

The Ministry of Loving, Listening, and Praying

Session 1: Questions about Healing

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1. Why is there sickness in the world?

A. The Original Plan--The Garden of Eden = God's Kingdom on earth.

B. The Fall and its effects: Sin brings death and corruption:

1. The Curse of Death: **Gen 3.19 Rom 5.12, 8.21. 2 Cor 4.16.**
2. The Result of fallenness: **Rom 1.24-32.** Fallen nature, Sickness, Death, Evil of all kinds are the result of sin in the world. Sickness isn't necessarily the result of a sin the sick person committed, but is the result of the sin of Adam in which all his descendent participated

2. Does the Bible teach that God heals?

A. Definition: Healing is the restoration of a person to wholeness in body, soul & spirit.

“Salvation, healing” (Greek: *σῶζω*) 1. to preserve or rescue from natural dangers and afflictions, save, keep from harm, preserve, rescue, save from death, bring out safely, save/free from disease, keep, preserve, thrive, prosper, get on well. 2. to save or preserve from transcendent danger or destruction, save/preserve from eternal death bring salvation, bring to salvation.

When Jesus says, “Your faith has healed you.” (Mt 9:22; Mk 5:34; 10:52; Lk 8:48; 17:19; 18:42), he is using *σῶζω*. And when Peter says, **Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved,** the word Peter uses is *σῶζω*.

B. The Plan of Redemption and Healing (atonement and healing)

1. Jesus Ministry

- Jesus came that we might have life to the full:
John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.
- Jesus began his ministry by quoting from **Isaiah 61:1.**
Luke 4:18 “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 & recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

2. Jesus came as the Prince of Peace (Hebrew: *shalom*)

- Nicholas Wolterstorff defines *shalom* as “the state of flourishing in all dimensions of one’s existence: in one’s relation to God, in one’s relation to one’s fellow human beings, in one’s relation to nature, and in one’s relation to oneself.”
Shalom can be translated using words such as completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safety, health, prosperity, tranquility, contentment, friendship, and peace from war. (BDB)
- This state of wholeness and blessing was God’s original intent for us in the Garden of Eden, but his plan was ruined by sin. God desires us to be in exclusive relationship with Him as our God and King. If we had lived under His rule and in relationship with Him, *shalom* would have filled the earth.

3. The Ultimate Plan: No sin, sickness, sorrow or pain.

Rev. 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Is. 35:8 And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. 9 No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, 10 and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

C. Jesus came as Messiah to establish God's Kingdom on earth.

1. The Central Message of Christ was the Message that he was bringing the Kingdom of God (heaven) to earth. There are over 100 gospel references to the Kingdom!

- Matt. 12:28 But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.
- Luke 8:1 After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God.
- Jesus' Ministry: Mark 1.15 summarizes Jesus ministry--preaching the Kingdom. "'The time has come', he said. 'The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!'"

2. "The Already and the Not Yet" of the Kingdom of God

- The Kingdom of God is God's rule. Wherever God rules, there the Kingdom is. If he rules in our lives, we are part of his Kingdom. Ultimately God will again rule all, and the Kingdom of this World will become the Kingdom of our God.
- God's Kingdom is already here, yet not fully here. God's wholeness is evidence of the presence of his Kingdom.
- The "good news of the Kingdom" is the news that the Messianic King has come to earth, and the Kingdom of God, the just and loving rule of God, has begun to be established on earth through the Messiah.
- When the Kingdom fully comes, the will of God will be perfectly accomplished. There will be no more sorrow, pain, death, sickness or sin. Revelation 21.1-4. A return, even transcending, of the original plan.

D. Oscar Cullmann, Christ and Time. World War II D-day (June 6, 1944) determined the outcome of the war, but the war was not over until V-day, May 7/8, 1945. The Kingdom Ministry of Jesus delegated to us

1. Jesus' delegation of his ministry

- Jesus' released his ministry to his apostles in Matthew 9:35-10:1 (also Luke 9:1-2). Matt. 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. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." 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.
- Jesus commissioned the 72 in Luke 10:1,8-9,17, sending them out to heal, preach, and cast out demons.

Luke 10:1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. 8 “When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. 9 Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you.’ 17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.”

- Jesus commissioned the entire Church in the Great Commission:

Matt. 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Disciples were commanded to teach new converts to do everything Jesus had commanded them to do! Which includes: preaching the good news, healing, and casting out demons.

The Church is the Body of Christ. We are Christ to the world. When Jesus left, he left us with the responsibility of carrying on his ministry. He has empowered us with his Holy Spirit and has given us his ministry. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given so we can do Christ's ministry.

2. Jesus promised his Church supernatural ministry and power from on high.

- The promise of supernatural ministry:

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

Who will do the “Greater things”? “All who believe.”

Mark 16:17 (NIV) And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

- The promise of power from on high: Luke 24:45-49, Acts 1:8

Luke 24:45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 46 He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

- The Empowering: Acts 2. Poured on all.

Acts 2:1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 “‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. 21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

- The book of Acts = the outworking of the Spirit empowered community. 1Cor 4:20 “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.”

3. Summary.

- The work of the Kingdom for Jesus always included proclamation, healing, and setting people free from Satan. When he delegated the ministry to his disciples, he delegated all aspects of his Kingdom work. We are his body, the extension of his work on earth!
- Jesus has all authority (**Matthew 28.19-20**). If he has given us his ministry, then with it he has given us the authority to do that ministry. We have reason to expect God to work through us!!

