

## ABSTRACT

### THE ROLE OF PREACHING IN ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING A HEALING MINISTRY IN THE LAKEVIEW FREE METHODIST CHURCH OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

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Teaching, preaching, and healing were the priorities of Jesus' ministry. The church in the United States understands and practices the priorities of teaching and preaching. However, the priority of healing and healing ministry seems neglected in many congregations.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the attitudinal changes of respondents toward the role of preaching in establishing and implementing a ministry of divine healing in the Lakeview Free Methodist Church of Seattle, Washington. I began with a pre-test to assess general congregational attitudes toward healing and towards the establishment of healing ministry. Following the pre-test, I preached eight sermons on healing. Included in the eight-week series were two opportunities for members of the congregation to participate in a healing service. A post-test followed the sermon series.

The eight sermons focused on the importance of healing as a priority in Jesus' ministry. A healing ministry is important in the life of the church and to ongoing spiritual health of the congregation.

The sermon series was a good means of introducing healing ministry to a local church congregation. Significance was found from pre-test to post-test on a *General Healing Attitude* scale and on an *Establishing a Healing Ministry* sub-scale. The study showed significant change in attitude can be achieved through an appropriate series of sermons supporting the importance of healing and healing ministry.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled  
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by

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-M. H. W.

## CHAPTER 1

### Overview of the Study

“I was healed of polio.” I heard these words all my life. In 1952 my father contracted polio and learned he would never walk again. One morning several months later, my father took off his braces and walked. Moments before he was reading John 11 where Jesus speaks to the crowd after Lazarus was raised from the dead: “Loose him and let him go” (John 11:44). Certain God had touched him, my father arose, took off his braces, and walked. He knew he was healed.

As a result of this experience, the ministry of divine healing was a part of my childhood. Few Christians enjoy a similar heritage. In fact, as I began my own ministry I noticed the mention of divine healing caused confusion and I realized it must be approached with caution.

During a 1990 monthly church board meeting, I raised the issue of divine healing and expressed my desire to begin regular healing services in the church. One member quickly responded, “You wouldn’t want to do that on a regular basis, would you?”

In retrospect I concluded this parishioner was responding to our current practice. While we often prayed for congregational needs on Sunday, we rarely anointed for healing. If the situation appeared critical we would anoint someone. Unfortunately, we communicated only serious cases merited anointing for healing.

#### The Problem and Its Context

When one observes healing ministry on Christian television programs, one might assume this area of church life is reserved for the flamboyant. Viewers watch the congregation fall backwards as Benny Hinn throws the Holy Spirit as if he were a softball. The casual observer could conclude this scene defines the sum total of healing ministry.

Opposite the flamboyant television ministries, well respected evangelical leaders relegate divine healing only to the first century. These skeptics of healing ministry agree

that God uses physicians and medicine but deny the need for a gift of divine healing (Packer and MacArthur). They regard healing as a helpful tool God used to establish the Christian Church but believe the need for healing died with the apostles. Thus, to them, resurrecting healing would be wrong.

A balanced perspective between these two extremes must be established. Our world, with its multitude of needs, silently cries out to the Church of Jesus Christ to live out the totality of the Gospel as modeled by Jesus. C. Peter Wagner notes, “So many people are hurting physically, emotionally and spiritually, and we would like to help them in tangible ways, more than we have so far been able to do” (8).

Jesus modeled his commitment to healing ministry. “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and disease among the people” (Matthew 4:23). In spite of this model, many contemporary ministers, while expressing little confusion about teaching and preaching, neglect healing in their congregations.

#### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the study was to analyze the attitudinal changes of respondents toward the role of preaching in establishing and implementing a ministry of divine healing in the Lakeview Free Methodist Church of Seattle, Washington. The purpose of the study was accomplished by administering a pre-test, preaching eight sermons over eight weeks, and administering a post-test.

#### Research Questions

RQ #1: What are the general attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to divine healing?

RQ #2: What are the attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to establishing an ongoing ministry of healing in the church?

RQ #3: What connections, if any, exist between attitudinal changes and demographic characteristics of subjects?

### Definition of Terms

The definition of *healing* is from the *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* published in 1990 by Abingdon Press. Healing is:

the process of being restored to bodily wholeness, emotional well-being, mental functioning, and spiritual aliveness. Christian modes of healing have always distinguished themselves by achieving a spiritual advance in connection with the healing process. Healing may also refer to the process of reconciling broken human relationships and to the development of a just social and political order among races and nations. (497)

For the purposes of this study, the terms *healing* and *divine healing* are synonymous.

*Establishing a healing ministry* implies the process followed when a congregation initiates and implements a healing ministry.

*Healing services* are worship services specifically designed for the purpose of anointing people for healing. The primary purpose of the healing service is to pray for persons to receive physical, emotional, and/or spiritual healing.

### Description of the Project

The project consisted of preaching eight sermons over eight weeks on the subject of healing and healing ministry. I approached the construction of the sermons from the perspective of someone who may not have had any significant background or understanding of healing. I wanted the listener of my sermons to experience that healing is described in the Old Testament, modeled as one of Jesus' top ministry priorities, demonstrated in the lives of the apostles and the early church, and remains a valid and important part of church life today. I was not just looking for an understanding of issues associated with healing but also an openness toward ongoing healing ministry in our church.

The eight sermons I preached were based on the following texts and titles (see APPENDIX A for manuscripts of sermons).

Week #1: Sunday, October 5, 1997 (Introduction of sermon series) Text - John



20:30-31. Sermon title: *A Christian Perspective on Healing Ministry*. Purpose: To help listeners see the biblical call to model Jesus' behaviors and to present this sermon series as a foundation for a better understanding of healing ministry.

Week #2: Sunday, October 12, 1997 Text - II Kings 5:1-14. Sermon title: *The Place of Healing in the Old Testament*. Purpose: To establish in the hearts and minds of listeners that healing began long before Jesus' ministry when God's Old Testament servants modeled healing.

Week #3: Sunday, October 18, 1997 Text - Matthew 4:23-25. Sermon title: *The Priority of Healing in Jesus Ministry*. Purpose: To teach the listener the three-fold purpose of Jesus' ministry as found in Matthew 4: teaching, preaching, and healing.

Week #4: Sunday, October 26, 1997 Text - John 11:17-44. Sermon title: *The Practice of Healing in Jesus' Ministry*. Purpose: To understand Jesus' desire to meet us at the point of our needs, even when circumstances do not work out as we expected, through examining Jesus' healing of Lazarus.

Week #5: Sunday, November 2, 1997 Text - II Corinthians 12:7-10 Sermon title: *The Pain and Promises When Healing Does Not Come*. Purpose: To share about the pain we might experience and the promises on which we rely when we are not healed.

Week #6: Sunday, November 9, 1997 Text - Acts 3:1-10; 5:12-16. Sermon title: *The Prominence of Healing in the Lives of the Apostles*. Purpose: To realize the Apostles applied the principles of healing practiced in the Old Testament and modeled in Jesus' ministry.

Week #7: Sunday, November 16, 1997 Text - James 5:13-18. Sermon title: *The Promise of Healing in the Life of the Church*. Purpose: To accept healing as a conditional promise to the believer and to understand the scriptural mandate given to the church of Jesus Christ.

Week # 8: Sunday, November 23, 1997 Text - Hebrews 4:14-16. Sermon title: *The Personal Call for Healing in the Life of the Believer*. Purpose: To help listeners know

Jesus has grace and mercy for us in our time of need, whatever the need may be, and to summarize the main points of the series.

### Methodology

The purpose of the study was to analyze the attitudinal changes of respondents toward the role of preaching in establishing and implementing a ministry of divine healing in the Lakeview Free Methodist Church of Seattle, Washington. The study included a pre-test, eight sermons preached over eight consecutive weeks, and a post-test.

A researcher-designed questionnaire used as a pre-test/post-test instrument assessed the changes in subjects' attitudes toward the role of preaching in establishing and implementing a healing ministry. The congregation received the pre-test at the beginning of worship service on the Sunday before the healing sermon series began.

The pre-test and post-test were both entitled *What Do You Believe About Healing Ministry?* in order to communicate the instrument was an opinion poll and not a test for subjects. The post-test was given to subjects on the Sunday following the last message in the series. I added a personal note at the top of the survey explaining the purpose of the survey and inviting subjects to participate in the sermon series by sharing their opinions.

I was looking for changes in attitudes of subjects toward the role of preaching after hearing sermons about healing. Additionally, openness to continue healing ministry in the church was a focus of the pre-test and post-test. In this study I looked for statistical significance by comparing respondents' pre-tests and post-tests.

### Population and Sample

The population for the study was the regular attendees from the Lakeview Free Methodist Church in Seattle, Washington who attended worship services during the eight-week sermon series on healing and who were fourteen years of age or older.

The sample for the study was the regular attendees from the Lakeview Free Methodist Church in Seattle, Washington who agreed to respond to the two instruments and who were fourteen years of age or older.

Church membership consists of approximately 160 adult members. Worship service attendance averages between 180-220. On any given Sunday those 14 and older would consist of about 55-60% of total attendance. Data included in this study was from individuals who heard at least one of the eight sermons but 78.5% of respondents heard at least five of the eight sermons in the series. Information about attendance was indicated on the post-test.

### Context of the Study

The Lakeview Free Methodist Church, over 100 years old, is a member congregation of an evangelical holiness denomination, the Free Methodist Church of North America. The church, several miles north of the University of Washington, is located in a residential neighborhood in the northeast section of Seattle, Washington. Home prices average over \$160,000.

The church is predominately comprised of individuals and families who are middle-class Caucasians from various occupations. The church attracts students, faculty, and staff from Seattle Pacific University, a Free Methodist college located in Seattle. In fact, Seattle Pacific University, with seventeen full-time employees in the congregation, is the largest single employer. In addition, twenty-five members of the congregation are employed in either private or public educational occupations.

The Lakeview Free Methodist Church is recognized in the community for its priority for ministry to children. Presently, young families with grade school age children and younger comprise the largest group within the church. Consequently, the toddler, pre-school, and kindergarten classes are the largest in both Sunday school and Wednesday night programs.

Every worship service features *Children's Moments*. Children are invited to come forward for a story, puppet show, or other means of explaining the theme of the service from the perspective of children. Midweek activities, musicals, and Sunday school are available for all ages.

The Lakeview Church lives out a strong commitment to social justice through a ministry for homeless women housed in the church. Each evening a group of homeless women find shelter at the church. This ministry, coordinated by a lay woman in the congregation, is characterized by the compassion of its volunteers. Currently Lakeview Church is the only evangelical congregation in Seattle housing the homeless in its facility. In addition, each month a cadre of volunteers from Lakeview Church ministers at *Operation Nightwatch*, another Christian organization serving the homeless in Seattle.

### Variables

The independent variables of this study were the eight-week sermon series and the two opportunities for people to be anointed for healing. Intervening variables in this study included, but were not limited to: church background, previous experience with healing, attendance at all eight of the sermons, response to the invitation to be anointed for healing, biblical knowledge, connection with sermon illustrations of healing, the preacher's credibility with the subjects, and biblical texts used during the sermon series. I acknowledge unknown and therefore uncontrolled variables may have influenced and impacted this study. The dependant variable of this study was the change in attitude on the part of the congregation toward healing and healing ministry after hearing the eight sermons on healing as measured by the researcher-designed instrument described below.

### Instrumentation

The researcher-designed instrument utilized in this study was a twenty-five question survey using a five-point Likert response scale (see APPENDIX B for survey). I acknowledge using several ideas and questions from a survey developed by Arthur L. Luckey for his 1990 Doctor of Ministry dissertation at Asbury Theological Seminary entitled *Preparing the Local Church for a Healing Ministry*. I obtained permission from Luckey to use parts of his survey in the construction of the study survey (see APPENDIX C for a letter from Arthur Luckey granting permission to use his survey as a basis for this instrument).

The face validity has been established at the 100 percent level. Five out of five individuals asked to evaluate the instrument approved its use. Each of the five individuals who evaluated the instrument received a copy of the statement of purpose for the study as well as the research questions. The five persons were requested to respond to the face validity of the instrument. Suggested changes were incorporated in the instrument contained in APPENDIX B.

Persons who participated in the evaluation of the instrument for this study were: the pastor of a sister church in the area, a pastor in the region who experienced healing a number of years ago, a social psychologist on the faculty of Seattle Pacific University, a staff person from my church who has a Master's degree in Biblical Studies, and a registered nurse from the congregation who experienced healing. (See APPENDIX D for instructions to survey reviewers).

#### Data Collection

The data for this study came from individuals who heard at least one or more of the eight sermons and who completed the pre-test and/or the post-test. The pre-test data was collected at the beginning of worship service on Sunday, September 28, 1997. The post-test data was collected at the beginning of worship service on Sunday, November 30, 1997.

#### Delimitations and Generalizability

Delimitations of this study include the fact that data was collected following an eight-week sermon series. A year-long or six-month time period would provide a better framework from which to test participants, but I understand this delimitation.

Because of concerns expressed by church leadership, individuals were not identified from pre-test to post-test. The data might have been more significant with such identification. However, I was able to study group to group responses, question to question responses, and the impact of demographic factors on the results.

Another delimiting factor involves previous experiences of individuals regarding healing. An individual's negative and/or positive involvement with healing in other contexts may impact the results of this study.

The results of this study are based on the opinions of participants who responded to the instruments at the Lakeview Free Methodist Church in Seattle, Washington, during the time of the study. The study was delimited to one Free Methodist congregation. However, the study provides possible implications for the wider Free Methodist denomination and for churches from similar traditions.

The generalizability of this study remains important to the church at large. While this was the study of one Free Methodist congregation in Seattle, Washington, I hoped this study indicated some understanding of the issue of healing in the larger Wesleyan family of churches. I expected this study would show the openness of one congregation to healing ministry after hearing sermons on the subject.

#### Theological Reflection

Why should we have healing ministry in the church today? It is not because we want to do something exciting on the cutting edge. "God is not in the business of gratifying our desires for excitement nor in helping some of his children win arguments over others. He is in the compassion business. To the degree that you can enter into his compassion for the sick and for the hurting, you can be a vessel through whom the healing power of Jesus can flow" (Deere 121).

Healing is vital to ministry in this age. The underlying presupposition of this study is that God desires wholeness of mind, body, and spirit. "Is any one of you sick? He should call for the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up" (James 5:14-15). Healing has a profound grounding in the grace and providence of God who desires to meet people at the point of their needs. Jesus' earthly ministry was characterized by meeting the needs of people who came to him.

Following the example of Jesus dictates that believers do what Jesus modeled. One of the central aspects of Jesus' earthly ministry was healing the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of people. If we take the promise of Jesus that we shall do greater works than he did (John 14:12) seriously, we must understand the place of healing in the church.

If a church or minister does not believe that healing is for this age, then one would not be surprised at the failure to find healing ministry as a part of church life and practice. But what is the explanation for clergy who do believe in healing but still do not offer opportunities for people to be anointed?

John Wesley modeled commitment to healing ministry. In his journal, Wesley challenges the church to take responsibility for the health needs of the poor:

I mentioned to the society my design of giving physic [medicine] to the poor. About thirty came the next day, and in three weeks about three hundred. This we continued for several years, till, the number of patients still increasing, the expense was greater than we could bear. Meantime, through the blessing of God, many who had been ill for months or years, were restored to perfect health. (Journal, 2:39)

Wesley believed in praying for the sick. Henry Rack points out that Wesley observed "prayer did have a positive healing effect, not only in conjunction with ordinary medicine but even in place of it" (145).

For most churches in the evangelical family of denominations, the problem is not one of belief; it is one of practice and priority. In other words, people who believe in healing are not teaching the priority of healing and are not providing regular opportunities for people to be anointed for healing. To them healing is not seen as one of the three-fold priorities of Jesus' ministry nor as a practice that should be included in the schedule of church life. The church must bring hurting people to Jesus and invite him to touch them.

We know that not everyone who is prayed for will be healed. We also know,

however, that God delights in having his children express their needs. God created us with needs. He delights in seeing us come to the realization that we cannot make it on our own.

In II Corinthians 12, Paul explains that God's grace was sufficient for his thorn in the flesh. What a powerful personal testimony of how God ministers to us even when we are not healed. Presenting Paul's perspective in this passage provides a balance in understanding the way God works in our lives. God does not always heal but God always gives grace to help us in our time of need.

My father, although healed of polio in 1952, recently succumbed to renal cell carcinoma. His death on November 19, 1997, was a vivid reminder physical healing does not come to everyone for whom we pray.

Does the church have anything to say to families who pray for a loved one's healing only to have that loved one pass away? Will our silence on this issue be construed as not knowing what to say? Worse yet, does it indicate we have nothing to say?

Being at my father's bedside at the time of his death was both wonderful and terrible. Just a month before his death, I prayed with my parents and anointed my father for healing. My dad reported God deeply touched his spirit. I know now God was preparing him for his final journey. I know God gave him a victorious crossing. It was a privilege to have had those moments praying with my parents, asking God to touch them for whatever was ahead.

The church of Jesus Christ must wrestle with hard questions about healing. The church of Jesus Christ must model Jesus' behavior. The church of Jesus Christ must provide opportunities to anoint the sick, inviting God to touch their needs.

A service of healing is an opportunity for the community of faith to come into God's presence. My limited experience is that persons prayed for in a healing service leave with a sense that God has met them regardless of whether or not they are healed. By seeing our own weaknesses, we enable God to work in healing power.



As Paul describes in II Corinthians 12:7-10, God works best in our lives in the areas of our weakness. “In the last analysis, as the cross demonstrates, the ultimate victory is won through the self-surrender of Christ in weakness and not through a display of force. Paradoxically, the way of weakness is the way of strength . . . . Miracles give glimpses of the glory to come. But the way to glory is the way of the cross” (Brown, Miracles, 15).

#### Significance of the Study

This study offered the possibility of bringing the issue of healing into the mainstream of one congregation in a typical middle-class, evangelical congregation. I sought ways to give healing ministry the priority Jesus modeled. In examining the role of preaching in changing attitude, I had the possibility of validating preaching or the possibility of calling into question its effectiveness.

#### Overview of the Study

Chapter 2 provides the precedents in the literature. Chapter 3 presents the design of the study. Chapter 4 describes the findings of the study. Chapter 5 summarizes and interprets the findings of the study.

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of the Selected Literature

#### Personal Concern

“Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people” (Matthew 4:23).

In these powerful words from the New Testament we find the clear priorities of Jesus’ earthly ministry. The gospels record that *teaching, preaching, and healing* were what Jesus was about during his time on earth. The church today is in agreement on the priority of preaching and teaching; however, it appears to be ambivalent about healing. Today a healing ministry is almost non-existent in many local congregations in the United States (C. P. Wagner 209).

What is the biblical record related to divine healing? Can a place be found for a balanced healing ministry within the framework of local church life? Can a congregation which has not had regular healing services be led through a process that will help them see the priority of healing? These questions provide the backdrop for this study and lead to a search for precedents in the literature.

