

A Research Paper

Why Are Some Not Healed?

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INTRODUCTION:

God reveals himself by his many names in the OT. The name itself tells us one aspect of his characters and who he is. Three days after Israelites' exodus out of Egypt, God declares himself to his people as Jehovah-Rapha, the God who heals (Exodus 15:26). There are many incidents of miraculous healing recorded in the OT as well as in the NT. A big part of Jesus' earthly ministry is supernatural by nature, including miracles and divine healing and casting out of demons. The book of Acts records incidents healing performed by the Apostles. The Great Commission commands Jesus's disciples to do everything Jesus did and take the Gospel to the end of the world with signs and wonders promised to follow. Early Fathers witness God's healing. St. Augustine of Hippo believes in miraculous healing. Divine healing had been seen in Christian revivals led by John Wesley, Finney, Smith Wigglesworth, and many others. The Pentecostal and Charismatic movements in the 20th century have brought revivals to the Church across all denominations with the power of the Holy Spirit energizing, transforming and restoring hundreds of millions of lives around the Globe to these days. The Third Wave movement, led by John Wimber proclaimed the Gospel through power evangelism, has captured millions of believers worldwide with supernatural signs of healing, prophecy, and deliverance. The purpose of this paper is not about whether God stills heals today, he does; but try to provide a balanced explanation answering to the question of why some not healed based on biblical principles and other sources of teaching from recognized authors and leaders who have been called by God into the supernatural ministry. Why only some but not all received healing when prayed for will always remain a mystery to a great extent until we see God face to face one day.

Meanwhile, it's our responsibility to overcome the many challenges in life, including sickness and disease by the grace of God, trusting He has given us every spiritual blessing from heaven to

live a godly life, whether in sickness or in health. We are to be in obedience to pray for the sick, whether we see healing manifested immediately or not. I believe God will give us a greater revelation about the miracle work and increase his manifested presence as the second coming of Jesus draws nearer. Our job is to submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit and trust in his faithfulness.

THE MEANING OF SALVATION

Before we address healing, we need to understand the root of sickness and God's plan of salvation with its meaning and implications. First, neither sickness nor death existed in the Garden of Eden until sin entered the world through Adam and Eve's rebellion against God. They were deceived by the Devil and violated the command of God by eating the forbidden fruit. Sin entered the world and is the root behind sickness and evils. This concept is accepted by Jewish tradition, and the principle is consistent with Christian teaching. In *Power Healing*, Wimber states: "Traditional Christian doctrine has always held that illness is the result of original sin and its origins are in the kingdom of Satan" (page 15). Second, Man in the bondage of sin has become a slave of sin, and he has no power to reverse his condition. He is under the curse of the Law and is separated from God (Isaiah 59:2, Romans 6:16). Third, God's grand plan of salvation has been fulfilled through the birth (Galatians 4:4-5), crucifixion (Mark 10:45), resurrection (Romans 4:25, 1 Corinthians 15:17), and ascension of Christ (Romans 8:34). It's a finished work. Jesus has completely defeated Satan once for all, who has been the source of all evil and who had the power of death. "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had

the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.” (Hebrews 2:14-15). Finally, the Gospel is the good news and the power of God to save everyone who believes (John 3:16, Colossians 1:13). Paul said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.” (Romans 1:16). Let’s take a closer look at the meaning of salvation. According to the Holman Bible Dictionary:

Christ's saving work involves already completed, on-going, and future saving activity. Jesus' earthly ministry made salvation a present reality for His generation. Jesus' healing ministry effected salvation from disease (Mark 5:34 ; Mark 10:52 ; Luke 17:19). Jesus offered God's forgiveness to hurting people (Mark 2:5 ; Luke 7:50). He assured a repentant Zacchaeus that “Today salvation has come to this house” (Luke 19:9). Through such encounters Jesus fulfilled the goal of His ministry: “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Salvation is not limited to the spiritual sense with its promise of forgiveness and eternal life. Salvation also includes healing of disease as demonstrated in Jesus’ healing ministry in the Gospels in which the word “sozo” (Greek, saved) was used 14 times meaning “deliverance from disease or demon possession” (Mt 9:21, 22; Mk 3:4; 5:23, 28, 34; 6:56; 10:52, Lu 6:9; 8:36, 48, 50; 17:19; 18:42; Jn 11:12). However, the question remains as to why not everybody is healed if healing is part of the salvation equation?

INTERPRETATIONS:

1) According to Wimber, sin, unbelief, not praying correctly, stop praying prematurely, not seeking God wholeheartedly and persistently, usually are the underlying reasons for not receiving healing. The following are the excerpts from Power Healing on Not Everyone is Healed: (page 152).