3. Do we have evidence that God heals?

A. Evidence in Ministry of Jesus ...

1. John Wimber: Everywhere Jesus went He functioned as a healer. 41 distinct instances of physical & mental healing are recorded in the Gospels, but this by no means represents the total. Many of the references summarize the healing of large numbers of people. John writes: **John 21:25 Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.**
2. Nearly one-fifth of the Gospel accounts are devoted to Jesus' healing ministry & the discussion occasioned by it.

B. Evidence in Early Church... The book of Acts is filled with stories of healing in the early church as well.

C. Evidence in Church History

1. John Wimber, in "A Brief Sketch of Signs and Wonders through the Church Age", cites sources proving that healing and spiritual gifts were present through out church history. Augustine (354-430), "It is sometimes objected that the miracles, which Christians claimed to have occurred, no longer happen...It is a simply fact that there is no lack of miracles even in our day. And the God who works the miracles we read in the Scriptures uses any means and manner He chooses."
2. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), "The Spirit of God breathes where He will; He does not ask our permission; He meets us on His own terms and distributes His charisms as He pleases...What Paul says in the twelfth chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians is still true today!"

D. Evidence in the Church Today

1. **Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday & today & forever.**
2. Personal Testimonies

4. Why does God heal?

A. Illustration in Jesus' Ministry

- Luke 11 (Lazarus). Read **John 11:1-23**. Note dead for 4 days, many Jews thought the soul stayed near the body for 3 days. After 4 days, all hope was gone. Read **11:33-44**.

B. Why God heals...

1. Because he has compassion for suffering people
 - **John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping, & the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit & troubled... 35 Jesus wept.**
 - Deeply moved = groaned, intense feeling, indignation. He was overcome with sorrow for all the pain death caused. Love.
 - Many times, compassion is mentioned as the motive for Jesus healing. **Matthew 14:14 When Jesus landed & saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them & healed their sick.**
2. To Authenticate the Ministry of Jesus so the people might believe

- Healing proves that God has power over sickness, & that Jesus is the Messiah & Savior of the world. Healing is always done in Jesus name.
 - John 11:14 So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, 15 & for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”
 - John 11:45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, & had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him.
 - Illustration in Early Church Ministry – Acts 3 (lame man at gate beautiful) about 2000 men came to Jesus as the result of this one miracle.
 - Power Evangelism.
3. To bring glory to the Father & the Son
- John 11:4 Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.”
 - God was glorified as his love & power over His creation was demonstrated in action.

5. What is needed for healing?

A. Authority is needed

- Matthew 10:1 He called his twelve disciples to him & gave them authority to drive out evil spirits & to heal every disease & sickness.
- Luke 10:9 Heal the sick who are there & tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you.’

B. Faith is needed (either in the minister or the recipient)

- Faith = confidence in God and his promises. It is not confidence in ourselves or our “faith.”
- Our faith increases as we understand our authority. (Ephesians 1 & 2 discuss our position and authority “in Christ”.)
- Our faith increases as we understand the presence of the Kingdom & our inheritance in Christ (see Ephesians 1:13-14). The gifts are a portion of our inheritance (see 1Corinthians 13:8-12).
- Our faith increases as embrace God’s Promises. (See Mark 11:24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.)

C. Asking is needed

- Matthew 21:22 If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.

D. Love is needed

- Jesus ministered out of compassion.
- 1Corinthians 13:2. If I have the gift of prophecy & can fathom all mysteries & all knowledge, & if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

E. Righteousness/purity is needed

- Through confession, righteousness of Christ. We can’t depend on our righteousness, but on the merit of Christ.
- James 5:16 The prayer of a righteous man is powerful & effective.

F. God’s timing is needed

- Man at gate beautiful was put there every day (Acts 3:1). How many times had Jesus himself passed by this man?

6. Why we don’t see more healing?

A. Lack of Faith, Love & Purity?

- Lack of faith was a problem in Jesus' time & also today. You may have faith & not be healed, but faith must somewhere be present for healing to take place. We have a lack of expectation because we haven't rightly understood the scriptures.
- Healing is evidence that the Kingdom is present. Is the kingdom perhaps far less come in our lives than we realize? The more Christ reigns in our lives the more we can expect to move in his Kingdom authority.
- Has a western rationalistic, materialistic worldview caused us to be suspicious of any miracle, and made us less than expectant?

B. Lack of asking?

- *James 4:2 You do not have, because you do not ask God.*

C. Lack of Evangelism?

- I believe God's Word that we have been given authority as ambassadors of the Kingdom. God's healing power seems to flow freely amongst unreached people. God heals the whole person. Physical healing is nevertheless secondary to spiritual healing.

Overview of Prayer Model

1. Listen

- Listening to the person – *“What would you like Jesus to do for you today?”*
- Listening to God – *“What is God saying about this person and their need?”*

2. Pray

- Prayer Selection – *How does God want me to pray?*
- Prayer Engagement – *Coming before the Father in expectant faith.*

3. Encourage

- Post-prayer encouragement and direction – *How can I encourage this person in his or her journey towards wholeness? What should this person do next?*