This chapter focuses on the biblical understanding of healing and wholeness, Jesus’ healing ministry, John Wesley and healing, classic evangelical and contemporary understanding of healing, dangers in the healing field, and the establishment of a healing ministry in a congregation.

#### Healing in the Scriptures

The Bible contains many references to divine healing. Words related to *healing* (*heal, healing, healed, heals, health, healthy, and healthier*) occur some 170 times in the scriptures (APPENDIX E contains a listing of these references).

The Old Testament contains many references to God’s healing and miracle working power. In Genesis God touched the aged Abraham and Sarah. Isaac was conceived by

the elderly couple to fulfill God's promise: "Now the Lord was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him" (Genesis 21:1-2).

Moses' own hand became leprous and then was healed instantly to show Moses God's power and God's ability to help him (Exodus 4:6-12). But it was not just Moses who saw God's healing power.

The resurrection of the widow's son (I Kings 17:17-24), the healing of the childless couple, and the resurrection of the dead boy (II Kings 4:8-37) which occurred during the ministry of Elijah and Elisha evidence God's healing power during the time of the Old Testament prophets.

A. B. Simpson points out the relationship of Old Testament healings and the coming of Jesus Christ: "The great principle that God's care and providence embrace the temporal and physical as well as the spiritual needs of His people runs thorough the Old Testament. Distinct provision for divine healing is made in all the ordinances of Moses. And the prophetic picture of the coming Deliverer is that of a great Physician as well as a glorious King and gracious Savior" (32).

One key to understanding healing is to see that healing in the scriptures is generally in the context of wholeness which includes completeness of mind, body, and spirit. One of the Hebrew words frequently used in the Old Testament for healing is *raphah*. This word means "to mend, to cure, to heal, to make whole" (Strong 110). *Raphah* is used in Psalm 41:4 (I said, "O Lord, have mercy on me; heal me, for I have sinned.") in the context of restoration from spiritual estrangement. *Raphah* is also used in Numbers 12:13 (So Moses cried out to the Lord, "O God please heal her.") to refer to Moses' plea that Miriam be healed from leprosy.

A study of New Testament words for healing sheds light on a balanced view of healing. Lloyd John Ogilvie explains the meanings of these words:

There are three words that are used particularly to describe what Jesus did. The word sozo is used for salvation and healing. The noun form is soteria, meaning “deliverance from danger, suffering, sin, and sickness.” This word is used to describe the eternal salvation for which Christ lived, died, and rose from the dead. Jesus described his essential healing ministry in John 3:17: “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” Here the word sozo is used. A second word for healing is iaomai, variously translated as “to heal” and “to make whole.” This is used twenty-two times in the New Testament to describe physical healing. The healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter is an example of this: “. . . And her daughter was healed from that very hour” (Matthew 15:28). . . The third word used in connection with healing is hugies. In the gospels it describes the state of being well or whole. This is the word used in Jesus’ question to the man by the Pool of Bethesda: “. . . Do you want to be made well?” (John 5:6) . . . All three of these words, and a few others used less frequently, are descriptive of Jesus’ healing ministry in the lives of people. He cared for individuals, seeking to set them free of sin and sickness. (Ogilvie 23-24)

The all-encompassing nature of *sozo*, *iaomai*, and *hugies* illustrates Jesus’ vast understanding about healing and Jesus’ desire to make people whole. Jesus is motivated by a heart filled with compassion for people to be restored to emotional, physical, and spiritual wholeness.

### Healing In Jesus’ Ministry

The issue of restoring the broken relationship to the Father was of primary importance to Jesus. Forgiveness for sins took on more significance than the healing of any physical problem. Jesus knew that the restoration of broken fellowship with God was the most important need he could meet. Jesus ministered to many physical needs but always with an eye toward the issue of sin and forgiveness.

In Jesus’ healing miracles we see him ministering to the whole person while curing physical problems. For example, in the story of healing the paralytic brought by

his friends, all three synoptic gospels (Mark 2, Matthew 9, and Luke 5), record that Jesus' command to the man as he healed him included saying "your sins are forgiven."

Spiritual miracles tended to excite Jesus more than physical ones. The scene with the paralytic lowered through the roof makes this point well. "Which is easier," Jesus asked, "to say to the paralytic, your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk?" Jesus entire ministry provides an answer: physical healing was far easier. Forgiveness of sins requires an act of will on the receivers' part. (Yancy 80)

Jesus' desire to tie together the spiritual and physical condition relates to the Old Testament concept of *shalom*. The popular definition of *shalom*, simply "peace," falls short of describing the entire meaning. *Shalom* contains the fullest meaning of healing, health, and wholeness. God's desire is that humankind would experience this fullness of life and well being.

In understanding the role of healing in the scriptures, several important texts must be examined. Luke 4:17-19 states:

The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor".

This is the clearest place in the scriptures where Jesus describes his priorities during his earthly ministry. Quoting from Isaiah, Jesus outlines the ministry of the Messiah and then sits down and says to everyone in the Nazareth synagogue, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." These powerful words signal the emphasis of Jesus' ministry. One of his priorities, he states, will be healing.

Jesus had much to say about healing and wholeness. "One fifth, 727, of the 3779 verses in the four Gospels have to do with healing in some way or other, a significant amount considering all of the various doctrinal and ethical matters that had to be addressed" (Pearson 14).

But this healing power was not Jesus' exclusive domain. He reminded the disciples they could do what he did and more. In John 14:12, Jesus states: "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater works than these, because I am going to the Father." For generations, these words have created a number of questions in people's minds. Jesus promises not only will we do the things that he did, but we will also do "greater works." Some have interpreted these "greater works" to be linked only to salvation, meaning that many more people would come to faith in Christ after his ascension than while he was on the earth. This argument appears invalid in light of the Greek word for "works" Jesus used in John 14:12. This word is the same one used throughout John's Gospel to refer to signs and wonders.

"Belief in Jesus will bring to the Christian power from God to perform the same works that Jesus performed, because, by uniting a man with Jesus and the Father, belief gives him a share in the power they possess" (Brown, Raymond 633). Greater works are promised because of the surpassing greatness of Jesus Christ, not because of the greatness and ability of the disciples or those who would follow them. Jesus does not hoard the ability to see people brought to wholeness.

#### Other Crucial New Testament Passages

In Acts, we see excellent examples of "living out" the authority Jesus gave to his followers as recorded in John 14. The apostles demonstrated God's healing power after being filled with the Holy Spirit. "The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people" (Acts 5:12). In Acts 3, Peter and John reflect the training they received from Jesus when God works through them to heal a crippled beggar. "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk" (Acts 3:6).

In Paul's writing, we see his involvement in and support for healing and healing ministry. Paul includes the spiritual gifts of "healing" and "miraculous powers" in I Corinthians 12. These gifts, listed in the context of the other gifts, delineate the

necessity for unity among believers. Paul implies that “All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one just as he determines” (I Cor. 12:11).

The Greek word that Paul uses in I Corinthians 12:9 for healing refers to any kind of healing: physical, spiritual, or emotional. Thus Paul remains true to Jesus’ model that views healing in the broad context of restoration to physical, emotional, and spiritual wholeness.

In writing to the Corinthians about his role as an apostle, Paul reminds them he has performed signs and wonders as the other apostles have. “The things that mark an apostle--signs, wonders and miracles--were done among you with great perseverance” (II Corinthians 12:12).

Paul Walaskay points out that Paul sees healing as a Christian vocation. Walaskay’s insight is important because it raises the issue of the place of healing in the ministry of Paul.

In Paul’s list of spiritual gifts, healing is distinguished by its rather mediocre position--outranked by such intellectual gifts as wisdom and knowledge, yet above such non-intellectual gifts as miracle working and tongue speaking (one suspects Paul’s bias: I Cor. 12:4-11). In an unintended way, Paul has discerned that the healing art is neither wholly cognitive; that is, scientific. Nor is it wholly affective. Healing is not simply the application of human invention or the invocation of divine intervention; rather, healing is an art which Paul has identified as a Christian vocation. (195)

One of the most important verses for this study is found in James 5:14. This verse lays out the validity of a healing ministry by giving specific direction about the way healing should happen in the church. The context of these verses is in the larger understanding of what happens when people in the fellowship face hard times. According to James, if any are in trouble they should pray; if any are sick the elders of the church should be called; if any have sinned they will be forgiven. James lays out the responsibility for church leaders to pray for and to anoint the sick.

This passage points out the necessity of dealing with sin in relationship to healing. If sin exists in the life of a believer, he/she should not expect to be healed. James contends that confessing sin is a prerequisite to healing. “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed” (James 5:16).

A. B. Simpson reinforces James’ admonition that sin in the life of a believer brings to a halt God’s healing touch.

It is quite vain for you to try to exercise faith for yourself or others in the face of willful transgressions and in defiance of the chastening that God has meant you should respect and yield to. But when you receive His correction and turn to Him with a humble and obedient heart, He may then graciously remove the pain and make the touch of healing the token of his forgiving love. (87)

In light of the above, the following conclusions can be inferred from the scriptures: ministry to the whole person, including healing, was a priority for Jesus; Jesus was always interested in the spiritual condition of the persons who came to him for healing; Jesus empowered his disciples and those who would come after him to continue in the works he did; Jesus also said his followers would do even greater works than he did; healing and miraculous signs are spiritual gifts given for the growth and edification of the church; and, finally, praying for the sick to be healed and anointing them with oil is laid out in the scriptures as normal duties for church leadership.

#### Healing Through the Ages

Healing and healing ministry have been important to the church for centuries as indicated in church records. In the *Journal of Religion and Health*, Morton Kelsey writes about some of these early foundations of healing:

Church historians of the post-Nicene era, Sozomen, Socrates, Theodoret, all told of similar instances. It was clear that orthodox Christians were distinguished from Arians by their power to heal. Fascinating stories of healing were told about two of the great church leaders of the fourth century, Gregory of Nazianzen and St. Ambrose, and down through the centuries stories were also told about St. Bernard, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Francis Xavier, St. Philip Neri, to mention only a few. (115)



One skeptic of healing ministry, Augustine, came later in his life to appreciate and believe in the gift of healing that he had once denied.

Toward the end of his life, however, he wrote a series of retractions, and this is one of the statements he retracted. In *The City of God* (Book 22:8) he said that in less than two years he knew of over seventy recorded and verified instances of miracles in his city of Hippo. (Deere 74)

### Wesley and Healing

The journals and writings of John Wesley indicate Wesley's belief in healing. Wesley prayed for his own health and the health of others. His journal records he even prayed for his horse to recover from lameness. Immediately the horse recovered and they continued on their journey (Wesley 552).

Wesley prayed for people's healing as the following journal entry from March 19, 1741, attests. "I visited many of the sick, and among the rest, J- W-, who was in grievous pain both of body and mind. After a short time spent in prayer, we left her. But her pain was gone: Her soul being in full peace, and her body also so strengthened, that she immediately rose, and the next day went abroad" (Journal 1, 304).

Wesley also prayed for his own healing when he was ill. "I explained, in the evening the thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel: In applying which, I was suddenly seized with such a pain in my side, that I could not speak. I knew my remedy, and immediately kneeled down. In a moment the pain was gone" (Journal 1, 304).

Morton Kelsey describes the practical belief in health, healing, and wholeness which motivated John Wesley to write "an enormously popular book on practical healing which helped many, many people in England" (183). Kelsey further mentions in a footnote that Wesley's *Primitive Psysick or an Essay and Natural Method of Curing Most Diseases* was published in 1747 and by 1850 had fifty editions and reprints (183).

In his article *Demons, Doctors And Early Methodist Healing*, Henry D. Rack describes Wesley's purpose in writing *Primitive Psysick*.

In his preface Wesley sketched the history of medicine and attacked many of its practitioners not only for their dangerous remedies but also for their general outlook. Elaborate theories about the origins of disease had perverted its treatment; and multiple remedies only added to expense. Wesley preferred a limited empirical approach resting on simple treatment through trial and error, using one medicine at a time and observing the results—"such a medicine removes such a pain". This was to treat symptoms without raising questions about causes. (He assumed that the ultimate cause of illness was Adam's fall). Once you know your illness, you can, he thought, deal with it easily by this method. (143)

But Wesley also believed in praying for the healing of the sick. Wesley's journal of December 20, 1742, records the following scene: "When I came home they told me the physician said he did not expect Mr. Meyrick would live till morning. . . . A few of us immediately joined in prayer (I relate the naked fact); before we had done his sense and his speech returned. Now he that will account for this by natural causes has my free leave; but I choose to say this is the power of God" (Journal 3:55-56).

Wesley understood from Jesus' examples that physical concerns often lead to conversations about spiritual issues. In Wesley's sermon, "On Visiting The Sick," he comments that seeing to the needs of those who are ill is imperative. "These little labors of love will pave the way to things of greater importance. Having shown that you have regard for their bodies, you may proceed to inquire concerning their souls. And here you have a large field before you; you have scope for exercising all the talents which God has given you" (Sermons, 7:117-127).

#### Classic Evangelical Healing Literature

The works of Andrew Murray, A. J. Gordon, and A. B. Simpson have been compiled by Jonathan Graf in a work entitled *Healing: The Three Great Classics on Divine Healing*. This volume contains classic healing literature from the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Murray, Gordon, and Simpson were ministering when, in many areas of the Christian community, healing was not popular. "In our days divine healing is very little believed in, because it has almost entirely disappeared from the Christian Church" (Graff 10).

Simpson's own healing experience was foundational in his interest and commitment to healing ministry. Simpson, writing in The Gospel of Healing, shares about the difference in his strength and stamina following his healing:

A few months after my healing, God called me into special pastoral, evangelistic and literary work that has since engaged my time and energy. I may truthfully say it has involved four times more labor than has any previous period of my life. And yet it has been a continual delight. It has been very much easier in every way than the far lighter tasks of former years. (170)

One of the issues raised in the writings of Murray, Gordon, and Simpson is the relationship of healing and the atonement of Jesus Christ. Simpson writes: "But redemption finds its center in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. There we must look for the fundamental principle of Divine healing, which rests on Jesus' atoning sacrifice" (34).

Murray, expressing much the same thought, states:

As soon as a sick believer understands the purport of the words, Jesus has borne my sins, he does not need to fear to also say: "I need no longer bear my sins; they are upon me no longer". In the same way as soon as he has fully taken in and believed for himself that Jesus has borne our sickness, he does not fear to say: "I need no longer bear my sickness; Jesus in bearing sin bore also sickness which is its consequence; for both He has made propitiation, and He delivers me from both". (Graff 64-65)

Gordon, in his writings about the relationship between the atonement and healing, tempers the stance of Simpson and Murray slightly but still bases healing in Jesus' sacrificial act on the cross.

In the atonement of Christ there seems to be a foundation laid for faith in bodily healing. Seems, we say, for the passage to which we refer is so profound and unsearchable in its meaning that one would be very careful not to speak dogmatically in regard to it. But it is at least a deep and suggestive truth that we have Christ set before us as the sickness-bearer as well as the sin bearer of His people. (Graff 130)

However, if healing is rooted in the atonement, God is required to heal just as God must forgive sin as he has promised. Basing healing in the atonement naturally leads to the belief that healing is as much the right of every believer as forgiveness. John Wilkinson traces the linkage of healing and atonement to Simpson and others. "As a result of the teaching and ministry of A. B. Simpson and others, teaching that physical healing was available in this life in the atonement by prayer became widespread and influential in the church life in America" (152). While these theological problems were not resolved in the writings of Murray, Gordon, and Simpson, their contribution remains significant.

One issue seen in nineteenth century healing literature is the view that healing is almost totally interventionist. But the discovery of antibiotics changed this perception. No longer was God the only hope with the onset of a serious infection. Today we believe God works in many ways and God deserves the credit for the miracle of healing no matter what form that healing may take.

During the mid- and late nineteenth century, the rise of Pentecostalism caused an adverse reaction in other denominations. Pulling back from a healing ministry caused further splintering in the body of Christ. "Holiness churches, such as the Church of the Nazarene, that believed in dramatic post-conversion experiences would normally have been somewhat open to faith healing. But they became the Pentecostals' most rabid opponents, both to protect against defections and to distance themselves from the public disdain that the Pentecostal movement was experiencing everywhere" (Barron 43-45).

### Contemporary Healing Literature

Francis MacNutt has written two classics in contemporary healing literature: *Healing* and *The Power to Heal*. MacNutt, writing about his personal discovery of healing, states: "Over and over again I have seen there is a power, the saving, healing power of Jesus Christ, which can change and transform lives in ways that I would never have dreamed of in my previous pastoral experience" (*The Power To Heal* 18-19).

MacNutt makes an important distinction in *The Power to Heal*. He challenges that we must not become sidetracked with "all or nothing" kinds of expectations related to healing.

The vision of the more or less and the marvelous ways God works in and through his creation should help us be more sensitive to see God's love and healing power at work in the most subtle ways. It cautions us against making absolute claims of healing or supplying proof which is not reasonably convincing. Since I have become aware of this "more or less" in healing, as distinct from "all or nothing", I can see more evidence of God's compassion at work than ever before. (99)

In the arena of healing where so much confusion and misinformation can exist, Ken Blue's perspective in *Authority to Heal* is helpful. Blue provides an important answer to the questions raised by nineteenth century healing authors (Murray, Gordon, & Simpson) about the relationship between the atonement and healing.

God wills the ultimate healing of all spiritual, psychological, and physical sickness. This complete healing comes to us through the atonement arising from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We receive this final, comprehensive healing at our resurrection from the dead. So too, as a sign and seal of this promise, God often sends healing today. The healing of an illness and the grace to endure in hope when healing is delayed is the reality of God standing with us now. (69)

Morton Kelsey's *Psychology, Medicine & Christian Healing* is a monumental contribution to the church because of its depth and scope. Kelsey has gained secular acceptance as an expert in the field of healing. At the time *Psychology, Medicine, and Christian Health* was released, *The Los Angeles Times* called it "a comprehensive

summary of the ancient arts of healing. . . . A book to live with and use as a means of reflection on how to gain serenity and find healing for frantic times and world-wide worries as well as personal problems" (Kelsey back cover).

Kelsey is open for criticism because some his work is grounded in the philosophy of psychologist Carl Jung. While Jung's contributions to the field of psychology are important, his world view cannot be described as Christian. Kelsey, writing about the impact of Jung on his life, states:

I became interested in Jungian psychology and found that my Jungian analyst friends were far more receptive to Anges Sanford's ministry than most clergy. Indeed, as I began to understand the worldview of Jung, I saw that it had a meaningful place for both the New Testament and Agnes Sanford and others who were reintroducing the healing ministry into mainline churches. (x-xi)

Kelsey's final chapter on implementing a healing ministry in the church is useful for its practical guidelines and concerns. Kelsey calls the church to follow the example of Jesus in beginning healing ministry. "The healing power that operated through Jesus and raised Jesus from the dead is now operating through the church of which we are members" (299).

