

HEALTH & HEALING



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5. Ways of Healing

Introduction

We have been looking at healing: why God heals, what causes sickness and how we can receive healing. In this study we are going to look at the different ways or means by which healing can come. Already we have learnt that God has made provision for our healing when we take Communion or the Lord's Supper. However others can also pray for us.

1. Simple Prayer of Faith

- ☐ What two ways or methods for praying for the sick are mentioned in the following verses? Mark 16:18 and James 5:14.

(The two ways are laying hands on the sick or anointing them with oil.)

- ☐ What attitude must we always have, even though the method used may be different? Mark 16:17, 18 and James 5:15.

(We must believe or have faith.)

- ☐ As we look at the life of Jesus we can see that there is no 'set' method. How did he pray for the blind man in Mark 8:22-25? Why do you think he prayed twice? What can we learn from these things?

(He spat on the blind man's eyes and then put his hands on him. Since the man could not see clearly Jesus laid his hands on him again. Perhaps when the man could see faintly his faith was activated so that when Jesus touched him again, he could receive total healing.)

- ☐ Why do you think the disciples could not heal the boy of dumbness and demon possession? Matthew 17:16-20

(Jesus said it was because they lacked faith.)

Sometimes healing is not instantaneous, but takes place gradually. The disciples were not always successful as they did not move in the faith and power that Jesus did. The same is certainly true of many of us! We may lack spiritual power, not because it is not available to us, but because we have not learnt how to exercise it. However we should not give up. Even if there is only a slight improvement this should encourage us to keep on praying. In fact when Jesus spoke about prayer he told us to keep on praying and not to give up. Surely this includes praying for healing.

2. Gifts of Healing

All of us can learn to pray for the sick, but there is another means by which God heals, and that is through the gifts of healing.

- ☐ Why is the gift of healing (and other gifts) given? 1 Corinthians 12:7

(They are given for the good of the Body of Christ.)

☐ Who gives these gifts and to whom are they given? 1 Corinthians 12:8, 11

(They are given by the Holy Spirit as he chooses.)

☐ Why should we earnestly desire the spiritual gifts in our life? 1 Corinthians 12:31. Perhaps you have been blessed when someone else has exercised a spiritual gift. Would you like to share how this has helped you?

The gifts of the Spirit are to build up the Body, the church. Let's earnestly desire them!

3. An Example of Healing

At the beginning of the Book of Acts there is a wonderful account of the healing of a crippled man. Let's look at the condition of this man first.

☐ How long had this man been crippled, and how often had he sat at the temple gate? Acts 3:2, 10, 4:22

(He had been crippled since birth, which was over 40 years ago and he sat at the gate every day.)

Perhaps this man had been there when Jesus had come into the temple. The disciples had no doubt passed him before too, but this was God's time to heal him, and his healing glorified God and resulted in many people believing in Jesus.

☐ What gifts of the Spirit do you think Peter was using on this occasion? Acts 3:4-8

(Possibly he was using the gift of faith and the gift of healing.)

☐ Why was God able to move in such power in the early Church? What can we learn from this? Acts 4:24, 29-31, 32-34.

(There had been a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but this was maintained in the life of the early Church because there was unity among the believers and much prayer.)

Conclusion

As a Body of believers we can cultivate the right environment for the Holy Spirit to move in our midst, or we can hinder him from working. The people in Jesus' hometown of Nazareth hindered him from healing and performing miracles because of their unbelief. However faith and expectancy, unity and love, fervent witnessing and prayer, provide the right environment! God's heart is towards us, so let's prepare the way for him to work in our midst.