

Melva's Corner

YES, I BELIEVE IN HEALING!

Part II

July 4, 2005

Bible Text: Luke 6:18-19 Luke 9:1, 2

Central Truth: “Do you want to be made whole?”

This message continues our series on, “Yes, I Believe in Healing.” In the Healing Ministry, many of the gifts of the Spirit are in operation (I Corinthians 12:4-11). The **'Word of Knowledge'** is one. Obviously God knows everything about every person and the **'Word of Knowledge'** is a divinely given fragment of that knowledge. Years ago a young married couple came to me for prayer. The husband told me that his wife was often overwhelmed by the fear of death and that this caused a great deal of sadness in her life. As he said this, the Holy Spirit told me that it was all related to her mother. On conveying that to her she broke down and wept. She told me that her mother had died when she was four and with that **'Word of Knowledge'** I was able to minister the deliverance and healing she needed.

Another gift is that of **'Faith'**. The supernatural spirit of faith! As a young evangelist I had the opportunity to minister with an extraordinary team of people. Their evangelistic ministry is one of healing through the operation of the Spiritual gifts of the **'Word of Knowledge'** and **'Faith'**.

I was praying with a group of them for a lady who was a relative of a member of our congregation. She had completely lost the sight in her left eye and was seeking healing. A number of us stood around her as we waited for a revelation from the Lord. Although I believe in physical healing through prayer, I did not at that time have faith to believe that her eye would be healed. However, a young man in the group did. He laid his hands on her and quietly told her that Jesus was at that moment restoring her sight. As a bystander I was as surprised as everyone else proved to be when,

with delight, she said her sight was restored. At the moment of prayer the Lord had given the young man that gift of faith.

Shortly after that I felt in possession of an incredible certainty which was this gift of faith and was consequently asked to go see a young man who was involved in a late night head-on crash. His car was written off and when eventually the ambulance arrived, he was pulled out as if dead. At the hospital I visited him in the Intensive Care Unit and spoke with the medical team involved. They said that his life was only being maintained by a machine and that his prognosis was non-existent. I did not accept their diagnosis and made my way towards his cubicle to pray with him. As I entered the area I was given an inner certainty that the Lord was going to raise him up. When I started to pray I found myself praising God for the healing which was beginning. Suffice it to say, he eventually recovered.

Paul uses the term '**the gifts of healing**' in I Corinthians 12:4-11. There are various ways in which the Lord shows believers what particular healing gift they may have. In the church I previously attended we prayed regularly for the sick at our monthly Communion Service. When I initially started attending five or six church leaders usually ministered and they prayed in such a way that the whole church could join in. This changed with the visitation of a guest minister from India. On the Saturday night of his visit he had a 'Word of Knowledge' to the effect that the Lord was anointing different members of the congregation for a healing ministry. He went on to say that all those who felt a warm tingling in their hands should go to the communion rail. About thirty went forward. He then anointed them with oil in the name of the Lord and the Spirit came mightily upon them.

Today, in that church, after every service several teams of these folks are on hand to pray for the sick. It is amongst them that there is a strong gift of healing operating weekly. To illustrate - one morning a lady came forward in great emotional distress. As they prayed for her the Holy Spirit spoke through one of the members and said two things: first, she was to open her life fully to Him and to receive the resources of His Spirit; second, she was to make an appointment to see a member of our congregation, who is a doctor and trained spiritual counselor.

The **'Discerning of Spirits'** is another gift used in the healing ministry. About nine years ago a young lady came to me for counseling. As I looked at her I was inwardly aware that an evil spirit had infiltrated her personality. She said that she had wanted to believe in Jesus, but whenever she tried, voices screamed in her head and she became agitated and violent. It seemed that she had been actively involved in occult practices. As she repented a prayer in the name of Jesus set her free to believe and rejoice.

Sometimes the Holy Spirit leads us to the sources of problems by showing us pictures or **'Visions'** about someone's condition. I remember at a conference there was a lady who was on leave from abroad and asked for prayer. As I prayed, a picture was given of a flower in full bloom which began to shrivel. I mentioned this and she replied, 'That is a picture of me. My spiritual life has shriveled and I feel empty and lost.' As we continued to pray the Spirit said that there were three things which were the cause of this condition: a sexual problem, deep guilt, and fear. I was then able to deal with each of these as she admitted them and through counsel and absolution she came to an inner peace and knew again the presence of God. God then said, 'She can be filled with the Spirit.' So we prayed and the Spirit filled her. I had a message from her two years afterwards saying all was going well.

I believe that, apart from unbelief, the greatest barrier to healing is an unwillingness to be healed. It may sound strange, but many people only have identity and receive the compassion they desire because of their illness.