Jack Deere's writing about healing and healing ministry is beneficial because of his careful examination of all the issues involved. Deere, a former professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, describes his dispensational belief that healing and miracles were not even necessary.

For example I knew that God no longer gave the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. There was no need for them; we had the completed Bible now. Of course, God sometimes did miracles. After all, he is God, and he can do anything he wants. It is just that he didn't do them very often. In fact, he did them so rarely that in all my years as a Christian I could never point to one healing miracle that I was confident was the result of God's power. I had never heard of such a miracle! (14)

But as the title of his book, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, indicates, Deere came to believe that God did heal and was available in supernatural ways to gift the lives of

ordinary believers. Deere makes the point that compassion should be the only motivation for healing ministry.

God is not in the business of gratifying our desires for excitement nor in helping some of his children win arguments over others. He is in the compassion business. To the degree that you can enter into his compassion for the sick and for the hurting, you can be a vessel through whom the healing power of Jesus can flow. If you really want to be used in a healing ministry, ask your heavenly Father to let you feel his compassion for the hurting. (121)

Rich Nathan and Ken Wilson coined a new term for members of the evangelical family involved with healing and deliverance ministry.

So what label should be given to conservative evangelicals who regularly heal the sick in the power of the Holy Spirit, cast out demons, have a low key perspective regarding tongues, and regularly receive prophecies? We have chosen to call such people "Empowered Evangelicals". Of course, immediately one might believe we are demeaning the experience of those who don't regularly practice healing and deliverance. Are Billy Graham or John Stott *unempowered*? Of course not! (12)

Nathan and Wilson call for the church to come together rather than continuing the division so characteristic of this area of church life. They suggest that name-calling and labeling must stop.

Christians within the bounds of orthodoxy have disagreed with each other since the days of Paul and Barnabas. Let's resolve to avoid lumping sincere differences in theological perspective or practice together with rank heresies. Let's further resolve, as much as possible, to avoid using harsh, pejorative, or unnecessarily negative labels in our writing and our speaking when referring to the position or person of a Christian brother or sister. (257)

One individual who has significantly contributed to the area of healing and healing ministry is John Wimber. Wimber, a former Quaker pastor, is known as the father of the Vineyard movement with over 750 fellowships worldwide. The explosive growth of Vineyard congregations around the world are a monument to Wimber's devotion to Jesus Christ.

Richard Foster, writing in the introduction of *Power Healing*, states that Wimber, although a controversial figure in evangelical circles, "speaks with the confidence of one who is living out of the divine Center. Because of this reality in John's life, he faces matters of intense controversy boldly, firmly, confidently. Prayer for the chronically ill, resurrections from the dead, inner healing, and much more are all topics given frank attention" (xii).

One category of contemporary healing literature must be classified as "secular." Dr. Bernie Siegel, author of *Love, Medicine, and Miracles* and *Peace, Joy and Healing* offers much good advice regarding health and healing. Siegel's perspective in his successful coping program for cancer patients is excellent. While Siegel has much good to offer, some of his writing is best described as New Age and certainly is not theologically orthodox!

In *Love, Medicine, and Miracles*, Siegel talks about his conversations with his "inner guide," a bearded man named George. ". . . I found that talking with George was like playing chess with myself, but without knowing what my alter ego's next move would be. George was spontaneous, aware of my feelings, and an excellent advisor . . . all I know is that he has been an invaluable companion ever since his first appearance. My life is much easier now, because he does the hard work" (20). One must view the plethora of New Age literature on healing and wholeness through the lens of historic biblical Christianity.

Siegel, who does not claim to be a Christian, has raised the level of interest and fascination regarding health and healing. Although his best selling books are important, they must be viewed with critical eyes. Healing must be centered in the person, work, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. All healing and wholeness theory, apart from Jesus Christ, is void of the core truth! Authors like Bernie Siegel raise the awareness of healing in the secular press and for that they deserve our thanks.



Inner healing is an area of interest today. Authors such as David Seamands and Ruth Carter Stapleton have written about God's desire to touch the deep needs of the mind and spirit. It makes perfect biblical sense that God not only wants to minister to physical needs but also to heal the emotional wounds. Seamands' books have had a significant impact in presenting the need for emotional and spiritual healing. Ruth Carter Stapleton defines inner healing as:

A process of emotional reconstruction experienced under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is not an attempt to supplant psychiatry or to ignore the wisdom found in secular psychology. Historically the church has recognized Jesus Christ as the great physician; his message and Spirit have inspired the development of medical and psychiatric science as well as the spiritual exercise of praying for miraculous physical healing. Inner healing of emotional trauma is the logical, natural extension of this same inspiration. (Stapleton 9)

The relationship between faith and medical science is a current topic in fields of scholarship. Editors Martin Marty and Kenneth Vaux provide medical and theological communities a service with *Health/Medicine and the Faith Traditions; An Inquiry Into Religion and Medicine*. It discusses the ways medical science and faith traditions can work together. The chapter by F. Dean Lueking, "The Congregation: Place of Sending and Healing," examines the ways medical personnel can experience a sense of call from congregations and challenges medical science and local churches to compassionately work together.

At times the needs can seem overwhelming, but caregivers cannot use compassion fatigue as an excuse for treating people disrespectfully. Giving people hope and dignity must be maintained at all costs. Richard B. Steele, in *The Journal of Religion in Disability and Rehabilitation*, reminds the medical community of the need for compassion and kindness in dealing with people. Steele's daughter, Sarah, has a crippling disease called Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressiva. Commenting on Sarah's doctor's ability to make Sarah feel significant, Steele writes:

I have watched him examine Sarah with a "bedside manner" which blends genuine respect and affection for his patient with a steely determination to understand and combat her baffling disease. Perhaps a sense of the man can be gleaned from a portion of a letter he wrote to Sarah on January 6, 1992. The letter is written on lined yellow paper in six different colored felt-tipped markers: accompanying it is a smiling, spectacled self-portrait labeled "Fred." He writes: "Dear Sarah, I hope you had a good Christmas and Santa brought you some fun gifts. I received your beautiful pictures and they were some of the best gifts I got for Christmas.

Pretty soon I will hang up the pictures on the wall in my new place so that I can see them all the time when I work, and think of my friend Sarah. . . Love, your friend, Fred". (23)

Steele's poignant description of this physician's love and respect for Sarah serves as a model for compassion in healing.

### Dangers in Healing Ministry

Barron and Hunt note some of the dangers for the church in relationship to healing ministry. The "word of faith" movement, as described by Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, E. W. Kenyon, and others, teaches that the speaking of your faith produces dramatic results. In this way of thinking, God responds to the commands of the believer as he/she speaks forth the word of faith. Prosperity and happiness are the byproducts of this way of thinking and belief, word of faith teachers assert (Baron and Hunt).

Gloria Copeland describes the return on gifts given to God and the guaranteed results:

You give \$1 for the Gospel's sake and \$100 belongs to you; you give \$10 and receive \$1000; give \$1000 and receive \$100,000. I know that you can multiply, but I want you to see it in black and white . . . Give one airplane and receive one hundred times the value of the airplane. Give one car and the return would furnish you a lifetime of cars. In short, Mark 10:30 is a very good deal. (Hunt 66)

Likewise with healing, the spiritual returns come because they are expected.

In the word of faith movement, healing is seen as the absolute right of every believer. Those who are not healed do not have enough faith or have not learned to use their faith in the right way. "The clear impression is that enough of the right kind of human effort

can get God to do almost anything" (Blue 47).

J. Sidlow Baxter calls the church to reason about the reality of healing and working with people:

Is it not time we stopped preaching divine healing is promised to all? -- for it is not. Is it not time we stopped offering to people in general what is promised to born-again believers only? Is it not time we stopped preaching that because Jesus healed all the sick who came to him long ago He does the same today? -- for he does not. Is it not time we stopped preaching that all sickness is directly from Satan? -- for it is not. Is it not time we stopped preaching that it is always the will of God to heal? -- for it is not. (Baxter 286)

Barron describes the response of one arrogant congregation to an ad in the local paper when Christian quadriplegic Joni Eareckson came to their town for a personal appearance. Below the ad for Joni's appearance another ad had been strategically placed with the following text: "Notice: We of (name of church) do not believe that it is God's will for man to suffer from sickness, disease or accident, nor do we believe that suffering glorifies God. We believe that God has provided healing through Jesus' scourging and death on the cross" (Barron 7). In other words, if Joni were a "real Christian," she would not be in a wheelchair.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones offers wise counsel regarding the danger of seeking after experiences not grounded theologically.

There is a very dangerous element in all this for reason that the main thesis seems to be that theology does not matter. What really matters, they say, is that one has had a living experience of the Spirit which manifests itself in particular gifts. So you can more or less believe anything you like as long as you have these manifestations. I put all this under the general heading of "capitulation to phenomena." It is the position in which your theology and your doctrine are more or less to be determined by phenomena (22-23).

This position of Lloyd-Jones which cautions against experience directing theology is an important part of a balanced theology of healing. The extreme of seeing healing as a right is antithetical to the balanced healing ministry presented in much of the literature

(Simpson, Gordon, Murray, Stanger, Kelsey, C. P. Wagner, J. Wagner). The other end of the spectrum is also off the biblical mark. It says that healing ministry, valid for the apostles and during the establishment of the church, has little or no place in the church today. Evangelical figures supporting this theological perspective preach and teach that, at best, we do not know if healing and miracles are for this age. J. I. Packer comments on the question of the validity of sign gifts for today: “The restorationist theology of sign gifts, which the charismatic movement also inherited from older Pentecostalism, is inapplicable; nobody can be sure, nor does it seem likely, that the New Testament gifts of tongues, interpretation, healing, and miracles have been restored” (C.P. Wagner 33).

How can we hope to understand healing and healing ministry when there are such sharp differences of opinion? Nathan and Wilson point out the need to bring together the evangelical and charismatic traditions in *Empowered Evangelicals*:

When it comes to exercising faith, we need to learn from the best of conservative evangelical and charismatic worlds. We need the witness of charismatics who remind us that it is the Father’s good pleasure to give us the kingdom and that we have an active role in receiving the kingdom. And we need the reminder from evangelicals to keep first things first: to remember that God has always been, and ever will be, God, that we can only receive what he actually gives us, and that he is ultimately in control of the process. It is only as we learn from the experience of evangelicals and charismatics that we can approach God with an expectant faith that moves beyond fatalism, without falling into presumption. (131)

Bringing the strengths of these two traditions together is vital to a balanced healing ministry.

### Balanced Local Church Healing Ministry

The literature indicates that a balanced healing ministry exists in spite of excesses on one hand and those who would ignore healing ministry on the other hand. The remainder of this chapter focuses on resources and strategies for implementing a healing ministry that will touch hurting people. Kelsey notes how God uses individuals involved in healing ministry as a means to reach out to people with needs:

The basic idea upon which the Christian healing ministry is founded is that the healer is the instrument and carrier of the healing love of God transmitted through the Holy Spirit. Along with this is the conviction that the power of this creative love is greater than any obstacles. The healing power that operated through Jesus and raised Jesus from the dead is now operating in and through the church of which we are members . . . . No other major religion of humankind, however, provides a founder like Jesus of Nazareth, who spoke so clearly about the love of God and who made healing a central part of his public ministry and then went on to teach and empower disciples to carry on that ministry. (Kelsey 299)

Kelsey observes that healing operates in and through the person of Jesus Christ and flows out of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Apart from Jesus Christ, healing loses its purpose and its greatest practitioner. Other major religions may offer forms of healing and health, but Christianity offers Jesus Christ, God in the flesh!

“Christians see the life of Jesus to be God’s gift of himself to us. In Jesus, God so offers himself to us that the dependent spontaneity of our lives is sustained everlastingly by the self-sufficient spontaneity of God’s own life. . . . We become ourselves in God by giving ourselves up to God. We do not become ourselves by trying to use God for ourselves” (Vogel 127). Healing can become “trying to use God for ourselves” if we are not centered in Jesus Christ and living in fellowship with the Holy Spirit (127).

In a statement that could be directed to the contemporary healing movement, A. J. Gordon writes:

Nowhere does zeal require to be so carefully tempered by knowledge as here. Novices, lifted up with pride, will lay hold of this doctrine, and with the enthusiasm which the discovery of some long-neglected truth is apt to engender, they will parade their faith and make claims concerning it. Nothing needs to be held with such quietness and reserve as this truth. (258)

Gordon's caution to maintain a humble spirit is prudent advice to anyone involved in ministry, especially healing ministry.

Healing ministry must be grounded in the person of Jesus Christ. Jack Deere sees passion for Jesus Christ as the place to begin if a believer is interested in being used by God's Spirit.

Don't be passive about acquiring passion for the Son of God. Make it the focus of your life. Put your eyes on the Son of God and leave them there (Heb. 12:22), and you will find yourself becoming like him. You will find yourself falling in love with him as you ask God day after day to consume you with passion for his glorious Son. *And that passion, as it begins to occupy your heart, will conquer a thousand sins in your life.* You will begin to love what he loves and hate what he hates. (201)

Those involved with healing ministry should heed Morton Kelsey's advice to establish a foundation of love. "If we are to be full instruments of God's healing power, our activity will be based in loving concern for all people. Love opens the doors so that people can come to us to receive what gifts of the spirit we have. Only love can open another's heart". (309)

This life of love and faith recognizes that we are not our own but were bought with an enormous price. Healing can put us in touch with the great truths of God if we follow Jesus' example and live out the call to be in submission to the Spirit of God in every area of our lives.

#### Facing Fear and Looking to Jesus

One of the greatest obstacles to healing is fear (C. P. Wagner, Kelsey, Stanger): fear in some churches that healing will lead to extremism, fear among some Christian leaders and clergy that healing is not for this age, and fear in people that God will not meet them when they seek healing. This problem of fear must be confronted. The scriptures tell us that "perfect love drives out fear" (I John 4:18).

Mark Pearson responds to the question of fear as he defines a Christ-centered framework for healing ministry in the local church.

Yes, a healing ministry will cause some disruptions. An effective ministry of healing will attract people who are hurting physically and emotionally. Some of them may dress strangely, act oddly or smell bad. But didn't Jesus come for these (Luke 5:30-32; 7:36-50)? And isn't part of our task as a community centered in Him to reach out and welcome into our midst such as these (James 1:27; 2:5)? A local church is a community responding to God's call, called out from the world, called to faith in Him, called together as a body and called forth to do His work. (52)

But how does the church begin this process of seeing the normalization of the healing ministry? Is it possible to return the healing ministry to the priority that Jesus taught? How can the fear and problems surrounding this issue be brought to light and overcome? Morton Kelsey notes that normalization of healing ministry must be grounded in the belief of a loving God.

Before a significant, normal, and continuous practice of healing returns to the church, we need to have people who truly believe that a loving God reaches into and can change our minds and bodies. And we need to remain in constant communion with that divine love. We need to know that Jesus and his followers practiced a ministry of healing because they wanted to express God's love. And then we need to reach out to broken, fragile, hurting human beings, well aware that followers of Jesus obediently loved, preached, taught, and healed. (300)

A healing ministry requires church leaders who have a deep and abiding love for God motivating them to seek those in need. God calls the church to a healing ministry that seeks to lift up Jesus Christ to an aching world. Healing ministry is not about institution building or ego stroking.

A healing ministry rises and falls in relationship to Jesus Christ. We must look to Jesus as the "author and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2). Cramer suggests modeling Jesus' behavior is an important way to accomplish healing ministry. "It will be worth our while to see how Jesus reacted to those who suffer, so that we may 'go and do likewise.' It will, perhaps, make us even more helpful to other people if we look at what Jesus did in contrast to the general reaction of ordinary folk" (116).

The church must understand the purpose of healing. Many authors and church leaders (Blue, Churchill, Deere, Nathan and Wilson, Payne, Ogilvie, Stanger, C. P. Wagner, J. Wagner, and Wimber) are calling for the return to a biblical understanding of healing.

Not only must the church better understand healing; individuals must also see the redemptive purpose of healing. The following explanation by Gary Churchill is vital to a

clear picture of the role of healing in the life of the individual:

Healing is not an end in itself, but it is intended to bring the person into a closer relationship to God and man. Healing is always purposeful, not for show, for escape or ease, but rather to enable the sufferer to better serve the Master. Have you ever wondered, as I, "why the anointing with oil upon the sick?" In the scriptures the primary purpose of anointing-oil was to indicate a setting apart for sacred use. The sick by coming are saying that they are voluntarily yielding their body to God for His service. ( 56)

This perspective is crucial when beginning a healing ministry. Healing is *not* just about taking away the physical problems or pain. Instead healing *is* more about inviting people into deeper levels of commitment and devotion to Christ, and as Churchill suggests, yielding themselves to God for set-apart service (56).

Healing is a call to God for help in hopeless situations. Healing is seeing that only God has the answers to the needs his people possess. Healing is believing that God cares more about his people than we care about them. Healing is knowing that God is available at the point of need.

St. Augustine describes the character of a loving and vital relationship with God who sought him out and would not let him go. Augustine's picture is a God who invests in his people and goes to great lengths to show us his love.

Late have I loved you, O beauty ever ancient, ever new! Late have I loved you! and behold You were within, and I without, and without I sought you. And deformed I ran after those forms of beauty You have made. You were with me and I was not with You. Those things held me back from You, things whose only being was to be in You. You called; You cried; and You broke through my deafness. You flashed; You shone; and You chased away my blindness. You became fragrant; and I inhaled and sighed for You. I tasted, and now hunger and thirst for You. You touched me; and I burn for your embrace. (quoted in Bakken and Hofeller 82)

Francis MacNutt notes this loving relationship God has for us is lived out in the mystery of healing:

As I experience the paradoxes of healing, I become more and more aware of the mystery involved. Those who want simple answers and absolute clarity are bound to be disappointed. They will never have the beautiful



experience that I have almost every day, of seeing a person touched and healed by God's merciful love. (134)

### The Pastor's Leadership

One of the key ingredients in beginning a healing ministry is the leadership of the church pastor. Deere, Kelsey, Stanger, C. P. Wagner, and J. Wagner discuss the importance of the pastor's preaching and teaching when implementing a healing ministry. As with most things in church life, the pastor must first be convinced of the importance of healing and then he must be the one to see healing ministry begin. "The pastor who is becoming increasingly convinced of the validity of a healing ministry and who desires to inaugurate such a healing ministry must participate in effective communication with his people concerning the important truths in this spiritual realm that are emerging in his heart and mind" (Stanger 126).