- Some people do not have faith in God for healing (James 5:15)
- Personal, unconfessed sin creates a barrier to God's grace (James 5:16).
- Persistent and widespread disunity, sin, and unbelief in bodies of believers and families inhibit healing in individual members of the body (1 Cor. 11:30).
- Because of incomplete or incorrect diagnoses of what is causing their problem, people do not know how to pray correctly.
- Some people assume that God always heals instantly, and when he does not heal immediately, they stop praying.

Whether healing is in the atonement or through the atonement, Wimber argues, the fact we are living in between the “already and the not yet,” we may not always see physical healing on earth as in heaven. He asserts: “His sovereignty, lordship, and kingdom are what bring healing, Our part is to pray ‘Thy kingdom come’ and trust him for whatever healing comes from his gracious hand. And if in this age it does not come, then we still have assurance from the atonement that it will come in the age to come” (Power Healing, page 157).

2) According to MacNutt, there is a mystery involved in why a particular person is not healed when prayed for. However, he encourages people to continue to pray for the sick based on God's goodness and will. The following excerpt is taken from his book Healing (page 194-203), summarized 12 reasons why some are not healed drawn on the study in his years of dedication to the healing ministry:

1. Lack of Faith
2. Redemptive Suffering
3. A False Value Attached to Suffering
4. Sin
5. Not Praying Specifically
6. Faulty Diagnosis
7. Refusal to See Medicine as A Way God Heals
8. Not Using the Natural Means of Preserving Health
9. “Now is not the time...”
10. A Different Person Is to Be The Instrument of Healing
11. Demonic Interference including Curses and Generational Bondage
12. The Social Environment Prevents Healing from Taking Place

This is probably one of the most comprehensive lists from an application point of view. MacNutt helps us to understand in why some are not healed with fresh insight. First, redemptive suffering serves to accomplish a larger purpose in the Kingdom of God than physical healing itself. He cited Paul's suffering for the church and for the sake of the Gospel. He quoted the story of Agnes Sanford's sickness and how God used it to transform the community of Franciscan Sisters. In other words, if the sickness is truly a redemptive sickness for certain incidents, good fruit will be the result of it. Second, there is a time when sickness is the direct result of the demonic assault, and once the demonic power is broken, the afflicted will recover from his/her infirmity. On the other hand, some sickness seems to pass down from one generation to another. It requires a prayer to break the generational bondage to free the person from his condition, whether the condition is spiritual or genetic oriented. Lastly, some sufferings are relational, and healing will not be complete until the relationship which causes the problem is restored. MacNutt reminds us that "there is more than one reason why people are not healed: lack of faith is not the only reason, and ministers of healing who oversimplify are simply leading people into all kinds of false guilt" (Healing, page 204). "Waiting upon God's wisdom in all simplicity, like a child," is the attitude we should have when we don't have all the answers.

3) Other ministers who have had a successful healing ministry wanted to teach others to pray for the sick with growing power based on biblical principles, which have had an enormous impact on their lives and those who have had an experience with it. For example, Seng uses a power equation to "help to illustrate how several different elements can combine together to increase our power in the Spirit" (Miracle Work, page 55). The simplicity of formula helps break

down the complexity of an abstract concept into elements that are easy to understand. Below is Power Equation Seng uses in his book *Miracle Work*:

$$\text{Authority} + \text{Gifting} + \text{Faith} + \text{Consecration} = \text{Power}$$

Basically, the argument goes like this. Supernatural Healing and miracles take the power of God to manifest. More power leads to more people getting healed. To increase power, you need to increase the capacity of each of the four elements contributing to power. Others who have been inspired to lead and participate in the healing ministry in one way or another operate in these principles. So let's take a closer look at each of the four categories of the power equation and learn from what others have to offer within the same principles.

A) Authority:

The Great Commission is one of the most significant statements from the Lord Jesus Christ. It's found on the Gospel of Mathew, Chapter 28:18-20:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Jesus has all the authority for us to get things done, and He promises his active presence for his followers when they obey his command. Seng believes obedience holds the key to growing in power. He asserts: "Active obedience in a situation adds power to the situation. A thing done in obedience is a thing that releases power" (*Miracle Work*, page 61). In his book *How to Pray for Healing*, Ahn said: "It's my conviction that as we grow in authority, we will see greater miracles and more healing than we do now" (page 48). He believes sin, ignorance, unbelief, and fear are

the common hindrance to move in God's authority. Jesus has given us the authority to defeat Satan and his work. It's up to us to act in faith and obedience. Johnson understands power and obedience well based on his own experience. He said, "No matter how much preparation is done to increase the anointing for miracles in a life, it never comes to fruition without radical obedience. I must look for the sick and tormented in order to pray for them" (When Heaven Invades Earth, page 104). When we don't see the better results, perhaps we should first examine whether we have really understood the authority given by Jesus and ask God whether there are any obstacles in our lives hindering us from exercising that authority. Jesus said: "I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you" (Luke 10:19). If we believe and obey, shouldn't we see more healing manifested?

