, murderous angel and his hosts out of heaven. And now I've come to earth to throw him out here as well. Someday I'll toss him in the lake of fire already prepared for the devil and his angels." That's pretty aggressive advancing of the kingdom of God, the domain where the will of God is evident. Who do you follow? Are you a disciple of Jesus? Be bold in taking back occupied territory from the enemy. This is the ministry and message of reconciliation that God's people carry in this era of reconciliation, before the age of heaven and hell. That is what time it is on God's clock (2 Corinthians 5:17-6:2)—time to reconcile the world to God.

The spiritual realm, which represents a huge part of human reality, is invisible to our physical senses. In addition, our Western culture is biased in favor of the material, scientific world. Consequently, what the Bible has to say about the spiritual realm is often overlooked or neglected when Western Christians study God's Word. The Bible teaches that God is spirit, and that the Holy Spirit lives in the saints and is like wind (we see the effects of it, but not the wind itself). The holy angels who serve the saints are not often seen, but they are always near (Matthew 18:10, Hebrews 1:14, Revelation 3:1, Acts 12:15). The devil and his angels, the one-third of heavenly beings who fell from heaven with him, are not usually visible either, but they are just as real as the visible realm (1 John 5:19). The supernatural realm is where the eyes of our heart operate by faith. Hebrews 11:1 teaches that faith is seeing the invisible, living by revelation and God's promises in the Holy Word.

Like the underwater part of an iceberg, the unseen reality of the spiritual realm shapes the barely visible, temporary realm. The spiritual shapes the physical, as in prayer's powerful results (James 5:16-18). Like the light spectrum, where invisible ultraviolet and infrared rays are found at either end of the visible light spectrum, most of reality is invisible to our physical senses. Yet as spiritual beings, born again in Christ, who have a soul (mind, emotions, and will) and who live in a body, we are equipped to live and engage in warfare in the spiritual realm as well as the physical realm. Sometimes in severe cases I've witnessed obvious manifestations of evil spirits (physical contortion, superhuman strength, strange voices coming from the person, fear of or reaction to the presence of Christ in us, etc.) in the physical realm. These are all seen in the Bible, too, as well as experienced today.

Rather than thinking in terms of all or nothing, "demon possessed" or not, try to think in terms of a scale from one to ten, with ten being severely demon-possessed. (See p. 30-31.) I have

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not yet met a Christian at this end of the scale, since the Holy Spirit dwells in the new creation of a true believer. I do think I've seen some level six or seven stuff in believers, but this is usually just in the early months of their conversion and Christian walk, which can involve kicking out the junk from the old life, tearing down strongholds (stubborn patterns of behavior or thinking contrary to the will of God), and "robbing the house" after binding up the strong man (Matthew 12:22-30). But it can also occur later, with a rather obvious change in a person, like addictions or a root of bitterness that grows to a high-consuming level.

### **Testimony**

I heard about the Healing Room at church. I was living with my boyfriend and we talked about going to the Healing Room. One Thursday night we attended, and it changed our lives forever. Our first experience, we felt healed and so much lighter. We knew we wanted and needed more healing. We knew we were just beginning. I had lots of demons to deal with—drugs, premarital sex, anger issues. I had already stopped using drugs (cocaine) but I was fighting the demons to return to drugs, hate, anger, and unforgiveness. Inner healing appointments prayed me through unforgiveness, anger, and hatred. The first inner healing was life changing. After leaving, I could clearly hear God. I realized he had been talking to me since I was 17. My personality changed. I became sweeter, calmer, humble, willing to serve, with all anger and hatred gone. A peace came over me and I was totally delivered from drugs (a battle of 13 years). I was delivered from hatred, anger, lying, premarital sex, with a whole personality change. Now I am happy, peaceful, joyful, [and] content where I am. Restored!"

—Artina, posted online on April 14, 2014,  
Healing Rooms Ministries

The key Greek word in the New Testament that refers to demon possession is *daimonizomai*. A good translation of this word would be "demonized," and we clearly see different levels of demonic activity as demons seek to affect the

mind, emotions, bodies, and worldly environment of human beings. They cannot control the spirit/new creation of the saints (we are in union with God's spirit) or directly manipulate the will of a human being, but they can wield influence, even with regard to dimensions of the soul that are not renewed or not surrendered. Human beings are accountable to God for every choice done in the body, whether good or evil. The enemy can influence mightily, but cannot substitute his own wicked will for the will of a human. Ultimately the human being is accountable for actions and choices, no matter how heavily "under the influence" of fallen angels.

Let's start from the lower end of demonization: everyday demonic activity in our world—activity that Christians and non-Christians alike are likely to encounter. In fact, Christians will face lots of spiritual "wrestling matches," because we truly are citizens of God's kingdom and dangerously potent with the Holy Spirit living in us for the mission of God in the world (Ephesians 1:17-23). However, Christians can be demonized on at least the first eight levels under the influence of a demon's strategy of sin (Matthew 15:26; Jesus refers to deliverance as the "children's bread"). Whether that influence is recognized and defeated, is resisted so that the devil "flees from you," or becomes a pattern of wrong thinking or behaving is based on a Christian's response or lack of response. Ignorance due to worldview issues, lack of fellowship, fear, pride, lack of confession and reading the Word of God, etc., can all contribute to the length of time before victory and freedom in Christ are established (see 1 John 5:18).

For example, in Matthew 16:22-23 Peter is hit with a demonic deception shortly after receiving a great revelation from the Father: that Jesus is truly the promised Messiah and Christ. But Jesus was there to expose the lie. Later, Peter would be "sifted as wheat" in his denial of Jesus at his trials before Jewish authorities, but Jesus had prayed for him, and after a night of fear and weakness he repented and became a bold witness. The individual stories of deliverance in Scripture that involve Jesus and Paul are often on a higher level of demonization. I do not believe this is to show it is more common, just that Jesus and his followers have authority to win in

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even the most severe cases we will face in this life, right on up to a level ten as we use the Spirit's power and wisdom (see Matthew 8:16; 10:1, 7-8; Luke 10:17; 1 John 3:8; Colossians 2:15). Ephesians 6:12 notes that people battle spiritual forces of wickedness.