Blue calls for careful leadership in the way healing and healing ministry are lived out in the local church:

Assertive Christian ministry, however, needs to guard against pastoral irresponsibility. In making an aggressive attack on sickness by affirming the will and power of God to heal, we may inadvertently do more harm than good to those who are not healed. And in vigorously attending to the demonized and diseased, we may neglect the poor and the hungry who are objects of Christ's compassion. A balanced agenda and common sense are called for in all ministry. (113)

C. P. Wagner challenges the church to be cautious regarding manipulation in the area of healing. He notes five important and helpful guidelines to avoid such manipulation:

- (1) Do not attempt to give orders to God or to write His script for Him.
- (2) Do not use formulas or techniques for healing.
- (3) Always seek God's will for healing.
- (4) Follow Jesus' example in being an open channel for the Father to do what He wants to do through you.
- (5) Do not attribute the results of prayer for the sick, whether positive or negative, to the faith level or the attitudes of the sick person. (250)

Prayer is the foundation of a healing ministry. The Holy Spirit works in the lives of

individuals as faithful prayer is uttered for persons in need. Stanger notes that a good way to start moving toward a healing ministry is to begin focused prayer groups whose only purpose is to pray for the healing of individuals with specific needs (127).

Establishing a prayer base for healing ministry is vital. People must be taught that their own attitudes can affect God's response in answering prayer. In healing ministry prayer must be the joyous response of persons thanking God for all that God has done and will do in the future. Living a life of gratitude and thankfulness reaps great rewards.

Donald Demaray points out the positive results of living with the attitude of gratitude. "In my work as a minister and counselor, I have noticed that those who make thankfulness the style of their lives get answers to prayer, even answers hard to come by. I have also observed the reverse, that those who complain miss the answers God desires to give, and their problems multiply" (59).

One of the most significant resources for beginning a healing ministry is C. Peter Wagner's *How To Have A Healing Ministry In Any Church*. He sets the stage for beginning a balanced healing ministry. He challenges the reader to begin praying for people's healing and to recognize the positive results.

Few undertakings in life are win-win situations, but praying for the sick is one. I don't mean there are never any breakdowns or bad trips but at least in my experience they are exceedingly rare. For example, last year I prayed one-on-one for perhaps 200 individuals, and so far as I can remember, every one had a positive experience. Not all were healed . . . but all were ministered to. (210-211)

This balanced perspective is refreshing in an arena of excesses. "There is no secret formula, ritual or procedure, which, when used correctly, makes the healing happen. God does the healing, and we cannot write His script for Him" (223).

Responding to the question as to why some people are healed and some are not, C. P. Wagner states that in his own prayer and healing ministry, he has seen the following results: "71 percent of the people I have prayed for over the last two years are still sick to

some degree after the prayer is over. Only 29 percent are now completely healed” (257).

These statistics are important to keep in mind. C. P. Wagner cites Wimber who remarks,

“More people I pray for are not healed than are” (257).

Paul Brand reminds believers to see a greater kind of healing available to everyone.

My discussion of healing would be tragically incomplete if I neglected one last aspect of spiritual healing. What happens when health never returns, when a disease is terminal, or a paralysis, or a permanent burn scar? Is there any hope? To such a person I would point to a different kind of healing, a healing of the soul. It is the kind of healing Jesus clearly concentrated on and the form of healing available to us all, even to those whose bodies never recover. (20)

Clergy and lay leaders, in beginning a healing ministry, must remember to preach and teach that God will meet individuals as they come to a healing service, but not everyone who is prayed for will be healed.

### Healing Services

John Wimber lays out some specific steps to follow as we pray for people to receive healing. While these steps are widely known and disseminated, we must seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in each individual case, according to C. P. Wagner and Kraft. Wimber’s steps for implementing healing ministry from *Power Evangelism* are as follows (199-235):

1. Interview: The purpose of the interview is to determine why the person has come for prayer. Talk with the person about his/her physical, emotional, or spiritual need.
2. Diagnostic Decision: Persons offering prayer will try to determine if there are other causes for the problem presented. Ask about resentments, known sins, or other issues that need to be confessed before healing prayer can be effective. Resentments, sin, and bitterness can be roadblocks to healing if not acknowledged.
3. The Prayer Selection: A distinction must be made between intercessory prayer and command prayer when working with a person who is demon possessed. Wimber and

C. P. Wagner also write about commanding illness or disease to come out of a certain part of the body, but only at the direction of the Holy Spirit.

4. The Prayer Engagement: In this step, prayer is offered on behalf of the person seeking healing. C. P. Wagner challenges the intercessors to pray prayers of active positive faith. He comments on the most effective way to pray:

More timid souls, in order to cover their bases and create a fail-safe condition will pray "God I don't know what your will is, but if it is your will, please heal this person." The basic principle is sound, namely, that we want nothing other than God's will, which is good, but also lack of faith and discernment, which are not. As we gain experience in listening to God as well as talking to Him, we will, in many cases, be able to know what God's will is by the time we get through the first three steps. This enables us to pray with a degree of boldness that otherwise we could not have, and the active approach does seem to release more healing power than the passive approach. I think it is a more direct attack on Satan's kingdom. (229)

Before prayer is offered the person is anointed with oil.

Wimber notes that the team leader praying for the individual should keep his/her eyes open to see if something said will evoke any reaction. For example, if a person begins to cry when an issue is mentioned, Wimber suggests prayer be offered in a more concentrated way for that specific area.

5. Post Prayer Direction: Following prayer Wimber suggests that the intercessors talk with the person anointed for healing to see whether they felt something or received other direction from the Lord.

#### Orders of Service

Stanger lists a possible order of worship for a healing service that includes the following elements:

Period of private meditation and prayer, scripture, prayer by leader, testimonies to healings by those present, brief message (not more than five minutes) by the leader on some phase of healing ministry, prayers for the healing of those present and the laying on of hands (after the laying on of hands and before benediction, if time permits, it is in order to have a

period of intercession during which those in attendance would be asked to intercede personally or collectively for those persons not present who are known to be in need of definite healing for whom prayer is requested), benediction. (128)

Only music needs to be added to Stanger's comprehensive service outline.

Congregational hymns, several choruses, or even special music would set the tone for openness to the work of the Holy Spirit.

One very helpful resource for finding an appropriate order of service is James K. Wagner's *Blessed to Be a Blessing*. In an appendix at the end of the book, Wagner includes nine liturgies representing different perspectives for public healing services. Wagner, commenting on the sacramental approach for healing services, suggests:

Consider the sacramental model for public healing services in the church. By this I mean directing the central focus of the worship experience on the Lord Jesus Christ who has already given to us visible signs of his invisible grace. He has already commanded his church to do certain things in memory of him, not in the mood of a fallen hero's funeral, but rather in the joyous spirit of celebrating victorious good news. Because the heartbeat of the healing ministry is the living Christ, whose loving presence is the same today as it was yesterday and will be tomorrow, let us intentionally focus upon him. (40)

### Conclusion and Personal Reflections

In January of 1993, as I was sitting in a classroom at Asbury Theological Seminary, God touched some deep needs in my own spirit. Professor Stephen Seamands was lecturing on the life of Nehemiah and Nehemiah's need to weep over the ruins of the city before rebuilding could begin. As Seamands spoke, I began to weep as God touched the barrenness of my soul and healed me. In the months prior to this experience I was struggling with my call to pastoral ministry and wrestling with a deep sense of inadequacy for the task. In those moments I received a spiritual healing related to my call and fitness for ministry that still remains.

My desire is that my congregation experience a similar divine healing. The fact that God chose to meet me in a classroom rather than a healing service proves again the

wonderful creativity of God. Implementing a healing ministry is not about giving glory to me or my congregation, but to lift high the Lord Jesus and invite others to be touched by him.

I do not have all of the answers about healing. My father's death from cancer during the time I was preaching the sermons on healing and wholeness stood out as a powerful reminder of the great mystery associated with healing.

But I have been challenged to believe, preach, and practice what I do know. I know God desires to touch us at the point of our needs if we will only humble ourselves. I know God desires local churches to follow Jesus' example and provide regular opportunities for people to receive healing. I know churches will never have regular services for healing unless clergy like myself take the initiative to step out and try something new. And I know that nothing of significance in my life has been accomplished without risk.

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool. To weep is to risk appearing sentimental. To reach out for another is to risk exposing your true self. To place your ideas, your dreams, before a crowd is to risk their loss. To love is to risk not being loved in return. To live is to risk dying. To hope is to risk despair. To try to heal is to risk failure. But risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing. The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, and is nothing. They avoid suffering and sorrow, but they cannot learn, feel, change, grow, love, live. Chained by their attitudes they are a slave, they have forfeited their freedom. Only a person who risks is free. (Kelsey 319-320)

#### Summary of Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the following theoretical framework:

##### **(1) Healing is taught in the scriptures and modeled in the ministry of Jesus:**

Biblical evidence exists for the priority of healing ministry. The Old and New Testaments contain many references to healing (see APPENDIX E). Jesus' priorities, as outlined in Matthew 4:23, were teaching, preaching, and healing.

(2) **The church must do the things Jesus modeled:** The call to follow Jesus is a call to emulate Jesus' priorities. Because healing the sick was an important part of Jesus' earthly ministry, healing the sick must be a part of the ministry of the church today.

(3) **Healing often gives rise to confusion in the church today:** The review of literature suggests the church is divided about the place and priority of healing ministry. This study attempted to understand the attitudes about healing in one Free Methodist congregation in Seattle, Washington, and it sought to place healing and healing ministry in their proper historical and biblical place.

(4) **Healing remains an area of mystery:** Honesty requires us to admit healing continues to be an area of mystery in the church. But the questions should not keep us from doing what Jesus modeled as we live out the scriptural command to call together the elders and anoint the sick.

(5) **Healing ministry can be taught:** This study determined that listening to eight sermons and participating in two healing services did change attitudes regarding healing and healing ministry. Healing ministry can be taught using the means listed above.

(6) **God desires to meet people's needs:** This study is based on my belief that God desires to meet people's needs. The scriptures are replete with promises of God being found when sought by persons in need. One of the ways God meets the needs of individuals is through physical, spiritual, and emotional healing. A human world in pain looks to the church of Jesus Christ to implement a healing ministry so that lives can be touched as persons are pointed to Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER 3

## Design of the Study

The Problem and Purpose of the Study

The problem addressed by this study was the ambivalence that exists regarding healing ministry in many churches and the seeming reluctance to incorporate services for healing in the schedule of activities. I assessed attitudes regarding healing and healing ministry as well as determined congregational openness to ongoing healing ministry through the use of a pre-test and post-test. The independent variable of this study was a series of eight sermons I preached between the pre-test and post-test. The purpose of this study was to analyze the attitudinal changes of respondents toward the role of preaching in establishing and implementing a healing ministry in the Lakeview Free Methodist Church of Seattle, Washington. This was accomplished by administering a pre-test, preaching eight sermons over eight weeks (two of the worship experiences over the eight-week period included opportunities for people to be anointed for healing), and administering a post-test.

The definition for healing used in this study is from the *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling* published in 1990 by Abingdon Press. Healing is, “The process of being restored to bodily wholeness, emotional well-being, mental functioning, and spiritual aliveness. Christian modes of healing have always distinguished themselves by achieving a spiritual advance in connection with the healing process” (497).

Research and Operational Questions

The following research questions are addressed in the study. Included is an analysis of other variables that may contribute to and/or explain changes in the pre-test and post-test scores.

RQ #1 What are the general attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to divine healing?



QQ #1 What degree of change will be seen in study participants' attitude toward Jesus' healing ministry?

QQ#2 What degree of change will be seen in study participants' understanding of healing as a biblical priority?

RQ #2 What are the attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to establishing an ongoing ministry of healing in the church?

QQ #1 What degree of change will be seen in study participants' belief in the priority of ongoing healing ministry in the church?

RQ #3 What is the relationship between various demographic differences of subjects and survey results?

### Population and Sample

The population of the study was members and regular attenders of the Lakeview Free Methodist Church in Seattle, Washington. The potential population for this study was anyone who could attend the worship services and take part in the pre-test and post-test. This potential population consists of 300-350 persons who call Lakeview Church their church home. Average attendance at the Sunday worship service is between 180-220 with almost one-third being children under sixth grade.

The Lakeview congregation is 100 years old and is comprised of theologically conservative individuals and families who are predominately middle-class Caucasian. Many of the occupations represented in the congregation are from the professional or white collar ranks: Boeing Aircraft workers, public and private school teachers, Seattle Pacific University faculty and staff, small business owners, etc. The largest single group in the church at the present time is young families with young children (grade school and below). The toddler, pre-school, and kindergarten classes are the largest in the Sunday school. The Lakeview church is located in a residential area of Seattle north of the University of Washington and northeast of Seattle Pacific University.

The sample for this study was those individuals in the congregation attending the worship services (age fourteen and above) who agreed to take the pre-test and post-test. The sample was drawn from the population on a basis of self-selection. I gave special attention to encourage as many people as possible to participate in the study.

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was a researcher-designed instrument, a twenty-five question survey using five-point Likert response scale (see APPENDIX B for survey).

The researcher-designed instrument sought to study two major attitudes and the relationship of demographics to these two attitudes. The attitudes were: (1) the general attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to divine healing, and (2) the attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to establishing an ongoing ministry of healing in the church. I also explored what connections, if any, existed between attitudinal changes and personal characteristics of subjects.

The *General Healing Attitudes* scale was comprised of those survey questions concerning basic attitudes about healing in the congregation. The scale consisted of all twenty-five survey questions. For example, respondents were asked questions such as the following: (1) Healing ministry should be left to Pentecostal churches. (2) One of Jesus' top priorities was healing ministry. (3) Healing ministry was only for New Testament times. (4) Sickness may be a sign of disobedience to God. (5) The scriptures encourage the church's involvement in healing ministry.

The *Establishing Healing Ministry* scale sought to measure the openness of the church to continued healing ministry. This scale consisted of the following five questions: (1) Our church should have healing services. (2) Anointing people for healing should be a regular part of church life. (3) Healing is valid for today. (4) Healing services at our church would be beneficial. (5) Free Methodist Churches need to emphasize healing more.

Survey questions related to the two major attitudes were: Attitude #1: Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25. Attitude #2: 5, 7, 12, 17, and 23. Demographic information was collected as part of the survey.

### Face Validity

Face validity is the extent to which the measure covers the concept as viewed subjectively by knowledgeable individuals. Five out of five individuals asked to evaluate the instrument approved its use. The five individuals asked to evaluate the instrument were given a copy of the statement of purpose for the study as well as the research questions. These five individuals were asked to respond to the face validity of the instrument. The instructions provided to the reviewers are contained in APPENDIX D. Changes were suggested and these changes were incorporated in the instrument contained in APPENDIX B.

The five individuals participating in the evaluation of the instrument were: the pastor of a sister church in the area, the pastor of a church in the region who experienced healing a number of years ago, a social psychologist who is a member of the Seattle Pacific University faculty, a staff person from my church who holds a Master's Degree in Biblical Studies, and a registered nurse from my congregation who experienced healing. (See APPENDIX D for instructions to survey reviewers).

### Reliability

Reliability of the survey was established using a split-half method with the Spearman-Brown correction. The reliability for the entire scale and the one sub-scale were figured separately. The *General Healing Attitudes* scale consisted of all twenty-five items. They were randomly assigned to groups of thirteen and twelve. The correlation corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula yielded an internal consistency of .79.

The *Establishing Healing Ministry* sub-scale consisted of five items. They were randomly assigned to groups of two and three. The correlation corrected by the

Spearman-Brown formula yielded an internal consistency of .80.

The reliability for all scales the and sub-scale used in this study can be considered appropriate for special scales of this type.

#### Design of the Instrument

The instrument was designed by the researcher. However, credit needs to be given to Arthur L. Luckie for use of questions from the survey in his 1990 Doctor of Ministry dissertation at Asbury Theological Seminary entitled *Preparing the Local Church for a Healing Ministry*. I obtained permission from Arthur L. Luckie to use several of the questions (see APPENDIX C for permission letter from Luckey) from his *Preparing the Local Church for a Healing Ministry* survey.

#### Data Collection Procedures

The schedule for the implementation of the study was as follows:

Sunday, September, 29, 1997. At the beginning of morning worship, individuals were encouraged to complete the brief survey included in the worship folder. Members of the Congregational Reflection Group assisted me in distributing and collecting the survey. Little explanation was given about the purpose of the study. A few individuals in the congregation were aware of the nature and purpose of the project.

Sunday, October 5, 1997. Sermon #1 preached: *A Christian Perspective on Healing Ministry*.

Sunday, October 12, 1997. Sermon #2 preached: *The Place of Healing in the Old Testament*.

Sunday, October 18, 1997. Sermon #3 preached: *The Priority of Healing in Jesus' Ministry*. At the conclusion of this service the first opportunity for individuals who desired to be anointed for healing was made available.

Sunday, October 26, 1997. Sermon #4 preached: *The Practice of Healing in Jesus Ministry*.

Sunday, November 2, 1997. Sermon #5 preached: *The Pain and Promises When Healing Does Not Come.*

Sunday, November 9, 1997. Sermon #6 preached: *The Prominence of Healing in the Lives of the Apostles.*

Sunday, November 16, 1997. Sermon # 7 preached: *The Promise of Healing in the Life of the Church.*

Sunday, November 23, 1997. Sermon # 8 preached: *The Personal Call for Healing in the Life of the Believer.* At the conclusion of this service the second opportunity for individuals who desired to be anointed for healing was made available.

Sunday, November 30, 1997. At the beginning of the service individuals were invited to complete the post-test. The Congregational Reflection Group again helped with the process of distributing and collecting the surveys.

I gave special attention to protect the confidentiality of the study participants. Although more powerful statistics would have resulted if the responses could have been matched, I yielded to the strong feeling of church leadership that no identifying marks be placed on the survey. This allowed complete anonymity for the respondents.

#### Variables

The independent variables in this study were the eight sermons I preached and participation in one or both of the worship experiences where individuals were anointed for healing. The pre-test and post-test were used as dependent variables to determine the influence of the independent variables.

It is also important to acknowledge that variables may have existed which had an unknown effect on this study. Among these variables would be issues such as previous positive or negative experiences with healing ministry, biblical knowledge, concern over taking a survey at church, etc.

#### Methodology

This study utilized a two-group pre-test/post-test design. The study included a pre-

test measure for the first group, followed by a treatment and a post-test for the second group (Group A 01----X----Group B 02). The two groups consisted of the members of the congregation who filled out the surveys on the weeks they were distributed. The groups were treated as independent groups because the responses could not be matched.

### Control

Control issues in this study must be understood in light of the differences in study participants. The possibility that the group in attendance at post-test differed from pre-test and thereby influenced results of the study was tested through demographic comparisons. The survey asked for the following: number of services subjects attended during the eight-week period of the sermon series, age, gender; tenure at Lakeview Church, denominational background, if subjects were previously anointed for healing, if subjects were anointed for healing during the sermon series, if subjects had ever experienced a life threatening illness, and if someone in subject's family had ever experienced a life threatening illness.