B) Gifting:

"Spiritual gifts give us a power boost in the specific ministry area they apply to," said Seng, "Healing gifts increase power for healing, prophetic gifts for prophesying, and so on" (page 63). Seng believes there are two ways to go about in getting the gift of healing. Pray and ask God for the healing gifts or borrow someone who already has the gifts to support your healing ministry. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives spiritual gifts. Sometimes healing takes place in a setting where multiple gifts manifested to accomplish the work, including gift of knowledge, gift of discerning of spirits, and gift of faith. That is why a prayer team is a great way to minister to the sick.

C) Faith:

Faith is perhaps the most important foundation with which every supernatural ministry is relied on. Jesus often associates the role of faith to the recipients who have received healing in the Gospel. “Miracle-working faith believes that God is genuinely eager for the goodness of miracles,” Seng said, “Believers should have an entire lifestyle built around taking risks on God’s generosity because that’s the best way to grow in trust” (page 66-67). A.B. Simpson teaches that faith must be rested on the Gospel. “Faith must ever rest on the Divine Word, and the most important element in the ‘prayer of faith’ is a full and firm persuasion that the healing of disease by simple faith in God is beyond question, a part of the Gospel and a doctrine of the Scriptures.” (The Gospel of Healing). Jesus attributed to the failure of his disciples to drive out the demon of an afflicted young boy due to a lack of faith. He said: “because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘move from here to there’ and it will move; Nothing will be impossible for you” (Matthew 17:14–20). If we want to see more people healed when prayed for, we need to grow in faith. Ahn teaches the five principles of faith to help us develop in faith in How to Pray for Healing (page 70-84). Johnson teaches faith from his personal experience that involves a risk factor. Merely understanding the truth in the bible is not enough. Johnson asserts, “Teaching MUST be followed with action that makes room for God to move.” (When Heaven Invades Earth, page 88).

D) Consecration:

Lastly, Seng refers consecration to the way “we dedicate ourselves to the things of God through specific sacrificial acts. The more of ourselves we set apart exclusively for God’s use, the larger our capacity to flow in God’s supernatural power” (page 69). It’s living a life dedicating to the kingdom of God and his righteousness in expecting God’s power overflow through us, touching

many lives. He suggests regular fasting, worship, and prayer as a way to live a consecrated life. Seng believes in the relationship between consecration and power. He said, “What you sacrifice to heaven; God gives back to you with power” (page 73). Johnson affirms the importance of consecration for the increase of God’s power in our lives. He said, “If we really want more of God, then we must change our lifestyle so that His manifested presence will increase upon us” (When Heaven Invades Earth, page 139). Near the end of his ministry, Jesus prayed to the Father, “they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth”. (John 17:16-17). The word sanctify means to make holy and to consecrate. We need to keep remind ourselves although we live in this world, we ultimately belong to another world, which is the kingdom of heaven. If we want to minister to the sick with power and see more people healed, we have to make a sacrificial living and separate ourselves from the distractions of the world.

CONCLUSION:

In this paper, we first affirm God is still in the healing business. He is the God that heals us. We believe sickness is traced to sin, and it belongs to the kingdom of Satan. We believe Jesus Christ has fulfilled God’s plan of salvation through his sacrificial death on the cross. He has defeated Satan, was resurrected from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father. We believe salvation not only limited to its spiritual sense with the promise of forgiveness and eternal life but also healing from diseases. As we witness lives being restored and healing taking place by prayers, we also realize not all who are healed when prayed for. We try to look for answers to the question from a theological perspective, and also from a diagnostic perspective in

which we can see more success in healing. Lastly, we draw on the experience from ministers who have attained a consistent measure of success in their healing ministry and study their principles behind their success. We conclude that divine healing, including inner healing to an extent, will always remain a mystery. However, God has given us tested biblical principles and commands in praying for the sick. We believe the rate of success in healing is in proportion to our capacity in exercise authority, gifting, faith, and to the degree we live a consecrated life. Our task is to keep praying for the sick and commit ourselves to his faithfulness, whether healing manifests immediately or not.

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