Here are descriptions of the ten levels of demonization (on a scale from least to greatest threat and most common to least common):

- 1. Demonic Accusation:** There is a general lack of peace and joy for believers, a general blanket of guilt and shame contrary to Romans 8:1 (not for specific sins, since that would lead to repentance by conviction of the Holy Spirit); accusation produces persistent feelings of being unworthy, unloved, incapable, and useless (Revelation 12:10).
- 2. Demonic Deception:** This is about believing a lie and absorbing it into your mind's worldview. The enemies' lies produce fear that controls someone contrary to the Father's protection and promises (2 Timothy 1:7). Deception can involve manmade traditions, racial prejudices, and the spirit of religion and legalism (John 8:43-47). It's about believing certain "doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1) perpetrated on the church, e.g., that spiritual gifts have ceased, that the Word of God does not have authority, that all human beings and fallen angels will be restored to right relationship with God, and calling sexual perversions "good" or from God (2 Corinthians 10:4-5; Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 12:9, 19:20; Jude 3-4, 7; 2 John 1:7; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1, etc.).
- 3. Demonic Temptation:** In temptation, a strong, pervasive, or persistent trap is laid for a person around a weakness of the flesh or blind spot (Judas in Luke 22:1-5, 1 John 2:15-17).
- 4. Demonic Oppression:** This consistent harassment often involves parts of one through three above and manifests itself in personality change, such as depression, fits of anger, self-hatred, acts of violence toward oneself, suicidal thoughts and pressure on the will to attempt it, and hearing voices (Judas in Matthew 27).
- 5. Demonic Attachment:** With attachment, a specific fallen angel is assigned to and takes up residence in some part of the human being's soul or body, usually through a foothold of unrepentant and persistent sin. The demon brings defilement and claims a right to be there. It can be a spirit of infirmity or specific disease (Luke 13:10-16), a lying spirit, a confusing spirit, a spirit of anger/rage/violence/murder, a deaf and dumb spirit (Mark 9:25, Matthew 9:32), a spirit of bitterness, a spirit of shame, a spirit of pride, a spirit of jealousy, a spirit of lust, a religious spirit, a spirit of death, etc. This level of demonization requires eviction by the superior power and presence of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:28) in the name and truth of Jesus, often with a ministry team of empowered believers. I've seen clear cases of Christians manifesting this level of demonization.
- 6. Demonic Entrenchment:** This level of demonization is mainly a matter of degree; the dark "power" of the fallen angel is gaining more and more impact on the person, shaping daily behavior and reactions, and making them shun places where God's anointing is at work and love the places where it isn't (1 John 2:18-19, 26-27; 4:1-6).
- 7. Demonic Stronghold:** At this level, a person is strongly swayed at times to act in line with the will of the evil spirit, and manifestations become common: the person may speak with an altered voice, exhibit an involuntary fixed gaze, curl hands and fingers or crouch like an animal, smell foul, shriek and scream, contort his or her face, or be thrown down into fire or water, seemingly against the person's will (Matthew 17:14-18; Mark 9:20, 26). It is beyond the person's control to manage the pain inside, and he or she can become catatonic or unable to speak or move, suddenly paralyzed without medical explanation. (See Acts 8:9-13 with Simon the sorcerer.)

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**8. Demonic Infestation:** This is when multiple demons, often in a chain of hierarchy, plague a person (for example, Mary Magdalene in Luke 8:2). Often this level includes manifestations as seen in level seven, including knowing information about the person and confronting them or the heavenly realms with that information, speaking it out aggressively (Luke 4:33-36). Ministry here may require a process of deliverance in a team environment over hours or days or sessions. The “layers of the onion” come off as God’s Word sets the person free, and she or he builds a new identity in Christ. I’ve seen deliverance from demonic infestation in Christians at least four times in my thirty years of deliverance ministry. In 1986 I saw a new disciple in Amsterdam, Holland, thrust a twelve-inch skewer through his neck skin, let it hang there, and pull it out with no bleeding.

**9. Demonic Empowerment:** At this level, the demon that is present is able to periodically exert superhuman abilities through the human being, like unnatural physical strength (Acts 19:13-20) or clairvoyance (Acts 16:16-18). Sometimes the dark power attempts to validate the power of the kingdom of darkness through fortune-telling or psychic channeling through mediums or séances. But while demons do exercise power, they do not have almighty power or sovereignty, and are thwarted when God acts against them through believers who exercise kingdom-of-heaven authority in his name. I had a close friend attempt a spontaneous, solo deliverance of a person with empowered strength. My friend got physically picked up and “dribbled” off the ground like a ball for a little while. People or objects can be levitated or thrown across the room at this level of demonization. Don’t focus on the phenomena but on the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in you (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

**10. Demonic Possession:** This is when a human personality has been so taken over that in meeting the person you are continually meeting the foul presence of multiple demons. An example is the man Jesus met when he crossed the lake of Galilee and

from whom he cast a “legion” of demons into a herd of pigs (Luke 8:26-39). Ugly traits caused by the demons that were possessing that man, whom Jesus completely delivered, included superhuman strength, living naked in a graveyard, and self-mutilation.

### Effective Deliverance Ministry

A. The first four levels on the scale of demonic activity against believers and unbelievers require rescue and deliverance through Christ and his kingdom’s power and truth. This is more in the sense of separation and protection, like getting a kidnapped child out of the hands of the kidnapper. Sufficient and effective approaches at this level to break off demonic accusation, deception, temptation, or oppression can be: intercession, preaching and teaching the gospel of the kingdom, sacraments, spiritual gifts operating in fellowship and worship, confession, counseling, rebuilding identity and freedom in Christ around biblical truth, positive confession, and renouncing, rebuking, and resisting the devil and his angels. In other words, you can seek freedom as a believer and find it in Christ a number of ways, and using other saints to help you do this is not a problem either. Truth and grace will set you free. Some people prefer to call this a “truth encounter” instead of a power encounter. (See *Seven Steps to Freedom*, by Neil Anderson.)

B. Levels five to seven on the scale often require a ministry team of empowered Christians to identify, oppose, and deliver the

person from this dark bondage, since it involves something more like a spiritual surgery of extraction or eviction from a part of the person’s being. Unbelievers can have a demonic spirit attached to or entrenched with their human spirit, which is dead because it is separated from God (Ephesians 2:1-4). Not all lost people have this attachment in their dead spirit, since there is a limited supply of fallen angels, and demand exceeds this supply by some margin established by God.