### Analysis

Research question one was answered through the comparison of the appropriate attitude items across the pre- and post-tests. This comparison was accomplished using a two-tailed t-test for independent groups. Research question two was answered with the same analysis for the appropriate attitude items.

Research question three dealing with the differences in attitudes across the various demographic factors was first explored using chi-square analysis for each demographic attribute. For each demographic attribute, chi-square analysis was used to determine if the variable was similarly represented in the two surveys. Once this was determined, their scores on the post-test for the entire scale and the *Establishing Healing Ministry* sub-scale were compared using a two-tailed t-test for independent groups when two or less categories were present in the demographic variable. Where there were more than two categories, I used a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

## CHAPTER 4

## Findings of the Study

This chapter describes the results of a study related to the role of preaching in establishing and implementing a healing ministry in the Lakeview Free Methodist Church of Seattle, Washington. I preached eight sermons over eight weeks dealing with healing and healing ministry. Before the first sermon and after the last one a survey was given to the congregation. Sixty-two of seventy-nine respondents indicated on the post-test they had heard at least five of the eight sermons in the series.

The study examined three research questions: RQ# 1: What are the general attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to divine healing? RQ #2: What are the attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to establishing an ongoing ministry of healing in the church? RQ #3: What connections, if any, exist between attitudinal changes and demographic characteristics of subjects?

Findings Related to Research Question Number One

Research question one was answered through the comparison of the mean score on the *General Healing Attitude* scale across the pre- and post-tests. This comparison was accomplished using a two-tailed t-test for independent groups. Table 1 below shows the mean scores, standard deviation, t-value, and the level of significance for this test. There was a significant difference ( $p \leq .05$ ) between the mean of the pre-test (mean = 63.1145) and the mean of the post-test (mean = 59.9367). Attitudes toward healing improved significantly in a positive direction. Post-test respondents viewed general attitudes about healing and healing ministry in a more positive way than did pre-test respondents.

### Findings Related to Research Question Number Two

Research question two was answered through the comparison of the mean score on the *Establishing Healing Ministry* sub-scale across the pre- and post-tests. This comparison was accomplished using a two-tailed t-test for independent groups. Table 1 below shows the mean scores, standard deviation, t-value, and the level of significance for this test. A significant difference existed ( $p \leq .05$ ) between the mean of the pre-test (mean = 11.4063) and the mean of the post-test (mean = 9.9620). Post-test respondents viewed establishing healing ministry issues in a more positive way than did pre-test respondents.

**Table 1**  
**Comparison of Pre- and Post Test Scores on Attitudes Toward Healing\***

Attitudes	Pre-Test		Post-Test		df	T	p ≤
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
General	63.11	11.58	59.94	9.73	172.92	1.97	.05
Establishing Healing Ministry	11.41	3.31	9.96	2.65	172.87	3.21	.002

\*The lower the score the more positive the attitude toward healing and establishing a healing ministry.

### Findings Related to Research Question Number Three

Research question three, dealing with the differences in attitudes across the various demographic factors, was first explored using chi-square analysis for each demographic attribute. For each demographic attribute, chi-square analysis was used to determine if the variable was evenly distributed across the sample. There were no significant chi-square differences noted, therefore the frequency of respondents across categories was as expected. Once this was determined, their scores on the post-test for the entire scale and the *Establishing Healing Ministry* sub-scale were compared using a two-tailed t-test for independent groups when two or less categories were present in the demographic variable. When there were more than two categories, I used a one-way analysis of



variance (ANOVA). No significant differences were found.

### Open-ended Feedback

While the statistics outlined above support the results already reported in this chapter, anecdotal data helps to personalize the impact of the survey. Listed below are some conclusions drawn from comments made by survey respondents on the post-test. Thirty-eight out of seventy-nine respondents made comments in the space provided on the post-test. These comments can be divided into the following four general categories.

(1) General comments about the survey and/or feedback about a specific question.

Five individuals commented about the nature of the survey. Some expressed liking the survey and several others did not. Included in these comments were some negative evaluations of specific questions. One person stated: "Many of the questions set up dichotomies that I believe were false. A holistic view of the gospel does not elevate one truth or ministry over another."

(2) Mixed reactions. Two sample comments from this perspective: "I feel that healing in the church made me feel depressed during the service. Every Sunday that I came I cried. But I do feel like many prayers will be answered. Lakeview is a great place and I do think we need to turn to one another during a time of need."

"We have many things to focus on as a church. Wholeness involves spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional. To focus only on one would be out of balance. Jesus' ministry was to all of our needs and not just one area. I think a healing ministry would be very beneficial to us as a congregation along with all other areas.

(3) Those persons wishing to reinforce some important point about healing and healing ministry. Twelve respondents made general comments in this area. One

individual stated: "I feel that the Lord heals both spiritually and physically. He uses different ways at different times and circumstances." Another person summarized the goal of the sermon series and emphasis on healing. "The key is balance. Churches should have a well balanced approach to all ways God deals with us."

(4) Positive comments about the sermon series. Sixteen individuals expressed appreciation for the emphasis on healing and the healing sermon series. One newcomer who attended the final two services of the series made this observation. "These are the first two times I have come to this church. I was very moved by the services and look forward to advent with you."

Written below the survey question that stated "one problem with healing is that people who are not healed can be disappointed" was the following comment. "Yes, they can, but in light of the events in the Whitehead family; we can see firsthand what healing is all about. Thank you for your transparency."

I appreciated the perspective of this person. "Okay. You have convinced me. I've changed my mind and think healing services are all right and could be an asset to our ministry. If it's handled appropriately (i.e. no Earnest Ainsely type yelling 'HEALED' services)."

But all the positive comments can be summarized by this wise and gracious response. "Thank you for bringing the healing emphasis to the church services. God worked through you. The Holy Spirit blessed you and many others. This should be a continued emphasis in our church ministry; it gets at the 'real needs' of people and can be an avenue for spiritual growth in our church."

## CHAPTER 5

### Summary and Conclusions

#### Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to analyze the role of preaching in the establishment and implementation of a healing ministry in the Lakeview Free Methodist Church in Seattle, Washington. The study examined three research questions: RQ #1: What are the general attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to divine healing? RQ #2: What are the attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to establishing an ongoing ministry of divine healing in the church? RQ #3: What connections, if any, exist between attitudinal changes and demographic characteristics of subjects?

#### Summary of Major Findings

The study was significant in two major areas. Post-test respondents viewed general attitudes about healing in a more positive way than did pre-test respondents. A significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) appeared between the mean of the pre-test (mean = 63.1145) and the mean of the post-test (mean = 59.9367).

Secondly, post-test respondents viewed establishing healing ministry issues in a more positive way than did pre-test respondents. There was a significant difference ( $p \leq .05$ ) between the mean of the pre-test (mean = 11.4063) and the mean of the post-test (mean = 9.9620).

#### Data Evaluation and Theological Reflection

Preaching remains important in evangelical church life. But is preaching effective in changing attitudes? Ministers hope their sermons impact people's lives. Most evangelical clergy invest a great deal of time and energy in sermon preparation each

week. People looking for a church home may base their decision on the pastor's ability to effectively deliver the sermon and the content of the message. Seminarians are schooled in homiletics and good preachers are sought after by congregations.

This study sought to determine if it was possible to see changes in attitude as a result of sermons heard by a congregation. Questions related to the effectiveness of preaching are, in many ways, subjective. Is preaching really an effective tool for influencing attitudes? Specifically for this study, the question was whether preaching was an effective tool for changing attitudes about healing and healing ministry?

The results of this study suggest preaching was effective in influencing and changing congregational attitudes regarding healing and healing ministry. The *General Healing Attitude* scale pre-test mean score across twenty-five items was 2.52 while the post-test mean was 2.40. The *Establishing Healing Ministry* sub-scale pre-test mean score across five items was 2.28 while the post-test mean was 1.99. I utilized a five-point Likert scale using the following five anchors: 1=Agree Strongly, 2=Agree, 3= Undecided, 4=Disagree, and 5=Disagree Strongly. The lower the score on the scale and sub-scale the greater openness to healing ministry and establishing healing ministry.

The sermon was a means of seeing positive attitudinal changes in respondents related to healing and healing ministry. These results affirmed the role of the sermon in congregational life and reinforced Jesus' practice of using sermons to communicate truth.

Matthew's Gospel (4:23) lays out Jesus' three-fold priority of teaching, preaching, and healing. This study brought together two of these three ministry priorities and indicated preaching was an effective way of positively impacting attitudes about healing

and healing ministry. One of the important benefits of this study was bringing together preaching and healing ministry.

Living out Jesus' priorities dictates the church must do what Jesus did. Healing is not optional to those wishing to model the behaviors of Jesus. The world, with its crushing needs, cries out to the church to respond. Healing ministry, neglected by some in the church today, can be preached about, lived out, and given the place of priority Jesus demonstrated.

Any forthright study of healing must deal honestly with the hard question of why some are healed and others are not. Neglecting this crucial and practical issue creates an incomplete theology of healing and may lead to disappointment when persons are not healed.

Frank B. Stanger shares an important perspective about the way God works in *The Five Miracles of Healing*. Stanger encourages believers to see healing as involving one of the following five miracles: (1) the miracle of a direct supernatural healing; (2) the miracle of the medical doctor; (3) the miracle healing powers of the human body; (4) the miracle of "my grace is sufficient for you"; (5) and the miracle of a victorious crossing (Stephen Seamands Telephone Conversation).

The fifth message preached for this study (see APPENDIX A for sermon manuscripts) dealt with Paul's thorn in the flesh (II Corinthians 12:7-10) and the reality that some are not healed. This truth was demonstrated in a difficult and ironic way in the life of our family.

On the fourth Sunday of the sermon series my father was in attendance. He was terminally ill with renal cell cancer but at that point was able to function well and his

quality of life remained high. Along with others my dad was anointed for healing at the conclusion of the service. But between the seventh and eighth week of the sermon series, he passed away. Although his death was expected, his sudden deterioration was sooner than any of the family anticipated.

On the final Sunday of the sermon series, just four days after my father's death, I stood in the pulpit and preached about the promise of healing and God's ultimate healing in my father's life. I cannot assess the breadth of the impact of this experience on the congregation but realize it was significant for many. A number of individuals in the congregation commented about the impact of the healing messages in light of the terminal illness and death of my dad.

On the two Sundays (October 26, 1997 and November 23, 1997) of the sermon series opportunities were provided for individuals to be anointed for healing. A number who responded reported emotional, physical, and spiritual healing. One of the most significant aspects of these two anointing services was that four individuals came forward to inquire about making commitments to Jesus. They were led to Christ by members of the prayer teams.

Reflecting on the whole experience of the study, including the eight sermons on healing and the attitude changes demonstrated through the study, I have concluded the following: (1) attitudes about healing and healing ministry can be changed by a sermon series; (2) a sermon series is a good way to introduce some new aspect of church life; (3) the events and timetable of my father's death did not take God by surprise; (4) God allowed questions about who is and who is not healed to be lived out before the congregation in my life and the life of my family; (5) and opportunities will continue to

be made available monthly for persons to be anointed for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

### Implications for Revising the Existing Body of Knowledge

Four major implications from this study suggest a revision of the existing body of knowledge. First, one implication was underscoring the sermon as an effective method to changing attitude, an underlying philosophical foundation for the modern sermon. The sermon is delivered by the minister in hopes it will change people's lives. This study suggests that a sermon series can have an impact on the attitude of a congregation.

Another significant implication was demonstrating that it is possible to bring healing and healing ministry to the attention of a church body. They can see the value of healing and healing ministry in the life of the church. Ministers often speculate about the best way to introduce some aspect of change to church. They wonder if sermon series are an effective way to present change to a church body. This study indicated a sermon series is a good way to introduce healing and healing ministry to a church body. Sermon series may also be effective in introducing other ministries to a congregation.

A third vital implication of this study was providing a means of linking Jesus' priorities of preaching and healing as described in the Gospels. This study provided a way to connect and model these priorities.

A final implication of this study was to link healing and death. While I did not study the impact of my father's death on the congregation, it is safe to say it was a significant event for many of them. Many in the congregation knew my dad and all of them saw the impact on me and my family. As the sermon series was preached, the unfolding of this life trauma provided a healthy balance and vivid illustration of the nature of divine

healing. Study results indicate the death of my father did not have the effect of moving people away from belief in healing.

#### Possible Contributions to Research Methodology

As part of the study I began the validation process of a scale measuring general attitudes about healing and a sub-scale measuring openness to establishing healing ministry. Reliability and face validity was established for the scale and the sub-scale.

This scale and sub-scale may serve as a means for other researchers to study congregational attitudes about healing and healing ministry. These scales will need further validation by other researchers, but they do provide a means of measuring attitudes about healing and healing ministry.

#### Relationship of the Results to Published Studies

Arthur Luckey, in *Preparing the Local Church for a Healing Ministry*, studied congregational healing attitudes from the perspective of introducing healing ministry through Sunday school classes. Luckey found the Sunday school class a significant means of introducing healing ministry. The difference between this study and the Lucky work is this study utilized an eight-week sermon series as a means of introducing healing and healing ministry.

Many authors cited in this study call for returning healing and healing ministry to a place of priority in church life (Churchill, Deere, Gordon, Kelsey, MacNutt, Murray, Ogilvie, Payne, Simpson, Stanger, Wagner, and Wimber). This study provides a possible framework for bringing healing and healing ministry into the mainstream of church life.



### Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are classified under six general headings: The research design used; the limited scope of the study; weaker results due to non-pairing of survey respondents from pre-test to post-test; the nature of healing attitudes before the study began; the illness and death of my father; and my relationship to the congregation.

This study used a pre-post one-group design. This design, while useful for initial investigations cannot establish causality. There are always events (such as my father's illness and death) which threaten the internal validity of the study. I have attempted to compensate for some of these factors by describing them as fully as possible.

Nevertheless, without a contrast group it is difficult to establish causality.

This study was limited in scope to a predominately middle class, mostly Caucasian, theologically conservative, Free Methodist congregation in Seattle, Washington.

Researchers using the survey instrument on other congregations may find different results from mine.

The non-pairing of survey respondents from pre-test to post-test in the statistical analysis made for less powerful results. Concerns related to confidentiality of respondents on the part of church leadership led to the decision not to include any means of identification from pre-test to post-test. However, I did use appropriate statistical tools and was able to include all responses which partially make up for the lack of power.

Another limitation of this study was that the general healing attitudes were already positive as shown in the pre-test. The pre-test showed the congregation had already taken the position I advocated in the eight sermons of the healing series. That these attitudes were significantly more positive on the post-test encouraged me. However, the fact that

respondents were already positive is a limitation. If a minister were preaching sermons contrary to congregational attitudes, the results might be different.

The illness and death of my father may be another limitation of this study. While it is unclear how this circumstance impacted study results, it is possible persons responding to the post-test felt sympathy and responded on their surveys to please me rather than giving their true feelings. It is also possible that the profound Christian witness and unshakable faith in healing of my dad had a positive impact on the respondents' attitude toward healing. I acknowledge this as one of the unknown factors of the study and therefore a possible limitation.

One last limitation may be my relationship to the congregation itself. I am in the eighth year of a positive relationship with my congregation. The congregation has grown, staff have been added, and financial stability has improved. This congregation has also supported me financially and provided time off over the last five years in the Doctor of Ministry program. They are vested emotionally and financially in my success.

#### Unexpected Findings Observed and Conclusions Regarding These Findings

The first unexpected finding of the study was that the attitude of the congregation regarding healing and healing ministry was already positive as indicated by the pre-test. I expected attitudes to be more neutral on the pre-test since I had conducted minimal teaching or preaching in recent years on the subject of healing or healing ministry. This finding leads me to conclude the congregation was already in favor of healing and healing ministry. This may be due to the fact that I have offered a few opportunities for individuals to be anointed during my tenure with this congregation. But these opportunities for anointing were only for serious medical cases and were not coupled

with any preaching or teaching about the issue. Another explanation for this finding may be the prior experience of respondents with healing and healing issues before participation in the study.

A second unexpected finding of this study was the lack of significance in the demographic data from pre-test to post-test. I expected, for example, individuals with an Assembly of God denominational background to be more open to healing and healing ministry than, say, Baptists, but this was not the case. These results (or lack of results) lead to the conclusion the pre-test and post-test groups were very similar.

A third unexpected finding of the study was the openness to establishing healing and healing ministry by the congregation. I was concerned if eight sermons over eight consecutive weeks on healing and healing ministry would be excessive. I feared this much focus on healing over so brief a time would move people away from interest in ongoing involvement in healing ministry. This was not the case. I found significance from pre-test to post-test in both the general healing attitudes of the congregation and openness to establishing ongoing healing ministry. My conclusion is that the congregation appreciated the healing sermons and were open to ongoing involvement in healing and healing ministry. Furthermore, it could be concluded I may have neglected the area of healing and healing ministry in my preaching and the congregation was responding to this oversight.

Another unexpected finding of the study were those individuals who made first time decisions to trust Jesus Christ as Savior during each of the anointing services. I did not specifically invite people who wanted to receive Jesus Christ to come forward during the

first anointing (following sermon four) service. However, two individuals responded and asked the prayer team how they could commit themselves to Jesus Christ.

At the second anointing service (following sermon eight), I did invite those who wanted to commit their life to Jesus Christ to come forward. Again, two individuals responded. The prayer teams were able to lead all four of these individuals to faith in Christ.

The conclusion regarding this unexpected result of the healing messages is that the Holy Spirit was working in the lives of individuals in the congregation. Since a restored relationship to God through faith in Jesus Christ is the greatest healing miracle, the response of these four individuals serves as an unexpected blessing.

Finally, one other result of this study involved the healing of some who were anointed. I was hopeful this would happen but was not sure how God would choose to respond in this situation. Among the results of which I am aware and was given permission to share were the following: One individual told of emotional healing from an abusive and traumatic childhood; another person reported God's healing touch to a serious injury on her shoulder; my father, anointed at the first anointing service, reported God's healing of his spirit and new peace as he faced a terminal illness; a young person in the congregation related her healing from fears associated with a difficult family circumstance; the four persons mentioned above who came to faith in Christ; and one other individual who did not come forward for anointing, reported God's touch related to an emotional need as he was sitting watching others being anointed at the altar.

Conclusions regarding these healings reinforce my hope that this study and the eight sermons preached would not be seen as an academic exercise for the congregation. I hoped the congregation would benefit from the experience; this indeed happened.

### Speculation About Further Studies

The results of this study indicate further research is needed where a congregation holds attitudes contrary to positions advocated by a minister during a sermon series. As reported previously, respondents to this study were already positive about healing and healing ministry at the time of the pre-test. While there was a positive shift in attitudes from pre-test to post-test, the congregation and I began the study on the same side of the ledger. An important extension of this study would evaluate the preaching of a series of messages contrary to attitudes of the congregation. The investigation of a wider range of attitudinal change based on hearing a series of sermons would be the next step in this research.