Recently, I ministered to a young engaged couple. The girl suffered from noises in the inner ear, which sometimes became so severe that she fainted. Over the years her parents had taken her to several doctors, but extensive tests showed nothing organically wrong.

Her conversation turned into a confession. When she was young her father had not been able to show her affection. However, at an early age she discovered that if she fainted she would receive the affection she craved. With the fainting came the noises in the inner ear. She had received both medical care and prayer; she had enjoyed the attention; up until that day she hadn't wanted to be healed. Her subsequent letter recounts that after her prayer of confession, the Lord healed her completely.

As we continue our discussion of inner healing it is important to remember that the mind is the battlefield upon which the devil wages the greatest war. He is by nature a destroyer, a liar, and an accuser. It is to the mind that he brings the thoughts which, if pursued, can lead to oppression. It is not without significance that Paul writes: 'Always carry the shield of faith so that you can use it to put out the burning arrows of the Evil One' (Ephesians 6.16).

'Burning arrows', once they pierce, and make an entrance, consume and destroy. I once read that on the walls of Martin Luther's study there is a mark where he threw an inkpot at the devil. We at times need to be just as definite. We must heed the words of Peter when he wrote: **'Be calm, but vigilant, because your enemy, the Devil, is prowling round like a roaring lion looking for someone to eat. Stand up to him, strong in faith'** (I Peter 5.8-9).

Whether we call it 'depression or 'oppression', it is my experience that the powers of evil are able somehow to infiltrate the human personality and distort it. Last month I ministered to a young man who was seeking freedom. He wanted to be engaged to a certain girl, but was also a practicing homosexual. He had tried to free himself but always, in his words, something overwhelmed him. As I prayed for him in the name of Jesus, he shook violently and began to say, 'I'm free, I'm free - something has left me.' In his particular case, something had. He was completely delivered from homosexual tendencies.

In the Living Bible there is a delightful translation of Jude, verse 21. It reads: 'Stay always within the boundaries where God's love can reach and bless you.' When we step outside the boundaries through willful disobedience or ignorance, we can suffer from destructive feelings of guilt and insecurity, and these can also have physical effects.

Two years ago a woman came to me in much distress. Seven years previously she had stepped outside the boundaries and had an affair. At the same time she had contracted a crippling internal disease which left her weak and in need of constant medical care. Before I met her she had come to a deep sense of sorrow and, through confession, had sought God's forgiveness.

She had known God's forgiveness, but felt that her physical condition was due to her wrong actions and that what she needed

was God's cleansing. As we prayed for cleansing, the physical condition was resolved.

In another gracious act Christ showed me not only that He is involved in our lives, but also that He is well aware of what is necessary for a full healing. One evening a man telephoned to ask for prayer. He had a heart ailment and this condition was causing him particular distress because he was relatively young. We prayed together over the telephone for a few minutes. A few days later the following letter arrived. 'Many thanks for the telephone ministry the other day. Immediately after I put down the receiver I was overcome by a tremendous overpowering emotion from the depths, in which all my failure and sin came pouring out, and all I could do between sobs was to tell God that I was a failure who had treated him like dirt, and ruined the creature he had intended. For years I have been aware of a large dead area which knew nothing of God, and I had prayed that he would deal with it. I had forgotten that I had made that prayer! Anyway, the upshot has been that my heart quietened down almost at once, and the dead area is now alive; for the first time I can accept my failure, because God does forgive, and I really feel forgiven. I am no longer quite literally breaking my heart in the depths of myself. I have had a recent medical examination and everything is normal.'

What a marvelous work of love that was by our Lord. It again shows His total involvement in the human situation. Though the man was concerned primarily with his physical condition, the Lord dealt with the core problem, thus making possible the healing of the body for evidently the illness was caused by the man's spiritual need. Again, it is clear that Jesus not only commands us to heal but is Himself actively engaged in healing. The infant Church understood this, for they prayed, '**And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant to thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, while thou stretchest out thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of thy holy servant Jesus**' (Acts 4.29-30). It is noteworthy that in the incident just described healing was made at a distance. It shows that the Lord is active everywhere and that healing, as wonderful as it is, does not necessitate the laying-on of hands in every situation.

In a very large proportion of cases, physical illness is the result of emotional or spiritual disorder. Asthma, digestive and bowel problems, heart and skin conditions, rheumatism and arthritis, are

often indicative of deeper trouble. As we minister to people with such ailments, paying attention to underlying emotional and spiritual conditions, we find that the physical manifestations can disappear. This leads us into the area of much of our Lord's deep and lovely work - the whole realm of emotional or inner healing. Because of a whole range of factors many people today are finding life too demanding. Consequently, in order to keep going, they resort to drug prescriptions from their doctor to relieve depression, strain, anxiety and an inability to cope.