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With more than seven billion humans now on the planet, the odds are reduced for a demon attaching itself to any one person. So Satan uses these foul spirits strategically to get more for his efforts, attacking leaders, using organizational structures of the world and church to reinforce patterns of disobedience, etc. Born-again believers have the Holy Spirit indwelling their new creation/spirit, which is now alive to God, who is rich in mercy, and so a demonic spirit cannot attach in their spirit (the new core of their being and identity). The "will" or volitional center of a person can't be directly controlled, since humans will be responsible and accountable to God for their motives, words, and actions on judgment day. However, the body, mind, and emotions of a person are far more susceptible to attack and attachment. In the spiritual clash between two kingdoms we humans are both the "battleground" and the "prize." The kingdom of God grows within us, Jesus says, and so, in typical fashion, the devil mimics and mirrors that plan of God for his own twisted purposes and tries to gain access to human bodies and personalities. Be sure the delivered person invites the infilling of the Holy

Spirit to replace the unclean spirit(s) (Luke 11:24-26).

- C. Levels eight to ten on the scale are best handled by tested, prepared, and experienced Christian ministry teams, usually after fasting and prayer, or by an individual who, like Paul or Jesus, is full of the Holy Spirit and has clearly established patterns of kingdom authority and deliverance ministry already evident in his or her life. You will note Jesus picked the time of his encounter with the demon-possessed man across the lake (who was known as a controlling influence in the whole region) and Paul waited a couple of days before going after the spirit of divination in the girl in Philippi. Teams going into an Indian or Middle Eastern village today to deliver the "crazy man" chained or caged in the city square usually do so under direction from the Holy Spirit by revelation, and with fasting and prayer for a couple of days preceding it. The effort is worth it as a church-planting strategy; when the person is fully delivered and restored in the "power encounter," whole groups of people, sometimes in the hundreds or thousands, come to Christ and enter the kingdom of God.

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## DIRTY DOZEN DOUBTS

**T**he truth of God's Word tears down the House of Doubts about healing.

**God's will:** *Is it God's will to heal me?*

Yes. Jesus—not our circumstances, traditions, or experiences—reveals the Father's will best. (See Hebrews 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20; John 14:6-13; 4:34; 5:19-20, 30, 36-37; 6:28-29, 38; 7:16, 29; 8:26-29, 40, 55; 10:15; 17:14; there are more than seventy New Testament passages on healing.)

**God's timing:** *Is it God's time to heal me now?*

When people came to Jesus for healing in the Gospels, that is when they started receiving it. (See Mark 1:32-34, 40-42; 2:4-5; 5:6, 22-29; Matthew 14:35-36.)

**God's purpose:** *Is it possible that God is using sickness in my life for some deep purpose, e.g., to teach me, test me, discipline me, judge me, keep me dependent on God, or as a mystery to humble me?*

No. God does bring good out of evil. He is strong and loving, and his Word, church, and Spirit are better teachers than sickness ever will be. God is a good Father. God sustains us in sickness and would never forsake us, and he is glorified by our healing, according to John 9:3. Darkness is the absence of light, evil is the absence of good, sickness is the absence of health. (See Genesis 1-2 and Revelation 21:4 and 22:2-3. God's will and purpose are most clear at the beginning and end of time. Luke 17:17 shows that all ten lepers were healed.)

**My faith:** *Do I have enough faith to be healed?*

Yes. Jesus everywhere commends faith and points out how doubt and fear are your enemies. Learn to replace your doubts with Scripture. (See Mark 5:34; 6:5-6; Matthew 15:27-31; 21:21; James 1:6-8.)

**Presumption:** *Am I presuming on God's goodness or grace to seek this for myself or for others?*

No. Salvation, healing, and deliverance are the children's bread. *Sozo* is the one word for all three in the New Testament (Mark 7:27-30; Matthew 8:16-17). When you are healed you are fulfilling prophecy, pointing to Christ's atonement, and destroying the devil's works (Acts 10:38). Learn to receive Jesus as your healer in the same way you have received him as your savior from sin.

**Misinterpreted experience:** *I've been prayed for before, so why should this time be different? I knew someone who had great faith and was never healed, so why should I expect a different outcome?*

Settle God's will in your heart and mind. (See number one, above.) Ask yourself, "Do I want to get well?" (See John 5:6-8 for a chronic sickness situation that Jesus healed after asking that question.)

**Misinterpreted revelation:** *Doesn't the Bible reveal that Paul had a thorn in the flesh—some kind of infirmity that God wouldn't heal? And didn't Job have sicknesses that God allowed? God's already revealed something different to me with regard to me being healed; shouldn't I trust that?*

Paul's thorn was not sickness, but persecution that was demonically inspired. (See the context of 2 Corinthians 11-12.) In the case of Job, the devil made him sick and God healed him. With regard to trusting a revelation, always be sure that you test what you believe God has revealed to you to make sure that it lines up with Scripture (see 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21 and number one, above).

**Emotion:** *How can I be healed when I feel so bad (physically, emotionally, or mentally)? Don't I need a specific word of knowledge or to "feel led" in a certain way in order to be healed?*

No. As Jesus heals the multitudes, he never has to pause to ask for a specific revelation for each person because he already knows the Father's will. (See 1 John 3:8 and Mark 1:40-41.)

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**Unclean conscience:** *Don't I deserve what I have?*

No. Sickness is creeping death, the absence of God's good health and a consequence of humanity's fall into sin. Jesus reverses the curse, the Fall, and all its effects. You have a perfect person's total forgiveness and actual righteousness. You can't add to perfect. "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1, NIV). Jesus heals lost people without expecting them to be all cleaned up first—why not you? Memorize John 1:8-9. Apply it to your life.

**Prayer burden distortion:** *Don't I have the gift/calling to bear someone else's burden and pain in their place?*

No. See 1 Timothy 2:5-6 for God's idea of

who the true mediator is and what atoning sacrifice is.

**Giftng:** *Don't I need some special spiritual gift to receive the miracle of healing? Or at least to be healed through someone to whom God has given a special gift for healing?*

No. Mark 16:17 and John 14:12 say that you need to be someone who believes—that's all.

**Death:** *Don't we all get sick and die anyway? Don't I have to be sick in order to die?*

Yes. We will all die, unless Jesus comes back first. But no, we don't necessarily die from sickness. Many people die peacefully in their sleep or under other circumstances God has appointed, or due to persecution because of their bold witness for the gospel.

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# THE HEALING MODEL

*This healing model was created by John Wimber and is posted on the Vineyard Church website, where permission is given for churches and church groups to use it.*

## STEP ONE: THE INTERVIEW

Where does it hurt?

