

The Gifts of Healing

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[This is the fourth in a series on the Holy Spirit and Today]

Note that in First Corinthians 12 healing is referred to in the plural. There are numerous ways in which the Holy Spirit works healing in our lives.

Contrary to the teaching of some sects, the Charismatic Episcopal Church recognizes the contribution of physicians, medicine, and medical research as one of those "gifts" of healing, not discounting the place of Unction, Laying-on-of-Hands, Prayer and Fasting. All are part of the "gifts" of healing.

In 1980 I was one of a team of twelve who ministered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. We were warned upon entry not to openly evangelize because as a Moslem dominated government we would immediately be expelled - *persona non grata*. The home in which I stayed was that of an English physician. Four physicians had created a clinic. The majority of their patients were Muslims. Each Wednesday at noon they held a "healing service" to which the patients were invited as "part of your treatment if you wish to come." Strictly voluntary. Many came. The healing service began with a song, a brief devotion about Jesus, and laying-on-of-hands. People went to the doctors and visiting clergy to receive prayer. Miracles convince Muslims of the power of Jesus of whom they have been taught He was only a prophet. They learn He is more than a Prophet.

Our Barnabas team was ministering in Zamboanga Mindanao (Philippines) at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church adjacent to Brent Hospital. A mid-wife student came to my station for prayer. She claimed dizziness. In talking with her I learned she was of the Muslim faith, and I asked her if she had a problem with me praying for her in the Name of Jesus. She did not; I prayed. I had her to sit and jump up to test the healing. No dizziness. A witness to the power of the Name of Jesus.

I learned to test the healing from Canon Mark Pearson. With his doctor-wife Mary, Canon Pearson has a healing center in New Hampshire (christianrenewal.wordpress.com). He accompanied me on two missions to the Philippines where he taught on the subject of healing. He told us to try to ascertain things the person could not do associated with the request for prayer. For example, if they ask for prayer because of a back problem, have

them do something that demonstrated the pain or problem. After you pray for them, test it by having them repeat the same demonstration. I have pages of testimony where this was done and it was a witness to the power of healing in Jesus' Name, and assurance to the person for whom the prayer was offered.

I was alone as teacher (Bishop David Ga from Dumaguete, an Iglesia Filipina Independiente Bishop accompanied me) on the island of Kilibo with former Obispo Maximo Abdias dela Cruz (*IFI*) who had invited me to do a seminar for his church lay workers and have a healing service the final evening. In the Philippines when you announce a healing service the people attend, and I knew I would be exhausted if I did the ministry alone. That afternoon I did a quick training of the seminar participants and told them they would form teams and pray for the people. I told them to do what Canon Pearson had taught - test the healing. The church was filled with people. I formed six stations and rotated among the teams. Upon reaching one station the people had finished praying for a lady and were waiting for her to return to her seat. "Did you test the healing?" I asked. They had not. I inquired as to what were they praying for and it was her back. I asked her how did the problem manifest itself and she told me. I asked her to do back bends, forward bends, stoop down; every possible position and there was no pain. The team was excited to see God answer their prayers. Then they told me about the daughter of this lady for whom they had just prayed, and she had a protruding tumor you could feel with your hand. They had not tested the healing. I called her to come back and asked "where *was* the tumor"? She went to show me and to her surprise, it was gone. If you fail to "test" the healing, the person may not even realize what God has done.

Bishop dela Cruz was watching. A man came from the congregation with his young son. He explained the child was born with a breathing defect that prevented him from running and playing like other children. To do the least exercise he would be breathless and pass out. I prayed for the child, and instructed him to run out of the church to the street and return. He did. No problem. I told him to do it again. He did. No problem. The bishop asked what was going on. He witnessed the healing in the child.

I know there are situations where the "testing" cannot be done, but where it is possible, do it. One night at Holy Trinity they brought a person on stretcher from the hospital. She was in such pain she could not walk. Assisting me on the prayer team was Dr. Rosendo Pacia, chief surgeon at

Brent Hospital. I asked what was the problem. It was something related to the woman's abdomen and her physician was in the church watching all this. The team prayed. Dr. Pacia asked the right kind of questions and the woman's response in her dialect was "no more pain". She walked out of the church, followed by her physician who discharged her from the hospital. Whenever we were in southern Philippines, Dr. Pacia was always with us and a tremendous blessing in ascertaining the problem for which to pray and the result after prayer.

Some healings are instantaneous. Some take place the next day. Remember the lepers were healed as they went on their way from Jesus. Some require continued prayer as Jesus prayed twice for a blind man before sight was restored. When anointed with Holy Oil it becomes one of the seven Sacraments. Laying-on-of-Hands provide the human touch of compassion. Sometimes exorcism of evil spirits is part of the healing procedure. But definitely, the Holy Spirit is still in the business of healing.

I recommend Canon Pearson's book "*Christian Healing: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide*" and, if you want to "grow" your church begin having a week night healing service opened to the public with your **laity trained** to do the ministry.