One other area of further work suggested by the results of this study would be to link together Jesus' three priorities (teaching, preaching, and healing) from Matthew 4:23. While this study connected the role of preaching and healing, additional research might include teaching and teaching ministry. A model combining teaching, preaching, and healing would be of benefit to the church.

### Practical Applications of the Findings

Among the important applications regarding the findings are the following:

(1) **God desires to see people made whole:** The core of this study is God's desire to see people whole. The scriptures teach that God delights in meeting the needs of the human family as those needs are brought to God. Jesus modeled the desire to meet

people's spiritual, emotional, and physical needs; the church of Jesus must model this same desire to see people made whole through healing ministry.

(2) **God is in control:** While we know God desires to see people whole we also know God's ways are not our ways. We know God heals but we also know God chooses not to heal. I received comments about each of the eight messages but received the most comments about the fifth message (*The Pain and Promises When Healing Does Not Come*). People must understand that while God does not always choose to heal or does not heal in a manner we immediately recognize God always gives grace to help us in our time of need. This study sought to bring a biblical balance to this important dichotomy.

(3) **Healing ministry can be taught:** This study provided a means for one congregation to be taught healing and healing ministry. The eight sermons preached for this study laid out the basic biblical foundation from the Old Testament, from the ministry of Jesus, and from the ministry of the Apostles. I observed the congregation's responsiveness to these messages as they expressed their appreciation for this teaching.

(4) **Preaching can change attitudes:** The results of this study suggest the value of preaching in changing the attitudes of a congregation. This contribution may be one of the most important findings for the church at large. Preaching is important. Preaching can change perceptions about controversial issues. Preaching is a valuable way of communicating truth. Preaching works.

(5) **God is good:** God was faithful during the time of this study. The positive impact on me and the congregation continues. Even the death of my father was an experience that deeply touched the congregation. My family and I were ministered to in

new and significant ways by the congregation. This healing came from the congregation in the midst of learning about healing.

(6) **Healing ministry will continue:** The Lakeview Free Methodist in Seattle, Washington, will continue to offer opportunities for people to be anointed for healing, not because I wrote a dissertation related to healing ministry but because God calls the church to meet people's needs in this important way.

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**Healing Series #1****A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE ON HEALING MINISTRY****John 20:30-31 (pg. 1053 in the pew Bible)****October 5, 1997**

Introduction: This morning we begin an exciting journey together. I want to thank you for filling out the questionnaire last week. I have been looking at your responses closely. The issues the survey raised are the issues I will be dealing with in this series of messages. I invite you to join me in praying God will work in each of our lives during this time as we have the opportunity to study healing and the place of healing ministry in our church.

Open your Bibles to John 20:30-31.

Notice five principles related to healing ministry that serve as the basis for these eight messages:

**1. Healing is taught in the scriptures and modeled in Jesus' ministry.** In Jesus' public ministry we see three clear priorities. Preaching--to the crowds coming after him. Teaching--to his disciples, in the synagogues, and to small groups of people. Healing--we find many references where Jesus touched people to meet their physical, spiritual, and emotional needs.

The clearest reference in the scriptures to this three-fold priority of Jesus' ministry is found in Matthew 4:23 "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people."

What does our text tell us? "Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples which are not recorded in this book." Jesus was about the miraculous during his earthly ministry.

**2. The church must model Jesus' priorities.** The call to follow Jesus is a call to do the things that Jesus did. Because healing the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of people was important to Jesus, it must also be important to us.

The greatest miracle is the gift of salvation offered to each of us. Notice what John says about the purpose of the miraculous? It is to attract people to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**3. Healing and healing ministry is a source of confusion today.** In all of the reading and study about healing that I have done over the last two years, one issue is crystal clear; people are unclear about both the place and priority of healing and healing ministry in the church.

I am praying that through this series of messages God will help us to sort out any confusion that exists. I am also praying for a spirit of unity in our congregation as we



learn together. I am amazed as I watch some of the things that I see on Christian television related to healing and healing ministry.

I don't want what I am about to say to sound judgmental, but much of what is seen on TV related to healing appears to be so flashy, flamboyant, loud and raucous.

This brings us to an important question. How can we tell the real from the counterfeit? I asked this question to my friend and mentor Dr. Donald Demaray. Dr. Demaray, who spoke here at our church several years ago, is involved in healing and healing ministry. This is what Dr. Don said: "The way that you can tell the real from the counterfeit in healing ministry is by one simple test: Who is being lifted up? Is this about lifting up Jesus or is about some other agenda? Making money? Making a big name for someone?" I like the simplicity and yet the profundity of Dr. Demaray's answer. Who is being lifted up?

One Biblical illustration of this principle is the sin that caused God to scatter the people at the tower of Babel in Genesis 11. Genesis 11:4 "Come let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves . . ." It is so dangerous when we try to make a name for ourselves but that is what seems to be happening in some quarters of the church today.

**4. We will never fully understand God's ways.** "Life is tough, but God is good." It is important to remember that we will never understand why some people are healed and why others are not. I have thought to myself, why even pray when we don't know for sure that someone will be healed. Think about that same argument in terms of praying for someone's salvation. We pray for people for years without knowing if they will come to faith in Jesus Christ. We must pray for people to be healed even though we do not know what God will choose to do.

**5. God desires to meet people's needs.** The scriptures are full of promises about God meeting the needs of people who seek him. It is hard for us to understand why at times God chooses to respond and bring healing and at other times God seems not to respond. We must understand that God desires to meet the needs of God's people. We must admit that across the span of our lives we will have broken places that need mending.

I like what Bruce Larson said about health and healing: "There is a lot more to health than not being sick." It may be that the greatest single thing God could do in our lives right now is to touch us at the point of some deep emotional wound that continues to hurt us.

In the text from John's gospel that I read a few minutes ago, John talks about finding life in Jesus Christ. That is a very significant revelation. Jesus came to bring us life.

I am very pleased that on this first Sunday of this series of messages on healing we will have the opportunity to share the Lord's supper together. It is because of Jesus' shed blood on the cross that we have the promise of finding help and healing.

God writes the final chapter. My dissertation starts with the story of my dad's healing from polio in 1952. Many of you know that my dad is battling cancer right now and I want you to know he is not doing well right now. He is very frail and weak because of radiation treatments that he has received over the last 10 days. I don't understand why dad is suffering, but I know that God is giving my parents grace and strength to cope with this difficult time.

So as we begin our journey together, I know God is good. I know God desires to meet you at the point of your need, whatever it may be. During these moments of quiet as Communion is served, would you pray and meditate in regard to the following:

- (1) Your openness to God's Spirit during these messages on healing.
- (2) Any broken or wounded places in your physical, spiritual, or emotional life that need God's healing touch.

**Healing Series #2****THE PLACE OF HEALING IN THE OLD TESTAMENT****II Kings 5:1-14 (pg. 359 in the pew Bible)****October 12, 1997**

Introduction: We began last week talking about healing and healing ministry. Remember, we saw that Jesus, in his ministry, lived out three priorities: preaching, teaching, and healing.

But what about healing in the Old Testament? What is the biblical record related to healing before Jesus? The story of Naaman will help to answer these important questions. This story contains important truth about the way God works in our lives today.

Open your Bibles to II Kings 5:1-14.

**1. God worked in the one area outside of Naaman's span of control:** Isn't it interesting to see what the scriptures tell us about this man Naaman: --He was a commander of the army of King of Aram. --He was a great man in the sight of his master. --He was highly regarded because through him God had given a great victory to Aram. --He was a valiant soldier.

If ever there was a take charge kind of person it was Naaman. I suspect he was accustomed to having people say "how high" when he yelled "jump". Naaman understood the chain of command and was clearly a man under authority. Naaman had great power!

BUT he had leprosy! With all Naaman had going for him, he was not spared this terrible skin disease. We are not sure about the specific nature of this leprosy, but we do know this disease may have been the only aspect of Naaman's life he was unable to control. We do not know why Naaman had this disease, but we do know God was able to use Naaman in spite of his problem.

What an important spiritual principle! God seems to work best in those areas that are outside our span of control. Do you have anything in your life outside your control? I hope you do, because God can do great and mighty things with surrendered folks like us who know our own limitations. If we are in control, we may have no need for God's help, God's power, or God's healing touch.

A physical problem was the area in Naaman's life he could not control. Perhaps the area of your life you feel most unable to handle is the area needing God's touch right now.

**2. God uses an unlikely cast of characters to minister to Naaman:** Isn't it ironic that the healing of the Commander of the army of Aram is facilitated by a young servant girl who is not afraid to speak a word of hope to her mistress. We see throughout the scriptures that God uses unlikely people to do God's work.

Notice the word of hope the young servant girl utters to her mistress in verse 3 of our text: "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of leprosy."

So Naaman goes to the King of Aram who gives him a letter of introduction to the King of Israel. But the King of Israel misunderstands the intent of the letter and responds by saying, "Am I God? I think he is trying to pick a quarrel with me."

Elisha hears about the situation. Eventually Naaman ends up at Elisha's house. But the prophet does not even come out to see him. He just gives these simple instructions recorded in verse 10: "Go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

Let's summarize the cast of characters and God's plan: brave servant girl, fearful King of Israel, absentee prophet, and the seven-fold dip in the Jordan river. This was what God was going to use to bring about Naaman's healing? You have got to be kidding! No! God's healing power is not about anything other than God getting the glory and people being pointed to God.

**3. God got the glory despite Naaman's preconceived notions:** Did you notice the small honorarium Naaman takes along to the prophet? Verse 5: 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets clothing. In Naaman's world this was the way difficult situations were dealt with.

Naaman is angry at not seeing Elisha and goes off in a rage. Naaman had it all figured out. He already knew what he wanted Elisha to do. When it doesn't work out like he had planned, he is angry. Naaman may have been thinking about the clear clean waters in Damascus and is sickened about dipping in the muddy Jordan. Not just one dip, but seven! But his servants speak up and remind him, "What do you have to lose"? And sure enough, he is healed.

#### Summary principles:

1. Beware of thinking in advance that you know how God will work. Our God is so creative. And he knows just what you need. God loves surprises! What is the "muddy Jordan" in your life today?
2. This miracle was both physical and spiritual. Verse 10: The servant goes back to Naaman and says ". . . your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed." Jesus continued to model concern for both physical and spiritual needs of people he healed. Notice what Naaman says in verse 15: "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel."
3. God may choose some unlikely people and some unusual means to minister to you.
4. Healing ministry is modeled in the Old Testament.
5. God is pleased when we look beyond our own circumstances to the "possible greater glory."

### Healing Series #3

## THE PRIORITY OF HEALING IN JESUS' MINISTRY

Matthew 4:23-25 (pg. 936 in the pew Bible)

October 18, 1997

Introduction: We are called to model what Jesus did during the time of his earthly ministry. This sounds so basic. But, in fact, we must study closely the priorities of Jesus in order to live out his example in our own lives and in the life of our church.

Open your Bibles to Matthew 4:23-25.

This text contains one of the clearest summaries of Jesus' activities found in the Gospels. According to Matthew, what was Jesus doing?

1. **Teaching in the synagogue.** The center of religious life in each Jewish community was the synagogue. It was the most important institution in their life and the primary center of education. Wherever there was a Jewish community there was a synagogue. If anyone had ideas to share, the synagogue was the place to begin. So Jesus went to the synagogue with his message. He did not hide in some obscure corner. Rather, he went to the center of religious life of the day, the local synagogue.

The structure of the synagogue service gave Jesus the privilege of speaking. In addition to times of prayer and the readings of the Law and the prophets, there was a third aspect of their service. Individuals had the opportunity of addressing the assembly, followed by an opportunity for discussion. Jesus used this open door to talk about the Kingdom of God.

2. **Preaching the good news of the kingdom.** Jesus' strategy was to tour Galilee and take the message of the Kingdom of God to the people. He wasn't just in the synagogues. He was out where people were. Jesus' ministry was focused on being able to let people know that a new day had come. The wait for the Messiah was over!

Do you remember what Jesus said about himself when he went to the synagogue in Nazareth? He unrolled the scroll of the Prophet Isaiah and read from the 61st chapter: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

There was no doubt that the course of human history would not be the same. The wait was over. The Kingdom of God had come.

**3. Healing every disease and sickness among the people.** Teaching and preaching were not the only important parts of Jesus' ministry. Healing was just as important. Look at what our text says "every disease and sickness among the people!"

Vs. 24 says that they also brought to him "those suffering with severe pain, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics and he healed them." Let that sink in for just a minute! Nothing was outside Jesus' ability to handle! No problem was too great! No illness was too serious! No prognosis was too bleak! No one was too far gone! Praise God!

He not only preached and taught, but his ministry was one of restoring people to wholeness. This man, who preached radical change, who announced the Kingdom, was performing deeds of mercy. He healed and restored common people to wholeness. No wonder large crowds followed him. Matthew concludes this section to show how popular the ministry of Jesus actually was. We read in verse 25 that great multitudes followed Him from Galilee, from Decapolis, from the free Greek cities across the Sea of Galilee (largely Gentile), from Jerusalem and Judea, and from the region across the Jordan. Jesus attracted people from all over the land of Palestine both to learn from Him and to be healed by him.

Now think with me about these priorities and the way that they are lived out in the church today. We are clear about the place of teaching. It is an important function of the church today. Preaching is certainly a vital part of worship in the 20th century evangelical church. But what about healing? How does healing fit it with these other two priorities?

The questions that we are asking ourselves during this series of messages are: How does healing fit in as a priority of the church? And, are we modeling what Jesus did during his earthly ministry?

Let me give you an important principle that will begin to help us answer these questions:

**We must commit to live out the priorities of Jesus.** We need to be aware of two positions as we think about healing ministry.

One position is the extreme that healing is the be-all and end-all of the church as demonstrated by the practices of some of our brothers and sisters in the charismatic family of believers. Some of the reaction in churches against healing and healing ministry can be traced back to an undue overemphasis of healing on the part of others in the family of God.

The other extreme is to say that healing is not valid for today, that healing ministry was just for the establishment of the New Testament church. One of the books that helped me in this regard is *Empowered Evangelicals* by Rich Nathan and Ken Wilson.

Listen to what Nathan and Wilson say about coming together: "When it comes to exercising faith, we need to learn from the best of conservative evangelical and charismatic worlds. We need the witness of charismatics who remind us that it is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom and that we have an active role in receiving the kingdom. And we need the reminder from evangelicals to keep first things first: to remember that God has always been, and ever will be, God, that we can only receive what he actually gives us, and that he is ultimately in control of the process. It is only as we learn from the experience of evangelicals and charismatics that we can approach God with an expectant faith that moves beyond fatalism, without falling into presumption" (131).

The Dictionary of Pastoral Care defines healing as "The process of being restored to bodily wholeness, emotional well being, mental functioning, and spiritual aliveness. Christian modes of healing have always distinguished themselves by achieving a spiritual advance in connection with the healing process. Healing may also refer to the process of reconciling broken relationships."

This definition is what Jesus was about: restoring bodily wholeness, emotional well being, mental functioning and spiritual aliveness, as well as reconciling broken relationships.

One of the important things I have learned about how God works in our lives is that something always happens when we ask people to pray for us. God honors our response of obedience and meets us at the healing altar.

In the service next Sunday we will be offering an opportunity for people to be anointed for healing. Would you pray this week for God's gentle holy presence as we come together next Sunday?

**Healing Series #4****THE PRACTICE OF HEALING IN JESUS' MINISTRY****John 11:17-44 (pg. 1041 in the pew Bible)****October 26, 1997**

What a joy it is for our family to have my parents here this morning. On behalf of our family, I want thank you for the way you have all been standing with us during this time of Dad's illness. Your support and love mean so much to us. In this passage Dad read from John's Gospel we see an incredible miracle take place. I invite you to open your hearts as we examine some important elements of this story.

Open your Bibles to John 11:17-44.

**1. See the preoccupation of Jesus:** The home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus was a place where Jesus was able to relax. We know these three were very special friends of Jesus and Jesus loved them. The home these three shared in Bethany was a place where Jesus could de-compress from the strain and pull of the crowds.

So it seems all the more strange that Jesus would wait to go when he hears that his good friend Lazarus is sick. In fact, we know that by the time Jesus gets to Bethany, Lazarus had been dead and in the tomb for four days.

Why would Jesus wait when he hears that his friend is very sick? Why didn't Jesus immediately go to Bethany? We have a clue from our text. John 11:4: "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified."

How do we handle it when we think God has not shown up? Perhaps another way to understand this question is to acknowledge that one of the toughest times on the road of faith is when we have prayed, believed, and asked, and yet nothing seems to happen.

Look at verses 21, 32 & 37. This is the great "if only" that we are called to understand at times in our lives. "If only Lord . . ." Have you been at some "if only" places in your life?

Mary and Martha are upset when Jesus does finally arrive. Written between every line of Mary's and Martha's words and every comment of those standing around is the painful reality that God did not show up when they thought he should and now Lazarus is dead. "If only Lord . . . ."

God's timing and our sense of timing can become a place of frustration and hurt for us. It certainly was for Mary and Martha.



**2. Feel the pain of those who loved Lazarus:** This was a great loss for Mary and Martha. There is great pain associated with the death of someone we love. It is a very real part of life and something we have to learn all too quickly.

So we understand the pain and grief these two sisters experienced in the death of their brother. But how do you explain Jesus' reaction? Look at verses 33-35. Jesus knew that this experience would not end in death.

He knew that in just a few moments Lazarus would be alive again. But Jesus weeps. Why is that?

--I think it was to validate our pain. Our grief and struggle are important

--I know that it was out of a heart of compassion that Jesus grieves with his friends. His heart was breaking for his friends. That says so much to us, doesn't it!

Jesus' tears are the first step in the miracle just about to take place. The questions that face us this morning are: Where are the hurting broken places in our lives? Are we quick to acknowledge them? When was the last time you had a good cry about someone else's pain? When was the last time you had a good cry about the wounded broken places in your own life?

**3. Stand back and ponder what Jesus does:** Look at vs. 38 and 39. Good old Martha, always so practical and always the realist. Isn't it great to have people around who remind us of the way things really are? "Lord he has been in the tomb for four days. I don't think you really want to take the stone away, do you?" He stinkith!!

Martha was right on top of a great miracle and she does not get it. "Hello Martha, don't you see what Jesus wants to do here."

Then Jesus talks to the Father about all this. Verses 41 and 42. There was always a greater purpose to what Jesus was about. What is the "so that" of this great miracle: "That they may believe that the Father had sent Jesus."

Verse 43: "When he had said this, Jesus called out in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen and a cloth around his face."

What a great miracle!! Is there any situation or circumstance in our lives today needing new life and fresh vitality?

There is a fourth important element to this miracle that we must not miss.

**4. Hear the call to partnership Jesus makes:** What does Jesus say in the 44 verse of this text? "Jesus said to them." "Jesus said to them." "Jesus said to them." This says to us that the community of faith has a part of play in the healing and wholeness God wants to bring to my life and to yours. They did something that Lazarus could not do for himself.