1. Conducted on two planes:
  - **Natural – Empirical:** (Ask person what they think is wrong, where it hurts, etc.) Sort information according to past and present experiences—what you see, know, have learned, etc.
  - **Supernatural – Cosmic:** (Ask the Holy Spirit to show his insights.) Sort information according to the gifts of the Spirit—words of knowledge and wisdom, discerning of spirits, etc.

This is **NOT** a medical interview.

## STEP TWO: DIAGNOSTIC DECISION

What has caused this condition?

1. It could be caused by natural factors:
  - **Living in a fallen, sinful world** (virus, accidents, etc.)
  - **Sin** (sexual immorality - STD)
  - **Emotional/social** (lack of forgiveness)
  - **Family traits** (poor heart, diabetes)
2. It could be caused by spiritual factors:
  - **Demonic affliction:** (blind, deaf, bowed over, etc.)
  - **Demonic oppression:** (compulsive behavior, fearful, etc.)

## STEP THREE: PRAYER SELECTION

What kind of prayer will I need?

- Prayer directed toward God:
- **Most common:** Petition—ask for Spirit's

- presence/ask for Spirit's healing
- **Intercessory prayer**
- Prayer from God:
  1. **Command** - of faith
  2. **Pronouncement** - of faith
  3. **To devil/demons** - rebuke, bind, expel

## STEP FOUR: PRAYER ENGAGEMENT

How are we doing?

- Prayer/ministry should be specifically directed toward the diagnosed problem while looking for indications of the Spirit's presence:
  - The "effect" you are praying for is healing.
  - Certain observable phenomena that indicate the Spirit is accomplishing healing can include the following: warmth, tingling, muscle spasms, shaking, deep breathing, tenderness, tears, stiffness in certain body parts, dizziness, or perspiration.
  - Pray with your eyes open to observe these signals and cooperate with the Spirit.
  - Follow the Spirit's lead by continued flow of gifts of the Spirit while ministering.
- When in doubt, ask questions:
  - Healing may have occurred without any visible signs.
  - Problems on the minister's side may be blocking healing: unable to fully discern what the Spirit is doing; may need to go back (repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 if necessary).
  - Problems on the receiving end may be blocking healing: some people are expecting not to receive; some are resisting what the Spirit has begun to do.
  - This feedback may lead to an adjusted approach that will be more effective.
- Stop praying when:

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- Healing is completed.
  - You sense that the Spirit is finished for now.
  - You don't know what else to do.

#### **STEP FIVE: POST-PRAYER DIRECTIONS**

What should I do or expect next?

- Summarize the situation:
  - Explain what has occurred.
  - Share any gifts of encouragement or exhortation given to you by the Holy Spirit.

- Direct the person to follow through on any repentance for sin that the Spirit has begun dealing with during the ministry time (be practical).
- If healing has not occurred or is incomplete, affirm and encourage the person to keep seeking because God is willing to heal.
- Avoid the following problems:
  - Don't give personal advice.
  - Don't condemn a person for not receiving healing ("it's sin" or "it's a lack of faith").
- Follow up

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# HEALING, PAST AND PRESENT

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father” (John 14:12, NASB).*

Throughout both the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible we are provided with miraculous stories of how God healed. It has always been God’s desire to heal spiritually, emotionally, or physically, and he has chosen to heal through everyday ordinary people, people who simply have a desire to do what Jesus did, and do even greater works. God has truly been gracious and compassionate, as his healing presence in us is something none of us can simply “work up.” The Holy Spirit is always present and willing to help us in our time of need. Actively yield to the Spirit, and let God’s anointing lead the way (Luke 5:17).

God’s healing presence accompanied the ministries of those who healed, both past and present. Below you will find a short biography of some of those who have gone before us, laying a firm foundation for the miracles, signs, and wonders that continue to accompany those who are ministering today.

May their stories inspire you to go and do likewise! The Bible says, “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ. And so through him the ‘Amen’ is spoken by us to the glory of God” (2 Corinthians 1:20, NASB).

As Bill Johnson and Randy Clark write in *The Essential Guide to Healing* (pp. 133-134): “For the greatest miracles we’ll see in the future will come when we have taught the Church to raise their corporate faith. People need to know that if someone gets a word of knowledge for somebody else, it’s just not the person giving the word whose faith goes up and who increases others’ faith. The whole congregation needs to understand how God works. When they understand the ways of God, it literally causes the whole congregation to rise up in their hearts and say, ‘Yes, God’s getting ready to do this!’ So all of us speak the ‘Amen,’ which

means ‘let it be’ or ‘so be it,’ to the glory of God.”

**Fred Francis Bosworth** was born on a farm in Nebraska around 1877. At the age of 16, Bosworth was invited to attend Methodist revival meetings. He came under conviction and was saved. While working for a physician he caught a severe chill and developed lung problems. He was told that he did not have long to live. He decided to visit his parents. While on the trip he stopped at a Methodist revival meeting, and a woman named Mattie Perry told Bosworth that he could be healed. She prayed for him and he was instantly healed. Bosworth was drawn to John Alexander Dowie’s healing ministry and moved with his family to Zion, Illinois. He saw tremendous miracles of healing while in Zion. Bosworth visited Azusa Street in California to see the new Pentecostal revival that was being held there. Although Bosworth taught on healing, he really was an evangelist who saw healing as the greatest tool to reach the lost. Bosworth and his brother Burt held many dramatic evangelistic and healing campaigns in the United States and Canada in the early 1920s. He continued his ministry until 1947, when he retired to Florida. In 1948, Bosworth met William Branham in Florida. William Branham was holding healing meetings and Bosworth decided to come out of retirement to join him. He traveled with Branham and saw thousands healed and saved in those campaigns.

*Material used with permission from [www.healingandrevival.com](http://www.healingandrevival.com).*

**Kathryn Johanna Kuhlman** was born in 1907 in Missouri. Kuhlman was converted when she was 14 at an evangelistic meeting held in a small Methodist church. Her older sister, Myrtle, had married an itinerant evangelist, Everette B. Parrott, and they asked Kathryn to join them for

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the summer. Her parents agreed, and she went to Oregon to help out, and often gave her testimony. She ended up working with them for five years. Kuhlman began to hold small evangelistic meetings on her own and preaching on radio broadcasts in Oil City, Pennsylvania. These became so popular they were picked up in Pittsburgh, and she was preaching throughout the area. She began to preach about the healing power of God. In 1947 a woman was healed of a tumor while listening to Kuhlman preach. Several Sundays later a man was healed while she was teaching on the Holy Spirit. She was now convinced of God's healing work. In 1948 Kuhlman held a series of meetings in Pittsburgh. She moved to Pittsburgh in 1950 and continued to hold meetings until 1971. Her style was flamboyant; she would hold her famous miracle services and the auditorium was filled to capacity every time. She was on radio and television shows. Hundreds of people were healed in her meetings and while listening to her on the radio or television. People she prayed for would often be hit with the power of God and be "slain in the Spirit." Kuhlman never claimed that she was the healer. She always pointed people to Jesus as their healer.

