

KINDS OF HEALING PRAYER

“...gifts of healings...” (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 20) PLURAL – many kinds of healings

“That evening they brought to [Jesus] many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah (53:4): “He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.” (Matthew 8:16-17)
Francis MacNutt: “Jesus took our sicknesses away on the cross too, not only our sin. Why don’t we talk about that?!”

I. The ministry of healing means we take the WHOLE PERSON (*shalom*) seriously.

In healing prayer, we pray for the whole person, not just the disease or affected part (knee, stomach, etc). We minister to persons, not conditions.

Hebrew concept *shalom* means completeness, wholeness, soundness, peace or well-being.¹ *Shalom* is closely related in scripture to steadfast love, faithfulness and righteousness, “describing proper conduct toward others, from which the state of well-being arises.”² *May God himself, the God of peace (*shalom*), sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1Thessalonians 5:23)*

Interconnected, cannot be separated any more than we can separate the kinds of healing prayer.

We say: “He is a pain in the neck.” “That makes me sick to my stomach.”

Scripture says: *A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.* (Proverbs 17:22)

*Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am in distress;
my eyes grow weak with sorrow,
my soul and body with grief.
My life is consumed by anguish
and my years by groaning;
my strength fails because of my affliction,
and my bones grow weak.* (Psalm 31:9, 10)

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life. (Proverbs 13:12)

One “part” of the human being cannot be affected without affecting the whole. (eg., grieving takes so much energy)

Our focus is not “fixing the problem”, but on healing, restoring wholeness to the whole person. Often more process than event.

“The whole person is involved in all that happens. Although sickness comes through different dimensions (spiritual, emotional, mental, physical), it affects other dimensions.” (*Doing Healing*, Venter, p. 59).

II. The ministry of healing means we take the Incarnation seriously.

Read Tommy Tyson’s talk to priests (*Healing*, MacNutt, pp. 255-256) “We are not ministering salve to sores; we are ministering love to suffering people.” (Tommy Tyson)

¹

Alexander et al., *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity and Diversity of Scripture*, 762.

²

Botterweck, Ringgren, and Fabry, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, XV, 41.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. (Isaiah 53:4)

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

(1 Peter 2:24)

Compassion, experience, touch, words, oil, water, presence, listening > indwelt by the Holy Spirit in and through our flesh and through the created order. Grace builds on or perfects or fulfills nature. [Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (ST), I, I, 8 ad 2].^{11 12}

The supernatural life does not negate or destroy the natural world. Rather, grace sanctifies, elevates and renews nature. Grace also works through nature. We are not just temples of the Holy Spirit, but instruments of the Spirit as well. We are collaborating with God in extending the boundaries of His Kingdom on earth of love and peace.’

III. Kinds of Healing Prayer

A. Praying for Physical Healing: disease, accidents, trauma, psychological stress affecting the body
What most people think of when talking about healing prayer. Numerous examples in Scripture. Watch a tumor shrink, see a leg extend, headache subsides, a person who is blind now sees, a skin condition clears up. “God is the healer and we are the vessels used to accomplish His purposes.” (Mike Evans, *Learning to Do What Jesus Did*, p. 3-1)

Jesus almost never prayed the same way twice...

Listening to the person who is asking for prayer and to God for what to pray for and how to pray
And listen for - are we meant to pray for this person at this time? (Can still pray a blessing, even if not for healing)

Ask person:

Level of pain or discomfort before prayer?

When did it start? How long have you had it? (Mark 9:21 – “How long has this been happening?”)

Accident or trauma involved?

Prayers used:

1. Prayer of Intercession: Asking on behalf of another for healing; specific prayer should be positive, hope for what is desired; may also picture or visualize God touching the person, praying with thanksgiving (Acts 4:24 – 30 for the disciples praying; Philippians 4:6; Matthew 7:7-11; James 5:14-15).

2. Prayer of Command: Mark 7:31-35 – “Be opened”; Luke 13:10-17 – “You are set free”: Luke 4:38-41 – Jesus rebuked the fever and it left or in Mark 1:30-31 – Jesus took her by the hand and lifted her up; John 5:6-9 – “Stand up, take up your mat and walk.”; Acts 3:6 – Peter: “In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk.”

○ Also: Laying on of hands: Mark 5:22-23; Acts 28:8

○ Anointing with oil: Mark 6:13; James 5:14

○ Praying in the Spirit (Romans 8:26-27)

○ Soaking prayer

○ Checking in as you pray to see what God is doing (pain level, movement, etc.) Mark 8:22-26

B. Praying for Spiritual Healing: wrongdoing, sin (not in right relationship with God, neighbor, self)

Forgiveness of sins is intimately connected with bodily and emotional healing

Mark 11:24-25 *Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.*"

For prayer:

Person admits and confesses wrongdoing to God, seeking forgiveness. (Psalm 51:1-12)

Asks anyone wronged for their forgiveness, if possible.

Offers forgiveness to those who wounded or hurt him/her.

Prayer minister assures person of God's forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:9; Psalm 103:12; Micah 7:19).

Person may need/desire sacramental reconciliation.

C. Praying for Emotional or Inner Healing:

Our memories affect who we are and how we see ourselves, others, God, circumstances.

Memories serve to strengthen us, provide resilience, or they drain life from us.

