

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Matt.21:18-22

Lesson #62

The Prayer of Faith

11/04/2018

Matthew 21:22

“And **all things** you ask in prayer, **believing**, you shall receive.”

What is the role of faith in healing?



*2016 Powerball
Lottery Jackpot*

\$1,586,500,000



2

prayer + faith = possession

- This does not seem to be true in the **experience** of many believers.
- This does not seem to be **healthy** for many believers.
- There are many texts that suggest that there are **other conditions** for answered prayer - motives, God's will, obedience, etc.
- But how are we to **view** this text and others like it?



3

Matthew 21

“18 Now in the morning, when He returned to the city, He became hungry. 19 And seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it, and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He said to it, “No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you.” And at once the fig tree withered. 20 And seeing this, the disciples marveled, saying, “How did the fig tree wither at once?” 21 And Jesus answered and said to them, “Truly I say to you, **if you have faith, and do not doubt**, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it shall happen. 22 And **all things you ask in prayer, believing**, you shall receive.””

4

The temple cleansing (vs.12-17) that precedes suggests an end to Israel's anointing.

The parable of two sons (vs.28-32) that follows makes the point that it's not those who talk but those who walk that get into the kingdom.

Matthew 21 (paraphrase)

“Jesus curses the fig tree (symbolizing Israel) and the disciples are shocked by how quickly it withered. Jesus tells them that if they trust in him, they too will displace Israel's anointing and change the world (**move mountains**). All things they do (**in prayer**) trusting him will bear the fruit that Israel did not and will not.”

5

Mark 2:22

“And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and the skins as well; but **one puts new wine into fresh wineskins.**”

Galatians 4:21-31

“**One covenant is from Mount Sinai** and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. . . . Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.” “**Cast out the bondwoman and her son,**” (vs.30)

6

Hebrews 8:13

“When He said, “A new covenant,” He has made the first **obsolete**. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old **is ready to disappear.**”

Hebrews 10:26

“For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, **there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,**”

7

“For if we hold with a firm heart the grace of God which has been given us, we are Israel, the seed of Abraham: unto us the Apostle says, “Therefore are you the seed of Abraham.””



Saint Augustine

8

Psalms 37:4

“Delight yourself in the LORD;
And He will give you
the desires of your heart.”

- The desires of our flesh may not be the core desires of our heart **(reconciliation with God, others).**
- Answered prayer comes when the desires of our heart are **synced** with the desires of God’s heart.

9

Faith & Healing Missteps

1.

The “prayer of faith”
that serves our priorities
more than God’s purposes
is idolatrous.



10

The besetting sin of Adam,
Israel, & fallen humanity is
spiritual autonomy.

“The Prayer of Faith”
is a path to freedom
with respect to bondage
to Satan’s agenda

**but not with respect to
bondage to
God’s agenda?**



11

Faith healing has a broad base of testimonial support.

- **Roman Catholic** icons and saints.
- **Protestants** like Oral Roberts and A. A. Allen.

“Healing” outside the Judeo-Christian tradition.

- **LDS** (Mormons) have a long history of faith healings.
- **New Ager** Larry Dossey’s science of prayer.
- **Psychics** like Harry Edwards.
- **Mediums** like Thomas Johanson of England.
- **Buddhism** (The Medicine Buddha).
- **Mind “Scientists”** like L. Ron Hubbard.
- **Placebo affects** mind over matter.

12

Healing in the N.T. is often but not always linked with faith.

- Most often healing faith was mentioned with a direct connection to Christ.
- Sometimes faith was emphasized but without reference to Christ. (Mk.5:34) **“faith in faith”?**
- Sometimes healing took place without the person knowing who Jesus was. (Jn.9:5-11) **“drive by healings”**
- In some cases there is no mention of faith. (Lk.6:17-19) **“come to the healer”**

13

Placebo Effect

a beneficial effect, produced by a placebo drug or treatment, that cannot be attributed to the properties of the placebo itself, and **must therefore be due to the patient's belief in that treatment.**

- This has been known for decades.
- It is most effective in removing certain symptoms but not underlying diseases.
- How it works is still unknown but it does suggest that there is a strong connection between faith and body chemistry.

14

“Miracles are not contrary to nature, but only contrary to what we know about nature.”



Saint Augustine

15

“Miracles do not, in fact, break the laws of nature.”



C.S. Lewis

16

Miracles

(God’s **“unusual providence”**)

- Not all miracles are in the same class.
 - Class #A** - Viewed as impossible in nature. (Resurrection of Christ’s body)
 - Class #B** - Viewed as improbable in nature. (Parting the Red Sea)
 - Class #C** - Viewed as dramatic coincidence. (The great catch of fish)
 - Class #D** - God’s general providence. (“We wish to see Jesus”)

17

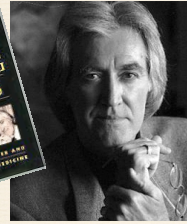
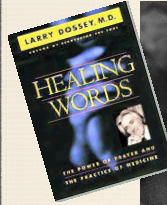
**"Mysteries are
not necessarily
miracles."**

**Johann Wolfgang
von Goethe**
("unorthodox Christian"
German writer and statesman)



18

Some "faith healing" is natural.



Before his book *Healing Words* was published in 1993, only three U.S. medical schools had courses devoted to exploring the role of religious practice and prayer in health; currently, nearly 80 medical schools have instituted such courses, many of which utilize Dr. Dossey's works.

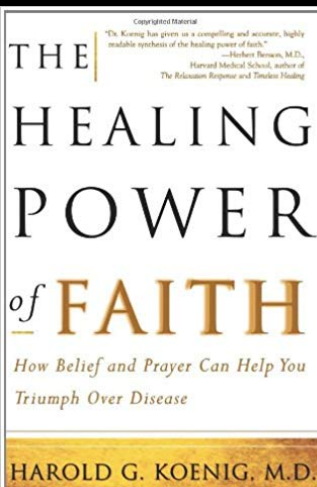
"Common"
healing by
faith



"Miraculous"
healing by
faith



19



**"Probably saying a 30
second prayer at a key
moment has done more
good than any
psychotherapy or drugs
I've prescribed."**

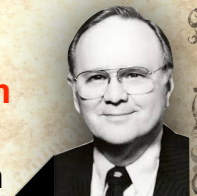


20

**Pioneer study of faith
and science in
physical healing**

- 1. Salvation**
- 2. Spirit filled**
- 3. Exorcism**

Dr. Willam P. Wilson



21

KEN BURNS PRESENTS
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22

Faith & Healing Missteps

2.

**A God who only heals
dramatically, or on our
command, & timetable
is too small.**



23

Some common mistakes:

- **A God who is “too small”** - who can only work in limited ways.
- **Neglect of faith** - in God’s general providence and in His dramatic acts.
- **Focus on faith** - with little attention to its object and SUBJECT.
- **Misplaced object of faith** - Faith in faith, Virgin Mary, etc.
- **Misplaced subject of faith** - MY plans, success, comfort, happiness, etc.

24

How to pray for healing:

- **Trust** - God and His plan / providence, knowing that we only see “dimly”.
- **Discern** - God’s perspective and priorities. (Lk.22:42)
 - * **Listen** - for “fear”, “guilt”, “bitterness”, “confusion”, “pride”, etc.
 - * **Scripture** - Eph.1,3,6, Jas.4:1-10, Matt.4:1-11.
 - * **Pray** - for insight, perseverance, and courage.
- **Petition** - God for deliverance (2 Cor.12)
 - * **Circumstances** - “from the situation”
 - * **Character** - “from personal blindness”

25