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**William Marrion Branham** was born in 1909 in eastern Kentucky. His family moved to a farm near Jeffersonville, Indiana, where they lived in poverty. He experienced his first divine visitation when he was three years old. He had a vision that one day the family would move from Kentucky to live near a city called New Albany. That vision was fulfilled. At the age of seven he had another divine encounter. He was under a poplar tree when a voice spoke out of a small whirlwind and said, "Never smoke, never drink, nor defile your body, for when you are older there is a work for you to do" (Peary Green, *The Acts of the Prophet*, p. 40). Thousands were converted or healed through his ministry. He reported that throughout his life he was guided by an angel who regularly communicated with him. He operated in what appears to be a genuine gift of the word of

knowledge that gave him the power to discern people's illnesses and thoughts.

*Material used with permission from [www.healingandrevival.com](http://www.healingandrevival.com) and [www.voiceofhealing.info](http://www.voiceofhealing.info).*

**Lester Frank Sumrall** was born in New Orleans in 1913. He was diagnosed with tuberculosis as a teenager. His mother prayed for Lester before he was born and decided even then that he was going to be a preacher. At age 17, he was dying of tuberculosis without any natural hope of recovery, but God gave him a choice of either preaching the gospel or dying of the disease. He chose the best option! Leaving his home in Panama City, Florida, he became a preacher in the backwoods of Florida, Tennessee, and Arkansas. At age 19, he founded a church in Green Forest, Arkansas, and was ordained by the Assemblies of God. In 1931 God began to deal with Lester's motives. He'd agreed to preach the gospel to save his life, but he didn't have a real concern for people. God gave him a vision of multitudes of people in foreign countries going to hell. God broke his heart for the lost that night. God called him to be an international evangelist and preach the gospel to the whole world. He was never the same. Eighteen months later God connected Sumrall with Howard Carter, an internationally known Bible teacher, and they began to travel the world together. They would go to an area and Carter would go to one place to preach and Sumrall to another. Some remarkable healings and deliverances began to occur in Sumrall's meetings. People were healed and saved by the thousands.

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**Granville Oral Roberts** was born in 1918, the fifth son of a minister in the Pentecostal Holiness church in Pontotoc County, Oklahoma. At 17, he was diagnosed with tuberculosis and bedridden for more than five months. He was totally healed of TB, and also of his stuttering, in July 1935 at a tent revival conducted by evangelist George W. Moncey in Ada,

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Oklahoma. For two years, Roberts was an apprentice under his father in evangelistic work. He was ordained by the Pentecostal Holiness church in 1936, and quickly became one of the outstanding young ministers in the denomination. Between 1941 and 1947 he served four different pastorates in small Pentecostal Holiness churches. Oral Roberts' initial success and continuing appeal rested on the healing ministry that began in 1947. His early preaching strongly emphasized the miraculous, but his ministry was never one simply of healing. He was always a passionate and effective evangelist. As the 1950s passed, evangelism came to be the dominant theme. He became the exemplary leader of a generation of dynamic revivalists who took the message of divine healing around the world. His ecumenical crusades were instrumental in revitalizing Pentecostalism in the post World War II era.

*Material used with permission from  
www.voiceofhealing.info.*

**John Richard Wimber** was born in 1934 in Peoria, Illinois, and raised in a non-Christian home. He loved music, and by his early 20s, he was involved in the music industry. In 1963, his life took a dramatic turn after he came to Christ through a Quaker Bible study group led by Gunner Payne. He felt that God was calling him out of the music industry, so he left it behind to move into what Christ had for him. He became highly evangelistic and led hundreds of people to Christ. He became a leader in the Yorba Linda Friends Church, and eventually was hired to be on staff in 1971. In 1974, Peter Wagner offered Wimber the position of founding director of the Department of Church Growth at Fuller Institute of Evangelism and Church Growth. Wimber was traveling all over the world teaching on church growth. In 1976 his wife, Carol, had a dream of preaching a seven-point sermon on the gifts of the Spirit to a large crowd. She developed an insatiable hunger for God. She was reading the Word and felt convicted that there was much more that God wanted for them. Carol began to seek God, weeping, repenting, and crying out for more of

God. God led her to a place of repentance and seeking forgiveness from those she had hurt. Also in 1976 a small group of people were meeting, seeking more of God, and they began to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in deeper ways. God also spoke to Carol about the importance of intimate worship. Wimber struggled with all of this initially, but in 1977 felt that they were to begin a church of their own from that small group. They left the Friends Church with their blessing. It was the time of the Jesus Movement, and Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California, was an important part of that movement. John became connected with Calvary Chapel and established his church as Calvary Chapel of Yorba Linda in May 1977. God began to speak to Wimber about healing the sick, and he began a church series on the subject. In March 1978, after ten months of preaching and praying without anyone being healed, Wimber saw his first healing. The church grew rapidly and began to experience a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Unexpectedly God began to train Wimber, and the church, in deliverance. This was a point of theological difference with Cavalry Chapel and they were asked to leave the denomination. They then associated with the Vineyard Church, another group in the area that was moving in a similar direction. In 1982 Wimber's church became a Vineyard church. He became the head of all the Vineyard churches in 1982. In the meantime, Wimber was still teaching at the Fuller Theological Seminary. He began to teach a course called "Signs and Wonders and Church Growth." It began in 1981 as a lecture and was taught as a full course between 1982 and 1985. This was a "hands on" class, and it became the most popular, and the most controversial, class at the school. In 1984, Wimber took the class "on the road." He began to train people all over the world in praying for the sick and "doing the works of ministry." His focus was on every-member ministry within the body. Healing and miracles occurred in these meetings by the hundreds and thousands.