Thus we are called to help and pray for and support. But do you know the only way that can happen? If we allow others to help and support and pray for us.

I heard this week about something that happened with a family in our church. I was so touched by what I heard that I called them to ask if I could share the story with you. The three kids in the family were all up on time and were ready for school, but they missed the bus because they were playing outside. Do you know what the parents did to help the children see the need to pay attention to an important responsibility like being on time to catch the bus? They made them walk to school. But do you know what else the parents did? The dad said, "You walk to school. But I am going to follow you all the way in the car to make sure you are o.k. and that you get there safely.

God may not remove us from the pain, but he promises to be with us every step of the way and he gives us people to help us at the point of our need.

Take out the insert from your worship folder.

### **Why offer opportunities for people to be anointed for healing?**

Out of obedience: "Is any of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call for the Elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." (James 5:13-16)

Following Jesus' example: "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in the their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people." (Matthew 4:23)

Jesus said, "Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do, and greater works than these will they do." (John 14:12)

Because of the broken places in our lives that need God's healing touch: "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those that are crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18)

### **Healing for what?**

Healing can be for physical, emotional, or spiritual pain. "There is a lot more to health than not being sick!" (Bruce Larson)

If you would like to be anointed for healing, write your need(s) in the space provided at the bottom of the insert so that those at the altar will know how best to pray for you.

As you see someone come forward to be anointed, would you pray for them. Let's allow God's Spirit to be at work among us today.

**Healing Sermon #5****THE PAIN AND PROMISES WHEN HEALING DOES NOT COME****II Corinthians 12:7-10 (pg. 1126 in the pew Bible)****November 2, 1997**

Introduction: We want to thank the Lord for the wonderful service last Sunday. A number came forward to be anointed for healing and there was a wonderful sense of God's gentle presence as we were in worship together. But what happens when either we or people we have been praying for are not healed?

Two experiences were in my mind as I have been working on this message:

1. A conversation I had after last week's service about someone who is dying of cancer and who has not been healed.
2. On Friday morning I got a call that my dad was hospitalized in Olympia. I drove to Olympia on Friday afternoon and spent several hours with my dad. We had a great visit and talked about a number of issues associated with his cancer.

So with this background I invite you to open your mind and heart to the ministry of the Holy Spirit as we open God's Word together.

Open your Bibles to II Corinthians 12:7-10.

Let's think about some principles this text brings to light.

**1. Healing is God's domain:** This is so basic, but we must begin with the understanding that not everyone we pray for will be healed. Healing is not something we can or should demand from God. Physical healing is not about us. Physical healing is about a God who delights to meet the needs of people. But we will never know or fully understand why one person is healed and another is not.

Virginia Birby was her name and I recall, as a Jr. high school student, going with my dad to see her in her home several weeks before she died of cancer. In the car, on the way home, I began to quiz my dad about why God would not want to heal Mrs. Birby.

We are on very dangerous ground when we try to speculate about God's activity in someone else's life. One of the most destructive things that can be said to someone who has not been healed is: "You must not have had enough faith." If healing is totally related to our faith, then healing becomes part of the human domain and God's sovereignty is removed.

Look at what the text says in verse 8: "Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it from me."

If healing was somehow based on our merits, it is clear the apostle Paul would have been at the front of the line. But even though he pleaded with God for healing, Paul was not healed.

**2. Healing involves the total person:** We tend to think of healing as just having some physical need met but this is not the case. In Jesus' ministry we see Jesus addressing the whole person: the spiritual, the emotional/relational, and the physical. The question is not did God touch this person's physical need but rather the question is did God minister to this person.

You may have noticed that last Sunday, here at the altar, I had the privilege of praying for my parents and anointing my dad for healing. Do you know what God did? God touched my dad spiritually? I got a card from him this week. He said he was revived spiritually and felt a fresh sense of God's presence for the days ahead. In talking with him at the hospital on Friday, he mentioned he has not gotten over the fact that God touched his spirit in such a wonderful way.

Do you know how many times dad has been anointed for healing in the last 18 months since being diagnosed with cancer? Seven times. By his own testimony God has touched him in some way each time.

While on vacation, Melanie and I found a plaque entitled *Cancer Is So Limited*. We gave it to my parents and it hangs in their bedroom.

"Cancer is so limited. It cannot cripple love. It cannot shatter hope. It cannot erode faith. It cannot take away peace. It cannot destroy confidence. It cannot kill friendship. It cannot shut out memories. It cannot silence courage. It cannot invade the soul. It cannot reduce eternal life. It cannot quench the Holy Spirit. It cannot lessen the power of the resurrection" -Author unknown.

**3. Healing comes through God's grace:** Look at what the Lord says to Paul. Verse 9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." God reminds Paul that grace compensates for thorns. Even though Paul wanted to be healed, he wanted more to be used by God.

There is no illness, no problem, no circumstance, no relationship, no estrangement, no sin, and no heartache outside God's ability to give us grace to get through. Isn't it interesting that, in spite of all the credits Paul has going for him, it took this problem to help him see God wanted to have glory in an area Paul could not glory in. Verse 10: "That is why for Christ's sake I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecution, in difficulties. For when I am weak then I am strong."

When I am weak, then I am strong! What an important principle of the Christian life! How contrary to everything we have learned about getting along in this world.

A thorn is something thrust upon us that we must learn to deal with. Any thorns here today? I hope there are many thorns here today because it is one way God receives glory. He receives glory through things we would not like to glory in.

Notice Paul reflects on the way God worked in this situation. Verse 9: "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." We don't want anyone to know about our weaknesses. But guess what? They already know! But Paul says, "I will boast about my weaknesses."

Boasting about weaknesses! Paul is talking about the opportunity to minister to others as a result of some rough spot we are going through.

How can we remain faithful when healing does not come?

1. By continuing to be faithful in prayer.
2. By knowing God always gives grace.
3. By surrendering our thorns.
4. By remembering when we are weak then we are strong.

Communion at the altar this morning: Anything you need to leave at the altar as you come or anything you need to settle while you are here?

**Healing Series #6****THE PROMINANCE OF HEALING IN THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES****Acts 3:1-10; 5:12-16 (pgs. 1057 & 1060 in the pew Bible)****November 9, 1997**

Introduction: Over these last weeks we have been studying healing and healing ministry. Remember, we have seen healing demonstrated in the Old Testament, in the Jesus' earthly ministry, and now we come to the book of Acts. We will see healing ministry in the lives of the Apostles.

We will examine several different perspectives to help us see the full picture of this scene:

**1. Note this man's desperate condition:** What does the text tell us about him? He had been crippled from birth. He had to be carried to the gate every day to beg from the people going to the temple. He found a great spot, but he needed help getting there. It must have been that people were more generous on the way to the temple. We know from Acts 4:22 that he was over 40 years old at the time of this incident.

Over 40 years of not being able to walk! By this time, he had come to believe that not being able to walk was his lot in life. It must have been hard to think his situation would ever change.

Look at the contrast here. This helpless, hopeless invalid is begging at the temple gate called "beautiful." Josephus, the historian, said the exquisite quality of this gate "far exceeded in value those gates that were plated with silver and set with gold." The poor man and the beautiful gate.

**2. Observe Peter and John's desire to give new life:** Here are Peter and John on the way to the Temple to pray at about 3:00 in the afternoon. Notice, they are still going to the Temple to pray. It is interesting to note the apostles kept this custom of going to the Temple to pray even after the resurrection. William Barclay says: "A new faith had come to them but they did not use that as an excuse for a license which broke all law. They were aware that the new faith and old discipline could walk hand in hand."

Don't miss what happens here. They walk by. The beggar asks them for money. But notice, he was not looking at them. This man knew people were uncomfortable looking him right in the eye.

Times haven't changed that much! Several weeks ago Melissa and I were coming home from McDonalds on Northgate Way. At the stop light in front of the Mall, a woman was standing with one of those signs: "Need food." We happened to stop right in front of her. I felt a bit awkward, so I tried to say something spiritual about how many people in Seattle are in need and it is hard to know what to do. But guess what Melissa said? "Dad, can I give her my cheeseburger?" I said, "Sure honey." We pulled into the parking

lot and Melissa gave the woman her cheeseburger. I was trying to philosophize and my daughter saw what she could do to meet a need.

Peter and John see what needs to happen. Look at what Peter says to this man in verses 6 and 7: "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helps him up and instantly the man's feet and ankles become strong.

Luke uses a Greek medical term here that helps us understand what happened. It is as if all at once (instantly) the bones and muscles are knit back together. His legs would have been atrophied and the bones would have stopped growing, but all at once this process is reversed by a healing miracle through the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

**3. Experience the joyful reaction of everyone involved:** Verse 8: "Walking, jumping, and praising God." But the reaction was not just from the man healed. Verse 9: "When the people saw him walking and praising God they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him."

What an amazing scene! What a miraculous scene! "Can this be the same man who is always at the gate begging?" "It looks like him, but he is walking and running and praising God."

**What does this passage teach us about God's healing power?**

**a. Healing is not about the personality or power of the people involved:** Acts 3:11 tells us that as the word spread people came running to see the man who had been healed by God's power. This gives Peter and John a great opportunity to witness.

Look at verses 12 and 16: "Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we made this man walk? . . . By faith in the name of Jesus, this man you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him as you all can see."

Isn't it great Peter and John give all of the glory to God. Peter does not mince words, but lays out the message of the Gospel with clarity and boldness.

**b. Open eyes saw this man in need:** It took the willingness on the part of Peter and John to see this man in need and to risk looking foolish. Are we able to see people in need around us who need God's healing touch?

**c. Wholeness is a priority in the scriptures:** We saw people touched by God's healing power in the Old Testament, we saw healing as one of the top three priorities of Jesus, and now we see healing in this example from the early church. In Acts 5:12-16 we see that the Apostles healed many.

**Two questions for you to think about this week:**

1. What are the paralyzed places in your life that need God's healing touch?
2. Who are the people who need you to help them find wholeness?



**Healing Series #7****THE PROMISE OF HEALING IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH****James 5:13-18 (pg. 1175 in the pew Bible)****November 16, 1997**

We have been thinking over these last weeks about the role of healing in the church. Next Sunday will be the last message in this series. I want to direct your attention to the passage from James 5 that Clark read a few minutes ago. This text has some wonderful truth for us and I invite you to open yourself to the ministry of the Holy Spirit as we learn together.

In studying this week, I have come to understand that, if taken seriously, James has laid down a way of responding to the events of life that can be very rewarding. Look at the text.

**1. Consider what you have:**

Verses 13-16: “Is any one of you in trouble? They should pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? They should call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned they will be forgiven.”

Three truths from the first three verses:

a. You are not alone on the journey of life: Living in isolation is a choice that we make. Christian faith is based on the premise that we have been called into a relationship. This is a relationship where we are invited to be in fellowship with the One who created all that we are and all that we can become. This is a relationship where we see again and again that we must pour out our hearts to God. When we are in trouble! When we are happy! When we are at the in-between times of life. Our perspective must be God-directed in all of life. That is so easy to say and so hard to do. As Thomas Howard has stated, success in the Christian life depends on our ability to see God in the everyday circumstances of life and "to find splendor in the ordinary." Let this truth burrow down deep in the very center of who you are: You are not alone.

b. You have the community of faith to support you: James wants us to know that healing in our lives frequently comes as we open ourselves to others. Again, although this is so basic to what it means to be “Christian,” it must be said again and again. The first step to healing is admitting that we have a need. We cannot expect to receive God’s healing touch until we admit that we are needy. We have talked about that before in this series. We must have needs in order to find healing and wholeness.

Isn’t it interesting that God did not prescribe some other means of healing in the lives of God’s people? God could have said, “What you need to do when you have a problem and need to have some type of physical, emotional, relational, or spiritual healing is to commence a 3 day fast. When that is over, I will respond and meet the need that you

have.” God doesn’t say that. God asks us to make the community of faith aware of our need and then give them permission to pray for us and anoint us. This is the way the scriptures tell us healing comes.

Let me stop at this point and say that, for some of us, this is the biggest obstacle to healing in our lives. Admitting that we are needy is tough, but it is essential to seeing God do a new work. We have been raised to be self-sufficient and to act as if we have it all together. To let people know we have needs seems to go against everything we stand for. Anyone relate to this? But the truth of this text is only lived out as we admit that we are in need of help. It is the ultimate in self-centeredness to think we can get along without the help of others on this wonderful and difficult journey of faith.

c. You have God’s promises to help you get through: I do not fully understand why some are healed and some are not. As we talked about two weeks ago, God always gives his grace and sometimes he heals. I mentioned my dad’s testimony that when he was anointed here in our service God touched him deeply. Is that any less a miracle than if God had healed his cancer? Part of the problem is that our perspective is so short-sided and so human.

Look at what verse 15 states: Faithful prayer brings healing and forgiveness. The greatest healing is the forgiveness of the human being who has been estranged from God. By accepting Jesus as their Savior, this person now comes into relationship with God.

Let’s be careful not to diminish the truth of this text. Let’s also be careful not to build our faith like a house of cards that comes tumbling down when we, or someone we love, are not healed in the way we think healing should occur.

See what you have: You are not alone on the journey of life. You have the community of faith to support you. You have God’s promises to get you through.

**2. Notice what to do:** Look at verse 16 “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man or woman is powerful and effective.”

Look at the progression here: Confession and prayer lead to healing. This is a fundamental principle in the Christian life. Confession and prayer lead to healing. And it isn’t just general confession but the text says, “confess your sins and pray so that you may be healed.”

There is great value in confession. Listen to these powerful verses related to confession:

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9

“Now make confessions to the Lord, the God of your Fathers, and do His will.” Ezra 10:11

“On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and having dust on their heads. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers.” Nehemiah 9:1-2

Notice that confession in James 5 is in the context of prayer. Confession is vital to the Christian. Living a life “grounded in confession” helps to prevent:

- a. A bitter spirit: It is so easy to develop a bitter spirit. Harboring a grudge against someone for something long since past is wrong. I was talking to a pastor friend several weeks ago and he was talking about two individuals in his congregation who have had a long standing fight over something that happened a number of years ago. One of the individuals has recently come to a new place in their Christian life where they were convicted about this problem and so they went to the other person to ask for forgiveness. But the other party said, “No, I can’t forgive you.”
- b. A hard heart: This can take place so slowly we may not even realize it is happening. Hardness of heart means that our heart is not broken over the things that break the heart of God. Do you know what grieves the heart of God? Lost people, the poor being mistreated, people turning to other gods.
- c. Worldliness: Worldliness is blurring the distinction of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. I am not talking about judging people by a set of external standards. I am talking about the subtle danger of allowing the world and the world’s agenda to dictate who belong to Christ.

### **3. Look at where to begin:**

- a. Admit that you are a person who cannot survive in isolation: When some of you hear this, you will say “so” because this is no big deal for you. That is not the case for all of us. That is a pretty basic step, isn’t it? But it is so important. Admitting you have needs leads to the second step.
- b. Confess your sins and your needs: God wants to do great things. He will if we allow him to help us at a point of weakness. If it is sin, ask for forgiveness. Several weeks ago, during our anointing service, we had several individuals pray to commit to trust Jesus Christ.
- c. Allow the community of faith to pray for you and anoint you for healing: That means that someone has to know what is going on in your life so that we can support and pray for you. If you have a specific emotional, spiritual, relational, or physical need, allow us to pray for you and anoint you with oil in the name of Jesus Christ. At the conclusion of the service next Sunday, we will be having another opportunity for you to come forward to be anointed for healing.

Conclusion: Verse 17 presents the example of Elijah? Why is that here? To confuse us? To help us see that with God impossible things can become reality. God will make a way when it seems there is no way.

**Healing Series #8****THE PERSONAL CALL FOR HEALING IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER****Hebrews 4:14-16 (pg. 1163 in the pew Bible)****November 23, 1997**

Introduction: Thank you for the support you have been for our family this week. We are being held up by the prayers of the family of God. Thinking about this final message on healing, the anointing time at the end of the service, and the very difficult week I have had, I am sustained by three bedrock truths:

1. The events of this week, my dad's death on Wednesday morning, and the fact that this is the last week in the healing series, did not take God by surprise. On the contrary, I choose to believe God knew I would be living out the truth of these messages I have been preaching.
2. One of my favorite books is the *Wounded Healer* by Father Henri Nouwen. Father Nouwen, in this wonderful little book relates that we minister best when we minister out of our own wounds and hurts. God can use us most effectively when we are hurt and broken. I confess I am feeling hurt and wounded today, but I want to talk with you about the truth of the Gospel as it provides help and hope in difficult heart-breaking circumstances.
3. My dad is in heaven and I do not grieve for him. The loss to our family is great, but Dad is with the Lord. With all this in mind and your knowing the events of my week, I want to open God's word and share again about God's healing power.

Open your Bibles to Hebrews 4:14-16.

How can we experience God's healing power?

**1. Look to Jesus:** Isn't this a wonderful truth! Look at what the text says. Verses 14 and 15: "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God . . . For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we have yet was without sin."

Look to Jesus when it seems life is giving away. Look to Jesus when you think the pain too great to bear. Look to Jesus when others let you down. Look to Jesus the Son of God. It is very dangerous to gain perspective from looking at others. We can really only see who we are in the light of who God is.

I wonder how people who do not have the community of faith can survive when they go through the kind of experiences our family has gone through. Many of you have been through the death of a loved one and you know the comfort God provides. Often the comfort God provides is through other people God sends to minister to us.

Tuesday evening Superintendent Joseph James and his wife Marilyn stopped by to see my parents and me. Marilyn sang the song "I Shall Know Him" and we sang some other hymns together. Dad was awake and told Joe how much he appreciated his work as our Conference Superintendent and how well he thought things were going in the Conference. The next morning at 11:05 a.m. Dad was ushered into God's presence. The memory of sitting around with the James and my parents will be with me forever. Joe and Marilyn James helped us see Jesus that Tuesday evening.

Last week when you prayed for Melanie and me, you were the very presence of Jesus to us. Little did we know how much we would need those prayers during the past week. You helped us see Jesus.

Look to Jesus!

**2. Hold on tight:** Verse 14b: Let us hold firmly to the faith we profess." Hold on tight to your relationship with God. Guard it closely. Don't allow anything to come between you and God. Our faith is not something we can lose like a set of car keys but it is possible to allow other things to creep in and displace our faith.

My dad loved the scriptures. During the day on Tuesday, I read him some of his favorite passages: Psalm 139: "O Lord you have searched me and you know me . . ." Isaiah 6: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne and exalted and the train of his robe filled the temple. . . ." Romans 8: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ . . ." John 14: "Let not your heart be troubled . . ."

As you might expect, I had a hard time reading those verses without weeping. I would stop when I was overwhelmed with emotion. When I did, Dad just put out his hand and took mine and went on, reciting from memory what I was unable to read.