The Lord shows His healing power with many people who are in such a state. Help is available for people who are depressed, who feel unloved or unwanted, who are not ill enough to necessitate hospital treatment, but who find, nevertheless, that life has lost its joy and purpose. They feel inadequate or useless, often plagued by anxiety, worry, fear or guilt. This leads to loneliness and difficulty in relationships. In large numbers of cases in which I have been privileged to share, I have seen God bring people to an inner peace which has enabled them to resume life in a more positive and fruitful way. A minister shared this example of the healing of a lady who had quite a lot of inner suffering, described in her own words:

'I was born in May 1945 and have a sister eight years older. I lived in a family which was generally opposed to religion, and where violent episodes due to drinking were prevalent.

'The story of my healing begins in October 1973 when I found faith in the Lord Jesus Christ through deliverance from evil spirits. (I had been involved in the occult for a number of years, hoping to find a meaning to life.)

'I had been ill since January 1970 with a complete breakdown, and for nearly four years I had undergone various forms of medical treatment, culminating in a period in a psychiatric hospital where I underwent narcosis (sleep therapy), all to no avail. For the period during the breakdown I was taking thirty-four pills a day, including eight 5mg of Valium, three of Nardil and fifteen of Inderal (the latter were to steady my heart which on occasions was beating two hundred times a minute). Among the symptoms I experienced were phobias, a feeling of strangulation - a persistent lump in my throat - pressures and tightness in my chest and stomach. Most days I had at least one panic attack in which unknown fears completely overwhelmed me.

'Life became totally unbearable and I often considered suicide. I was away from work as often as I was there and eventually had to resign my job as well as withdraw from all activities outside the home. My marriage was on the rocks. I was a medical write-off, at twenty-eight years of age.

'When I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ into my life that evening in October 1973 (incidentally my husband did so at the same time), I found a meaning in life, and very soon, in consultation with the doctor, I could radically decrease the number of tablets. But after about eighteen months, having stopped taking all the tablets except about 1mg of Valium, I was unable to cut down any further. After much prayer with our minister and his wife as to why I was making no more progress, I was led to receive a deeper ministry of inner healing. On a number of occasions over the following months I was ministered to in a very deep way during which the Lord through His Spirit, took me back to areas in my past which needed His healing touch, including trauma during the birth process. This ministry revealed, among other things, that I had buried very deep anger against members of my family, especially my mother who had overprotected me as a child. My father had died in 1967 and I had never been able to express my grief at the time.

'As the areas of deep pain were exposed to the Master's healing love, the symptoms gradually disappeared - the lump in my throat was the last to go. The number of tablets I took diminished further until I was completely free from each and every one of them in July 1981, and today (over twenty years later) I am still free of them. During the past year, the Lord has helped me shed 40 pounds in weight, much of which I had put on during the illness.'

This lady and her husband are now themselves involved, in their parish church, in ministering to others who are in bondage to the emotional pains of their past.

There were some quite disturbing elements in this lady's background, some of which have not been mentioned for family reasons. While a surprising number have such traumas, many people from all levels of society who need inner healing come from what we would call a normal background. That is to say, their parents cared for them, wanted to be good parents and provided what they considered to be a family life that gave more than the

necessities of life. Nevertheless the children have grown up with problems. In the final analysis it seems that they feel they were not loved for themselves. The cause of this is that in some way the parents, or other adults involved, had been unable to form a true relationship with their children. This may be because of the parents' emotional difficulties, for example, the mother's emotional needs may drive her to try to possess her child. Post-natal depression can cause a rift between mother and child, as can the removal of a baby from its mother for medical reasons. Or some mothers for whatever reason may say that they are unable to bear the thought of having another child. All these and other factors can cause a child to feel he or she is unwanted. Similarly, fathers play their part. Someone will say to me, 'My father was a retiring person,' which means that he could not relate to his children, or 'I felt that father's first love was his work. The family seemed to come second.'

I have seen the Holy Spirit enter into the inner agony of many, giving them a new sense that they matter so that they have been able to accept themselves. As a result, their attitude to life has blossomed. While many people have been released, it must again be said that, for reasons which are not known yet, others have not come out of their prison. There is no magical or automatic action by God in areas such as these with so many complicating elements and unmet needs. But even in such cases, the willingness to share another's pain can never be in vain.

So I believe in healing because God has made it abundantly plain to me that He is active in caring for those He has created. The greatest joy is that He is strongly active 'at such a time as this', when the need is so great, for church after church is awakening to this realization and one sees the ministry of healing becoming an integral part of their life. This message reveals - the deeper we go into inner healing the great the results.

Memory Text:

**“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path”
(Psalms 119:105).**