*Material used with permission from  
www.healingandrevival.com.*

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**Bill Johnson** was born in 1951 in Minnesota. He says, "I am a fifth generation pastor on my dad's side of the family, fourth on my mom's. My three children are now the sixth generation of pastors. I grew up in a very good Christian home and had a fear of God, and while I never lived in out-and-out rebellion, neither was I a passionate follower of Jesus. The thought of becoming a pastor never once entered my head. In 1968, at the end of my high school years, I moved from the LA area to Redding, California, where my parents became the pastors of Bethel Church, and in 1970 the Holy Spirit began to move powerfully in our church community. It was around this time that Mario Murillo would come and visit our church and speak about being absolutely abandoned to Christ. One Saturday night, alone, I finally said yes to God—the absolute yes. For me everything changed that night. I was invited to pastor Mountain Chapel in Weaverville, California, in 1978, and I accepted only on the basis that this assignment was from the Lord, that I would be sent out from Bethel Church in Redding, and that I would still be able to come under the supervision of my dad, who continued to pastor the church in Redding. We served in Weaverville for seventeen wonderful years. During this time the presence of God was so strong on us as a church family that we extended our times of worshiping and glorifying God, but in those first years we saw few miracles despite praying for many. My greatest breakthrough in ministry came after attending two conferences in 1987 put on by John Wimber. I realized I needed to 'put a demand' on what I believed—my risk factor had to line up with the boldness of my beliefs. As I did this there was an immediate change in my ministry and we began to see healing and miracles increase. We moved back to Bethel Church in Redding in 1996 after the leadership there unanimously supported my one condition: I was born for revival and would

pursue revival—this was not negotiable. The outpouring when we started to minister at Bethel began almost immediately, although in seed form, yet grew rapidly and we began to see many healings including multiple cases of cancer healed. Healings and miracles have become normal today and I rejoice in this. Many visit Redding weekly, hoping that God will touch them. I am happy to report that many leave well and whole. But many others leave in the same condition in which they came. I refuse to blame God for this, as though he has a purpose in their disease. While Jesus did not heal everyone alive in his time, he did heal everyone who came to him. His is the only standard worth following."

*Material used with permission from [www.bjm.org](http://www.bjm.org).*

**Todd White** was a drug addict and atheist for 22 years when in 2004 he was radically set free. Redemption and righteousness are the foundation and the keys to the new creation reality that we are to live in and from. God has opened Todd's eyes to this truth: that the Holy Spirit wants to flow through every believer everywhere we go, at work, school, grocery stores, malls, gas stations, everywhere. His true joy is being able to reproduce in people the simplicity of this reality, in a 24/7 kingdom lifestyle that is for every believer. His passion is to activate people to understand who they really are and to destroy the lies that hold people back from being who God created them to be.

*Material used with permission from [www.powerandlove.org](http://www.powerandlove.org).*

*For more inspirational examples of healing ministry, look up the powerful stories of Charles and Frances Hunter, Randy Clark, and Mahesh Chavda.*

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## THE *HUIOS* OF GOD

When Jesus is baptized by John in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:11, Luke 3:21, John 1:32), the Father speaks from heaven: "You are my son whom I love; with you I am well pleased." The word translated "son" in this passage is *huios* (pronounced hwee-os'), which means "heir" in the original Greek. At age thirty, Jesus is named the heir of the Father's business, and immediately he is filled with the Spirit and begins to heal the sick, drive out demons, and much more. For the heir, everything changes with the inheritance. And, astonishingly, we are called co-heirs with Christ! The Father is pleased to give us the kingdom of God as well (Luke 12:32, Ephesians 1:14, 18).

The kingdom of God is the rule of Christ. Christ in us, the hope of glory, is of course the Holy Spirit. We must "seek first the kingdom" (daily come under his government). Those who are led by the Spirit are the *huios*, or sons and daughters of God (the Greek word is not gender specific). Jesus preached the kingdom, demonstrated the power of the kingdom, spoke parables about the kingdom, etc. The kingdom was clearly the central theme of his teachings and life. He told his disciples to preach the kingdom to the whole earth and then the end would come. The goal of seeking the kingdom is to become Spirit-led.

Just as important as the fact that Jesus is Lord is that we are servants and ministers of the Lord. We are first born again as *children* of God (in the original Greek, *teknon*, legal offspring though still immature). God is our Father. Then we willingly become subject to the rule of Christ, and become his *servants* (*doulos*, the Greek word for "slave"). Finally, as we mature spiritually (through discipleship) and learn to hear and obey the Spirit clearly and consistently, we are called sons of God (*huios*, mean-



ing a mature son who reflects the nature of his father). Sons of God are able to do what Jesus modeled: heal the sick, raise the dead, open blind eyes, and feed the hungry.

"For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God" (Romans 8:19). We are called to become, like Jesus, the *huios* of

God. As we take the authority entrusted to sons of God, we are thereby empowered to heal the sick and raise the dead. The bulk of the church settles for being *teknons*, which are in fact simply born-again Christians. They are converts. They haven't yet been disciplined. They have not matured spiritually. They aren't doing much more than reading the Bible and attending meetings. Creation isn't eagerly waiting for *teknons* (children); but rather they are waiting for the *huios* of God (fully mature sons and daughters). A *huios* is one who has been disciplined in the Word and in the Spirit.

Jesus said that to be great in God's kingdom you must become a servant. Healing is a great example of this. You learn that though God has told us to lay hands on the sick, we ourselves cannot heal them; but through faith in his grace, we are able to overcome sickness and oppression.

"Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate, says the Lord. And do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters [*huios*] to Me, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Corinthians 6:17-18, NASB).

"For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons [*huios*] of God" (Romans 8:14, NASB).

"He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as re-

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ceived Him, to them He gave the right to become children [*huios*] of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:11-13, NASB).

"Because you are sons [*huios*], God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God" (Galatians 4:6-7, NASB).

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# HEALING THROUGH WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE

By Randy Clark, director of Global Awakening

*Editor's Note:* If this pushes you out of your comfort zone, or to dig deeper, ask questions of your trainers!

Our first word of knowledge is the Bible, and ministry-specific revelation of the Father's will is called "words of knowledge." While you're in motion...the Holy Spirit will give you compassion and direction.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware...But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;" (1 Corinthians 12:1, 7-8, NASB).