So much of what I know about the Christian faith I know from my Dad, but faith is not a legacy that can be passed down from one generation to another. Faith in Jesus Christ must be experienced individually on our own.

Look to Jesus. Hold on tight.

**3. Approach with confidence:** Verse 16: "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Because of what Jesus did, we are invited to come into God's presence with confidence. Isn't that remarkable! Coming into God's presence with confidence! Look at what we are told will happen? We will receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Dear friends, this is why we can talk about God's healing power. We are invited to come into God's very presence so we can find mercy and grace.

I love what Max Lucado has written in *Sufficient Grace*: "You wonder why God doesn't heal you? He has healed you. If you are in Christ, you have a perfected soul and a perfected body. His plan is to give you the soul now and the body when you get home. He may choose to heal parts of your body before heaven. But if he doesn't, don't you still have a reason for gratitude? If he never gave you more than eternal life, could you ask for more than that? His grace is sufficient for gratitude" (137).

You have an insert containing some of the important truths we have learned over these last eight weeks about God's healing power:

- Wholeness is a priority in the Bible.
- Healing is demonstrated in Jesus' ministry as one of his top priorities.
- God loves to work in areas that are outside of our span of control.
- Inviting others to pray for us when we have physical, emotional, and/or spiritual needs and asking them to anoint us with oil in the name of the Lord follows an important Biblical command.
- God does not always heal because healing is God's domain. But God always gives grace to help us in our time of need.
- Healing is not about the personality or power of the person involved.
- Confession begins God's work in our lives.
- Because we want to follow the example of Jesus, the church today must provide regular opportunities for people to be anointed for healing.

### **Why offer opportunities for people to be anointed for healing?**

Out of obedience: "Is any of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call for the Elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." (James 5:13-16)

Following Jesus' example: "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people." (Matthew 4:23)

Jesus said, "Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do, and greater works than these will they do." (John 14:12)

Because of the broken places in our lives that need God's healing touch: "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those that are crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18)

**Healing for what?**

Healing can be for physical, emotional, or spiritual pain. "There is a lot more to health than not being sick!" (Bruce Larson)

If you would like to be anointed for healing, write you need(s) in the space provided at the bottom of the insert so that those at the altar will know how best to pray for you.

As you see someone come forward to be anointed, would you pray for them. Let's allow God's Spirit to be at work among us today.

Look to Jesus. Hold on tight. Approach with confidence.



## (Pre-Test)

**WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT HEALING?**

**Beginning next Sunday I will begin preaching a series of messages on healing. I am praying these sermons will impact each of us. It would help me a great deal if you would take a few moments to fill out the survey below and turn it in to the ushers when the offering plates are passed. If you do not wish to fill out the survey please also turn in the blank survey to the ushers. The responses of our congregation will help me as I preach these messages. Thank you! -Pastor Matt Whitehead**

**Please circle the answers that describe you:**      Sex: Male - Female

Age: Under 14   15-25   25-35   36-45   46-55   56-65   66-75   76-85   86-95

**How long have you attended Lakeview Church:**

Less than 1 year   2-5 years   6-10 years   11-20 years   21-30 years   Over 30 years

**My denominational/church background could best be described as:**

Assemblies of God   Baptist   Catholic   Episcopal   Free Methodist   Lutheran  
Methodist   Non-Denominational   Presbyterian   Wesleyan   None   Other \_\_\_\_\_

**I have been anointed for healing - Yes or No**

**I have experienced a life threatening illness - Yes or No**

**Someone in my family has experienced a life threatening illness - Yes or No**

**After each question circle only one response:**

**1. Prayer chain topics too often focus on physical problems.**

Agree strongly   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Disagree strongly

**2. Healing ministry should be left to Pentecostal churches.**

Agree strongly   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Disagree strongly

**3. One of Jesus' top priorities was healing ministry.**

Agree strongly   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Disagree strongly

**4. Evangelism and conversion should be the primary emphases of the church, rather than healing.**

Agree strongly   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Disagree strongly

**5. Our church should have healing services.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**6. One problem with a healing ministry is that people who are not healed can be disappointed.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**7. Anointing people for healing should be a regular part of church life.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**8. The scriptures encourage the church's involvement in healing ministry.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**9. If I were sick I would go forward in a healing service to have people pray for me.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**10. It's wrong to pray for healing for things that you can take care of yourself.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**11. The church should focus on teaching people good health habits.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**12. Healing is valid for today.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**13. Intercessory prayer for people's salvation is more important than praying for people to be healed.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**14. A major reason God heals people is to attract them to the gospel.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**15. Healing ministry was only for New Testament times.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**16. I think pastors should preach on healing more often.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**17. Healing services at our church would be beneficial.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**18. I believe that some people have the spiritual gift of healing today.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**19. Healing ministry is an area that should be approached with caution.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**20. People who believe they are healed are really only kidding themselves.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**21. The church should focus on spiritual growth rather than healing.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**22. Sunday morning pastoral prayers too often focus on physical needs.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**23. Free Methodist Churches need to emphasize healing more.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**24. Most often, God uses medicine and physicians rather than God's special touch to heal people today.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**25. Sickness may be a sign of disobedience to God.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**(Post-Test)****WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT HEALING?**

Over the last eight weeks I have been preaching a series of messages on healing. It would help me a great deal if you would take a few moments to fill out the survey below (even if you filled out a similar survey earlier your completion of this survey is also very helpful). Turn in the survey to the ushers when the offering plates are passed. If you do not wish to fill out the survey please also turn in the blank survey to the ushers. Thank you! -Pastor Matt Whitehead

**Please circle the answers that describe you:**

**There were eight messages on healing in this series. How many of these did you hear (give you best estimate):**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7            8

**Sex:** Male - Female

**Age:** Under 14   15-25   25-35   36-45   46-55   56-65   66-75   76-85   86-95

**How long have you attended Lakeview Church:**

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**My denominational/church background could best be described as:**

Assemblies of God   Baptist   Catholic   Episcopal   Free Methodist   Lutheran  
Methodist   Non-Denominational   Presbyterian   Wesleyan   None   Other \_\_\_\_\_

**During this series of messages I was anointed for healing - Yes or No**

**Previously, I was anointed for healing - Yes or No**

**I have experienced a life threatening illness - Yes or No**

**Someone in my family has experienced a life threatening illness - Yes or No**

**After each question circle only one response:**

**1. Prayer chain topics too often focus on physical problems.**

Agree strongly   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Disagree strongly

**2. Healing ministry should be left to Pentecostal churches.**

Agree strongly   Agree   Undecided   Disagree   Disagree strongly

**3. One of Jesus' top priorities was healing ministry.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**4. Evangelism and conversion should be the primary emphases of the church, rather than healing.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**5. Our church should have healing services.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**6. One problem with a healing ministry is that people who are not healed can be disappointed.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**7. Anointing people for healing should be a regular part of church life.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**8. The scriptures encourage the church's involvement in healing ministry.**

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**9. If I were sick I would go forward in a healing service to have people pray for me.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

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**11. The church should focus on teaching people good health habits.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**12. Healing is valid for today.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly

**13. Intercessory prayer for people's salvation is more important than praying for people to be healed.**

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**24. Most often, God uses medicine and physicians rather than God's special touch to heal people today.**

Agree strongly    Agree    Undecided    Disagree    Disagree strongly





# First United Methodist Church

200 EAST DECATUR STREET  
DEMOPOLIS, ALABAMA 36732

March 12, 1996

Dr. Arthur L. Luckie, Pastor  
1102 LAKE LANE

CHURCH: 334-289-1933  
PARSONAGE: 334-289-0205

Matt Whitehead  
Lakeview Free Methodist Church  
9412 15th Ave., N.E.  
Seattle, Washington 98115

Dear Matt,

As per our conversation this morning, please know that you have my permission to incorporate any of my dissertation, "Preparing The Local Church for a Healing Ministry," into the writing of your dissertation. I am honored at your request and delighted that I can be of help. I do apologize for the difficulty you had in locating me.

God's best to you as you continue in the service of our Lord.



## M E M O R A N D U M

To: Survey Reviewers  
From: Matt Whitehead  
Re: Your Help With My Survey

I have talked with each of you about your assistance in validating my survey. I appreciate your help but I do need to ask that you respond as soon as possible. The question that I need you to answer is: Does the survey below reflect a good way for me to access the general attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to healing and healing ministry?

The purpose of my study is evaluate the role of preaching in establishing and implementing a ministry of divine healing in the Lakeview Free Methodist Church of Seattle, Washington.

The research questions are:

1. What are the general attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to divine healing?
2. What are the attitudes of the Lakeview congregation related to establishing an ongoing ministry of healing in the church?

If you have suggestions for changes in the questions please let me know. If you think the questions are fine, as is let me know. Thank you in advance for your help!!

People taking the survey will respond to the survey questions using a 5-point Likert scale:

- 1-Agree strongly
- 2-Agree
- 3-Neutral or undecided
- 4-Disagree
- 5-Disagree strongly

I will give the survey to the congregation twice. Once, before the sermon series and the healing service and again after. My study will compare and contrast the results of the two surveys.

## SCRIPTURES RELATED TO HEALING

**HEAL:** occurs 44 times in 43 verses

Numbers 12:13 So Moses cries out to the Lord, “O God please heal her!”

Deuteronomy 32:39 “See now that I myself am He! There is no god beside me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.

II Kings 20:5 “Go back and tell Hezekiah, the leader of my people, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the temple of the Lord.

II Kings 20:8 Hezekiah has asked Isaiah, “What will be the sign that the Lord will heal me and that I will go up to the temple of the Lord on the third day from now?”

II Chronicles 7:14 If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Job 5:18 For he wounds, but he also binds up; he injures, but his hands also heal.

Psalms 6:2 Be merciful to me, O Lord, for I am faint; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are in agony.

Psalms 41:4 I said, “O Lord, have mercy on me; heal me, for I have sinned against you.”

Ecclesiastes 3:3 A time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build.

Isaiah 19:22 The Lord will strike Egypt with a plague; he will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the Lord, and he will respond to their pleas and heal them.

Isaiah 57:18 I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will guide him and restore comfort to him.

Isaiah 57:19 Creating praise on the lips of the mourners in Israel. Peace, peace, to those far and near,” says the Lord. “And I will heal them.”

Jeremiah 17:14 Heal me O Lord, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise.

Jeremiah 30:17 But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,' declares the Lord, 'because you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares.'

Jeremiah 33:6 “Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security.

Lamentations 2:13 What can I say for you? With what can I compare you, O Daughter of Jerusalem? To what can I liken you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? Your wound is as deep as the sea. Who can heal you.

Hosea 5:13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his sores, then Ephraim turned to Assyria, and sent to the great king for help. But he is not able to cure you, not able to heal your sores.

Hosea 6:1 “Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds.

Hosea 14:4 “I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them.

Nahum 3:19 Nothing can heal your wound; your injury is fatal. Everyone who hears the news about you claps his hands at your fall, for who has not felt your endless cruelty.

Zechariah 11:16 For I am going to raise up a shepherd over the land who will not care for the lost, or seek the young, or heal the injured, or feed the healthy, but will eat the meat of the choice sheep, tearing off their hoofs.

Matthew 8:7 Jesus said to him, “I will go and heal him.”

Matthew 10:1 He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

Matthew 10:8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Matthew 12:10 And a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”

Matthew 13:15 For this people’s heart has become callused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.

Matthew 17:16 I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.

Mark 3:2 Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath.

Mark 6:5 He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them.

Luke 4:23 Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'"

Luke 5:17 One day as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there. And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick.

Luke 6:7 The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath.

Luke 7:3 The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant.

Luke 8:43 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her.

Luke 9:2 And he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

Luke 10:9 "Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.'"

Luke 13:32 He replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.'

Luke 14:3 Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?"

John 4:47 When this man heard that Jesus has arrived in Galilee from Judah, he went to him and begged him to come heal his son, who was close to death.

John 12:40 "He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn-- and I will heal them."

Acts 4:30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.

**Healing**: occurs 28 times in 28 verses

II Chronicles 28:15 The men designated by name took the prisoners, and from the plunder they clothed all who were naked. They provided them with clothes and sandals, food and drink, and healing balm. All those who were weak they put on donkeys. So they took them back to their fellow countryman at Jericho, the city of Palms, and returned to Samaria.

Proverbs 13:17 A wicked messenger falls into trouble, but a trustworthy envoy brings healing.

Proverbs 15:4 The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.

Proverbs 16:24 Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

Isaiah 58:8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

Jeremiah 8:15 We hoped for peace but no good has come, for a time of healing but there was only terror.

Jeremiah 8:22 Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people.

Jeremiah 14:9 Have you rejected Judah completely? Do you despise Zion? Why have you afflicted us so that we cannot be healed? We hoped for peace but no good has come, for a time of healing but there is only terror.

Jeremiah 30:12 "This is what the Lord says: "Your wound is incurable, your injury beyond healing."

Jeremiah 30:13 There is no one to plead your cause, no remedy for your sore, no healing for you.

Jeremiah 33:6 "Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security.

Ezekiel 30:21 "Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt. It has not been bound up for healing or put in a splint so as to become strong enough to hold a sword.

Ezekiel 47:12 Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

Malachi 4:2 But for you who receive my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from stall.

Matthew 4:23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Matthew 9:35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Luke 6:19 And the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

Luke 9:6 So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.

Luke 9:11 But the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed healing.

John 7:23 Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man of the Sabbath.

Acts 3:16 By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

I Corinthians 12:9 To another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit.

I Corinthians 12:28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

I Corinthians 12:30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

Revelation 22:2 Down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

**Healed**: occurs 73 times in 70 verses

Genesis 20:17 Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife and his slave girls so they could have children again.

Exodus 21:19 The one who struck the blow will not be held responsible if the other gets up and walks around outside with his staff; however, he must pay the injured man for the loss of his time and see that he is completely healed.

Leviticus 13:37 If, however, in his judgment it is unchanged and black hair has grown in it, the itch is healed. He is clean, and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

Leviticus 14:3 The priest is to go outside the camp and examine him. If the person has been healed of his infectious disease . . .

Joshua 5:8 And after the whole nation had been circumcised, they remained where they were in camp until they were healed.

I Samuel 6:3 They answered, "If you return the ark of God of Israel, not send it away empty, but by all means send a guilt offering to him; then you will be healed, and you will know why his hand has not been lifted from you."

II Kings 2:21 Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, "This is what the Lord says: 'I have healed the water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive.'"

II Chronicles 30:20 And the Lord heard Hezekiah and healed the people.

Psalms 30:2 O Lord my God, I called to you for help and you healed me.

Psalms 107:20 He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.

Isaiah 6:10 Make the heart of this people callused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Jeremiah 14:19 Have you rejected Judah completely? Do you despise Zion? Why have you afflicted us so that we cannot be healed? We hoped for peace but no good has come, for a time of healing but there is only terror.

Jeremiah 51:8 Babylon will suddenly fall and be broken. Wail over her! Get balm for her pain; perhaps she can be healed.

Jeremiah 51:9 We would have healed Babylon, but she cannot be healed; let us leave her and each go to his own land, for her judgment reaches to the skies, it rises as high as the clouds.

Ezekiel 34:4 You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally.

Hosea 34:4 It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them.

Matthew 4:24 News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.

Matthew 8:8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed."

Matthew 8:13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! It will be done just as you believed it would!" And his servant was healed at that very hour.

Matthew 8:16 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.

Matthew 9:21 She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed."

Matthew 9:22 Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed from that moment.

Matthew 12:15 Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. Many followed him, and he healed their sick.

Matthew 12:22 Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see.

Matthew 14:14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

Matthew 14:36 and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.

Matthew 15:28 Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour."

Matthew 15:30 Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them.

Matthew 17:18 Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment.



Matthew 19:2 Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

Matthew 21:14 The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.

Mark 1:34 And Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

Mark 3:10 For he healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him.

Mark 5:23 And pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live."

Mark 5:28 Because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed."

Mark 5:34 He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

Mark 6:13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

Mark 6:56 And wherever he went--into villages, towns or countryside--they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They brought him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.

Mark 10:52 "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

Luke 4:40 When the sun was setting, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them.

Luke 5:15 Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses.

Luke 6:18 who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by evil spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him.

Luke 7:7 That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed.

Luke 8:47 Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed.

Luke 8:48 Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

Luke 8:50 Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.”

Luke 9:11 But the crowds learned about it and followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those needing healing.

Luke 9:42 Even while the boy was coming, the demon threw him to the ground in a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the evil spirit, healed the boy and gave him back to his father.

Luke 13:14 Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue ruler said to the people, “There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.”

Luke 14:4 But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him away.

Luke 17:15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice.

Luke 18:42 Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.”

Luke 22:51 But Jesus answered, “No more of this!” And he touched the man’s ear and healed him.

John 5:10 And so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.”

Acts 4:9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed...

Acts 4:10 Then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.

Acts 4:14 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.

Acts 4:22 For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

Acts 5:16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

Acts 8:7 With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed.

Acts 14:9 He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed.

Acts 28:8 His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him.

Hebrews 12:13 “Make level paths for your feet,” so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

I Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Revelation 13:3 One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound has been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.

Revelation 13:12 He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound has been healed.

**Heals** occurs 6 times in 6 verses

Exodus 15:26 He said, “If you pay attention carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you.

Leviticus 13:18 “When someone has a boil on his skin and it heals . . .

Psalms 103:3 Who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.

Psalms 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Isaiah 30:26 The moon will shine like the sun, and the sunlight will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven full days, when the Lord binds up the bruises of his people and heals the wounds he inflicted.

Acts 9:34 “Aeneas,” Peter said to him, “Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat.” Immediately Aeneas got up.

**Health** occurs 11 times in 10 verses

I Samuel 25:6 Say to him: “Long life to you! Good health to you and your household! And good health to all that is yours.”

Psalms 38:3 Because of your wrath there is no health in my body; my bones have no soundness because of my sin.

Psalms 38:7 My back is filled with searing pain; there is no health in my body.

Proverbs 3:8 This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

Proverbs 4:22 For they are life to those who find them and health to a man’s whole body.

Proverbs 15:30 A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones.

Isaiah 38:16 Lord, by such things men live; and my spirit finds life in them too. You restored me to health and let me live.

Jeremiah 30:17 “But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,” declares the Lord, “because you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares.”

Jeremiah 33:6 “Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security.”

III John 1:2 Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.

**Healthy** occurs 7 times in 7 verses

Genesis 41:5 He fell asleep again and had a second dream: Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk.

Genesis 41:7 The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream.

Psalms 73:4 They had no struggles; their bodies were healthy and strong.

Zechariah 11:16 For I am going to raise up a shepherd over the land who will not care for the lost, or seek the young, or heal the injured, or feed the healthy, but will eat the meat of the choice sheep, tearing off their hoofs.

Matthew 9:12 On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

Mark 2:17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Luke 5:31 Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

**Healthier** occurs 1 time in 1 verse

Daniel 1:15 At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food.