Painful memories, those with wounds or trauma, can damage our emotions, crippling and binding us in our personal, emotional and spiritual lives, and can cut us off from giving and receiving love. "Inner healing is God's way of healing and liberating us from our brokenness and deepest wounds of the heart." (J. MacNutt)

Four levels of our need for inner healing:

1. The suffering, sin, and illness we all experience because we live in a fallen world;
2. The wounds or trauma inflicted by others;
3. The wounds we inflict on ourselves through sin or wrongdoing;
4. The absence of love or nurture (belonging, acceptance/approval, safety and protection, stability, healthy and loving touch, spiritual nurturing, presence)

The need for inner healing surfaces through:

1. Emotional over-reactions to situations, people, etc. (e.g., lingering or growing bitterness or resentment from wounds; paralyzing fear or avoidance; overwhelming anxiety; anger that has no outlet but grows into rage or flashes up; depression)
2. Self-talk/self-image – negative messages/beliefs we have received and/or tell ourselves
3. Negative image of God
4. Inner vows made ("I will never...")

What is inner healing?

Ministering to and praying for damaged emotions and unhealed memories (David Seamands, *Healing of Memories*)

"A process in which the Holy Spirit brings forgiveness of sins and emotional renewal to people suffering from damaged minds, wills, and emotions." (John Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 239)

Inner healing is when Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today and forever, takes the memories of our past and heals them from the effects of those wounds that still remain and affect our daily lives. Jesus can fill those places within us with his love, drain from us the poison of past hurts and resentments, and release the shame that binds us. We are often enabled by inner healing to forgive and release others from wounds inflicted on us. In inner healing we bring to light the things that have hurt us and pray to the Lord to free us from the binding effects of our hurtful past. (Francis & Judith MacNutt, *School of Healing Prayer I* ®)

Scriptures: Luke 24:13-35 – read passage with the understanding that Jesus is offering inner healing to these two downcast disciples

John 21:1-19 – Jesus heals Peter from the wounds of his betrayal and denial of Jesus

Image of a wound
Story

D. Praying for Deliverance

Freeing a person through prayer who is oppressed or infested by the presence of evil (but who is not possessed)

Indications deliverance is needed:

1. An inner compulsion that cannot be overcome by self-discipline, prayer, or therapy (addictions, habits, suicidal tendencies)
2. The person asking for prayer is aware or believes the problem is demonic in nature.
3. Prayer for inner healing does not seem to accomplish anything (deliverance often happens in the course of inner healing prayer when the wound is healed and evil has no more right to be there or foothold in the person).
4. Participation in activities of an occult nature, out of curiosity, for “fun”, or in earnest.

DISCERNMENT is key to knowing when prayer for deliverance is needed.

Prayer includes: Praying for protection, binding the force and power of evil – forbidding them to manifest in any way, repentance, renunciation, the person him- or herself commands with authority the evil spirit to depart and go to Jesus Christ for him to deal with; or the minister in the Name of Jesus Christ commands the spirit to depart and to go to Jesus Christ, without harming the person or anyone along the way. Followed by prayer to fill what has been vacated with the presence of Jesus Christ – his love, his peace, his power.

Following this prayer (and any other prayer) it is good to give counsel – to pray regularly, meditate on Scripture, receive sacraments, be part of a Christian community. To eliminate any items used in occult practices (burning, disposing of them so others will not find and use them). Seek further prayer or professional help if needed.

Francis MacNutt: “Everyone who needs deliverance needs inner healing. But not everyone who needs inner healing needs deliverance too.”

E. Prayer for Generational Healing

Pre-dispositions or tendencies to sickness and sin can be passed down through family lines. Likewise, blessings and curses can be visited upon us through our family lineage. We can pray for healing of these pre-dispositions and tendencies with the authority of those who are made a new creation in Christ Jesus. We can also bless the gifts, abilities, and legacies and ask that they be multiplied in our families while breaking the curses against our families.

We look for the pattern of gifts and blessings in our families as well as the pattern of weakness or trauma in our family stories. A helpful tool for mapping this information is the genogram which depicts the patterns in a family tree diagram, making them easier to recognize.

Simple prayers for healing may be used, not only for ourselves but for past, present and future generations. A powerful tool for generational healing prayer is to offer these prayers in the context of Holy Communion or Holy Eucharist.

In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, we are now free to become the child of God the Lord intended for us to – filled with love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Thank you, Lord, that you would grant all of us according to the riches of your glory to be strengthened with power through your Holy Spirit in our inner being, so that Christ may dwell in our

hearts through faith, and that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that we may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Amen. (Ephesians 3:14-19)

Resources:

Norma Dearing, *The Healing Touch: A Guide to Healing Prayer* (Grand Rapids: Chosen), 2002.

Michael Evans, *Learning To Do What Jesus Did: How to pray for physical, emotional, and spiritual healing* (Lake Mary, FL: Archer-Ellison Publishing), 1996, 2012.

Francis MacNutt, *Healing* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press), 1974, 1999.

Francis & Judith MacNutt, *School of Healing Prayer, Level I* ®, Christian Healing Ministries, Jacksonville, FL

Alexander Venter, *Doing Healing: How to Minister God's Kingdom in the Power of the Spirit* (Capetown, South Africa: Vineyard International Publishing), 2009.

Prepared by The Rev. Canon Dr. Sandra B. Kerner