- **What is a word of knowledge?** Simply, a word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation of information received through the Holy Spirit in order to bring transformation. It is knowledge received apart from natural analysis or human means. In this lesson we are focusing on words of knowledge for healing (John 4:17-18—Jesus and the Samaritan woman; Luke 7:36—Jesus and Simon the Pharisee; Matthew 12:25—Jesus delivering a man and the Pharisees accusing him).
- **How does God give a word of knowledge for healing?** God gives his revelations in different ways, and that is true of words of knowledge for healing as well as for other kinds of revelation. The basis for words of knowledge is God's omniscience. Hebrews 4:13 says, "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. But everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." Some of the more common ways God gives words of knowledge for healing are:
  - Feel it
  - See it

- Read it
- Think it
- Say it
- Dream it
- Experience it

Let's now look at each of these in more detail.

## EXAMINE SEVEN COMMON WAYS TO RECEIVE A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

1. **Feel it:** You may have a sharp pain in some part of your body, a throbbing sensation, some other sensation, a strong emotion such as fear or panic. Be careful that your feeling is not caused by a condition in your own body. For instance, if you often have pain in your left ear, you would not give that as a word of knowledge, even if you get that pain during a meeting. This is ministry-specific to the Holy Spirit giving you compassion and direction.
2. **See it:** You may get a mental picture such as a body part: perhaps a heart, a foot, an eye, a head, a person with a certain condition such as a limp, a person carefully holding his arm, a crutch, eyeglasses, a person walking with a cane, a water bottle, a barbed wire fence, an auto accident. Being fully surrendered to and filled by the Holy Spirit as you walk every day enables the Spirit to help you "see" into the supernatural realm to address the need in the natural realm.
3. **Read it:** You may see in your mind a person with a word written across his front or back, or over his head, a word written on a wall or on a carpet, something like a newspaper headline, or a banner.
4. **Think it:** You may sense in your mind that someone has a particular condition, or that the Holy Spirit has spoken the word to you. It is a mental impression.

5. **Say it:** While talking or praying or standing with someone, unpremeditated words may tumble out of your mouth relating to a physical condition you were not aware of.

6. **Dream it:** While sleeping, you may have a vivid dream in which you have a new health problem, you see someone with a health problem, you hear someone talking about a health problem, or you see an event acted out before you like a movie, such as a hospital scene or an accident.

7. **Experience it:** Similar to dreaming it, you may have a vivid vision while awake. It may be so strong that you are actually a part of what is happening, not just an observer.

Sometimes these categories blend together. Is it a mental picture or a vision? Vision could be likened to a 3D movie—something given by the Holy Spirit that is beyond a mental picture in intensity and vividness.

#### MINISTERING A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE FOR HEALING

- **The Holy Spirit gives a word of knowledge for a specific need:** The Holy Spirit often gives a revelatory word of knowledge concerning the need of a person (or persons) for healing. This is an indication that God wishes to heal the person or those who have the condition revealed in the word of knowledge, and usually that he wishes to heal at the time the word is given. When understood in this way, a word of knowledge builds faith in the person who needs the healing, and also in the person who received the word of knowledge.

Accordingly, the person who receives the word usually speaks it out at that time or at the next appropriate time. Should see if it applies to someone present, and if so, offer to pray at once for that person's healing.

Remember, Jesus is our model for ministry as the first human being filled by the Holy Spirit and as the kingdom heir. He did not use a word of knowledge in healing all who came to him in response to the gospel, but

Jesus often exhibited this gift of the Spirit in his ministry too.

#### THE CONTEXT FOR RECEIVING A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

- **You may receive a word of knowledge any time or anywhere.** You might get a word during a prayer meeting, a cell group meeting, walking past someone in church or in the supermarket, or while washing dishes at home.
- **You may or may not know for whom the revelation has been given.** Most often, the word of knowledge is given for someone present. However, it may not be for someone present, but for a person whom someone present knows about. Or it can be for someone you will see in the near future.

#### Specificity in Expressing a Word of Knowledge for Healing and the Effect on Faith

The more specific the word of knowledge is, the more faith it builds in the people involved. If the word is received through feeling a pain, it is helpful if the kind of pain and its exact location is stated. For example, it is better to say, "A shooting pain on the left side of the neck just below the ear," or to point to the exact location, than to say merely, "A pain in the neck," or, "Does someone's neck hurt?"

#### EXPRESSING A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE ONLY AS RECEIVED

The person receiving the word should be careful not to change it, and to not add to it. When shared it should not be exaggerated, nor any detail left out of that seems unimportant. Changes or additions can cause confusion.

**Personal Illustration from Randy:** I once had a mental picture of someone being injured by tripping over a green hose. The only green hoses I had seen were garden hoses. So I said I had a picture of a person injured by tripping over a green garden hose. There was a man in the meeting who had been injured by tripping over a green pressure hose at work. He did not respond to my word at first, because the hose

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he tripped on wasn't a garden hose. He would have responded more quickly if I had not assumed that the green hose was a garden hose and had presented it just as I had seen it.

## HOW TO DELIVER A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE FOR HEALING

### 1. It is generally wise to be tentative in speaking out the word you have received.

For example, you might say, "Does anyone have a sharp pain in his left elbow just now?" If no one responds, don't be concerned. If someone responds you could say, "Well, I just had a sharp pain in my left elbow, which may be a word of knowledge indicating that God would like to heal you now. Since you have that condition, would you like for me (or us) to pray for you now?"

### 2. If the person is open to receiving prayer, pray for that person.

If he or she wants prayer later, pray later. If the person doesn't want prayer due to embarrassment, lovingly encourage him or her to receive it. But if the person refuses, don't pressure anyone in any way to receive prayer.

## Practical Insights for Growing in the Use of a Word of Knowledge for Healing

- **A word of knowledge may come quickly.** Words of knowledge may come flitting through your mind more like a bird or dancing butterfly than like a stationary billboard.
- **A word of knowledge may be rather vague, tempting you to screen it out or to ignore it.** Practice "tuning in" to these revelations and speaking them out. If you are tentative and humble, not arrogant or presumptuous, no one will be offended if you seem to have heard amiss.
- **Resist the thought that a word you have received is not important, or that it is "just you."** Remember, it builds faith in the other person to know that God has revealed that person's condition to you. What seems like a vague impression to you may be a shout to

the other person! However, don't be presumptuous. Don't say, "God just told me you have an earache." Instead, say, "Does your left ear ever bother you? I have an impression of a problem in a left ear. Does this mean anything to you?"

- **Unpretentious honesty is the best policy!** It's perfectly okay to admit that you're nervous, to say that you have only a vague impression, to say that you have never had a word for someone before, or to say that praying for sick people is new to you.
- **Don't let fear rob you and the person who might have been stirred up to receive healing.** Someone has said that "faith" is spelled "r-i-s-k". Be patient, but step out! Be humble, but step out! Be tentative, but STEP OUT! God is giving you words of knowledge because he wants you to use them! He wants you to use them wisely and prudently and humbly, but he DOES want you to use them!

## ACTIVATION

We now get to the fun part! Again, if you have never received a word of knowledge, don't be afraid! Step out on the faithfulness of God and into the revelation of the Holy Spirit.

### Remember:

- Gifts are given to us in the "Finished Work of Jesus Christ" in his atonement.
- Gifts are received by asking.
- Gifts are drawn to those who hunger and thirst for spiritual things.
- Gifts are received through faith, like everything else in the kingdom.

### My Personal History:

I had been in the ministry 14 years without ever recognizing a word of knowledge.

I had both a B.S. degree in religious studies and a Master of Divinity degree from the School of Theology, but had no understanding of how to move in the gift of word of knowledge.

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The very week I was told five ways you could have a word of knowledge, I began having them.

One week later I taught on words of knowledge for the first time in my life. That very evening a woman had a word that led to a healing!

Ever since then, every time I have taught on this subject and given God the opportunity, there has always been someone who receives their first words of knowledge. I have taught this teaching hundreds of times.

Today we shall see God be faithful once again, and at least 10 percent of this crowd who have never had a word of knowledge will receive

their first word of knowledge. In a brief period of time I am going to pray and wait for two minutes, during which time some of you who have never had a word of knowledge will receive your first word of knowledge. I have never taught this when God didn't give people words of knowledge.

Of the ministry team on the bus in Brazil, one half had never received a word of knowledge or seen anyone healed. I told them that before two days was over, they would all have a word of knowledge and pray for someone who would be healed. It happened and has continued to happen!

So, get ready to be activated!

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## NINE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**1** Corinthians 12 describes spiritual gifts given to the whole body of believers to make the body whole. These nine “manifestations” (*phanerosis*, or “make visible”) of the Holy Spirit flow from anointed believers as needed and directed by the Holy Spirit for the common good. They are listed below, along with definitions and examples.

- 1. Message of wisdom:** Direction-setting breakthrough, often in a situation involving conflict; demonstrates that God’s ways are higher than our ways. Examples: 1 Kings 3:16-28 (Solomon and the two mothers), Matthew 22:15-22 (Jesus responds to the question about paying taxes to Caesar), John 8 (Jesus responds to the woman caught in adultery and her accusers).
- 2. Message of knowledge:** Supernatural revelation of specific information to bring transformation; demonstrates that God’s thoughts are higher than our thoughts—God sees and knows everything (Hebrews 4:13). Examples: John 4:17-18 (Jesus and the Samaritan woman), Luke 7:36 (Jesus and Simon the Pharisee), Matthew 12:25 (Jesus delivers a man and speaks to the Pharisees accusing him), Mark 11:1 (the colt used for the triumphal entry to Jerusalem), Acts 5:3 (Peter and Ananias and Sapphira).
- 3. Faith:** Extraordinary confidence in the power and purposes of God by a momentum-maker in the kingdom. Examples: Matthew 16:18 (Jesus assures the world, “I will build my church”); Old Testament heroes of faith like Abraham (Genesis 12), Noah (Genesis 6), Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16-45), Nehemiah rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1-3).
- 4. Gifts of healing:** Restoration of the divine design for body, soul, and spirit. Examples: many in the Old Testament, but then an avalanche of healing by Jesus documented in

the Gospels (more than 75 passages; tens of thousands healed). The apostles heal great crowds (Acts 5:15-16), as does Paul on the island of Malta (Acts 28:9).

- 5. Miraculous powers:** A sudden display of God’s power over all parts of life and creation. Examples: Luke 5 and John 21 (miraculous catch of fish); Jesus feeding the 5,000 and 4,000 men, plus women and children; Jesus walks on the water, as does Peter; Mark 4 (Jesus calms the storm on the Sea of Galilee); John 2 (Jesus turns water into wine); Jesus/Peter/Paul raise people back to life; Mark 9 (transfiguration of Jesus); Acts 5 and 12 (apostles are released from prison); Acts 28 (a poisonous snake bites Paul’s hand but there is no harm); Acts 13:11 (Paul commands the blindness of a sorcerer opposing him).
- 6. Prophecy:** Speaking forth the heart, will, and ways of God in the “now,” sometimes highly predictive, to comfort/strengthen/encourage the believers and cut unbelievers to the heart. Examples: the whole of Scripture; many Old and New Testament books specifically highlight prophecy (and about 350 specific Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled by Jesus as the Messiah); the greatest prophet (John the Baptist) and his greatest prophecy about Jesus as the one who will baptize us in the Holy Spirit; Jesus in Mark 10:33 and elsewhere predicting his death on the cross and resurrection in three days; John 14:1-4 as Jesus prophesies about heaven for his disciples; Jesus speaks the heart of God to the believing thief on the cross. “Today you will be with me in paradise” says Jesus in Matthew 24.
- 7. Distinguishing between spirits:** Recognition of the presence of demons/angels and insight into the source of current influence as human, demonic, or divine. Examples: Jesus with Peter in Matthew 16 first naming Peter’s words as a revelation from the Father and

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next needing to rebuke Peter for speaking for Satan; Jesus' extensive deliverance ministry in which, about 25 percent of the time, Jesus has to drive out a demonic spirit to heal someone.

**8. Speaking in different kinds of tongues:**

Communicating with God or people in an unlearned human or heavenly language to preach, prophesy, pray, or praise. Examples: Acts 2:4-12 (the apostles); Acts 8:15-17 (the new Samaritan believers); Acts 10:44-46 (the Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit); Acts 19:1-7 (twelve of John the Baptist's disciples are

filled with the Holy Spirit); 1 Corinthians 14 (Paul teaches that Christians are filled with the Spirit to walk in the way of love with the gifts of prophecy and tongues).

**9. Interpretation of tongues:** Conveying a message from the Holy Spirit in the known language of the hearer to either edify believers or be a sign to unbelievers. Examples from Scripture are less clear, but the teaching in 1 Corinthians 14 expects that either the one speaking in tongues or another believer can rightly interpret the tongues-message.

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# NOTES

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