

Notes for the Ekklesia Meeting

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Gifts Of Healings By The One Spirit

by Dan Trygg

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of servings, and the same Lord. And there are varieties of in-workings, but the same God, the One in-working all things in all persons. But to each one is given the disclosure of the Spirit for the common good ("carrying together"). For, on the one hand, to one is given a word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to a different person a faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healings by the one Spirit, and to another in-workings of powerful acts, and to another a prophetic-utterance, and to another distinguishings of spirits, to a different person kinds of tongues, and to another an interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit in-works all these things, distributing to each one individually according as He intends." I Cor. 12:4-11

"...and the power of the Lord was being [there] for Him to heal." Lk. 5:17

"And all the crowd was seeking to touch Him, because power from Him was coming out and was healing everyone." Lk. 6:19

The word used for "healing" in this passage is the Greek word *hiama*. It means "a healing, a cure, or a restoration", emphasizing the outcome of wholeness and health. There are 26 total times in the NT where the verbal form of this word (*hiamai*) occurs (Matt. 8:8,13; 13:15; 15:28; Mk. 5:29; Lk. 5:17; 6:18,19; 7:7; 8:47; 9:2,11,42; 14:4; 17:15; 22:51; Jn. 4:47; 5:13; 12:40; Acts 9:34;10:38; 28:8,27; Jas. 5:16; I Pet. 2:24), and three times each where two different noun derivatives occur (*hiama* -- I Cor. 12:9,28,30; *hiasis* -- Lk. 13:32; Acts 4:22,30). While there are three instances that clearly do *not* refer to physical healing (Matt. 13:15; Jn. 12:40; Acts 28:27), the vast majority of instances deal with physical healing, though some also may include spiritual/emotional healing, as well. The common word for a physician was also a derivative (*hiatros*), since a physician, when successful, affected the cure or restoration of a person's health. It is clear from the contexts, and the dramatic impact of Jesus' healing ministry, that His methods were very powerful and often instantaneous. Unquestionably, He and the apostles were instruments of Divine, miraculous healing, though the word itself is indistinguishable from cures wrought in other ways.

There was another Greek word, *therapeuō*, which was also used to describe healing. This occurs some 43 times in verbal form (Matt. 4:23,24; 8:7,16; 9:35; 10:1,8; 12:10,15,22; 14:14; 15:30; 17:16,18; 19:2; 21:14; Mk. 1:34; 3:2,10; 6:5,13; Lk. 4:23,40; 5:15; 6:7,18; 8:2,43; 9:1,6; 10:9; 13:14; 14:3; Jn. 5:10; Acts 4:14; 5:16; 8:7; 17:25; 28:9; Rev. 13:3,12), with another 3 times appearing as a noun (*therapeia* -- Lk. 9:11; 12:42; Rev. 22:2). Of all these occurrences, two are definitely *not* about healing, but serving. The emphasis of *therapeuō* is on the action of serving or attending to the person in order to affect a cure. It could also be used for a long-term care situation, as a nurse or other care-giver. The contexts in which the word occurs in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles again reveal that what they were doing was God-induced, supernatural healing. *Therapeuō* emphasizes the ministry act (i.e., they "did therapy", usually involving prayer, laying on of hands, exorcism or other such methodology), while *hiamai* emphasizes the result of the ministry process.

If these two words are taken together, there are 73 times in the NT where healing is mentioned. Without doubt, healing is a major theme, and a noticeable characteristic of the activity of the Kingdom of God. Even in the Old Testament, from just a cursory survey I found at least 37 passages that attribute healing to the Lord (Gen. 20:17; Ex. 15:26; Num. 12:13; Deut. 32: 39; II Kg. 20:5,8; II Chr. 7:14; 30:20; Job 5:18; Psa. 6:2; 30:2; 41:4; 103:3; 107:20; 147:3; Isa. 19:22; 30:26; 38:16; 53:5; 57:8,19; Jer. 3:22; 17:14; 30:7; 33:6; Ezk. 47:12; Hos. 6:1; 7:1; 11:3; 14:4; Mal. 4:2). These cover physical, spiritual, emotional and even national healing. It is clear that OT believers looked to God for healing. They also had experienced dramatic, miraculous healing in answer to prayer, so that Jesus' ministry was an expansion upon Old Testament experiences, not an entirely new thing.

We must remember, too, that supernatural healing was also performed by demonic spiritists and proponents of false religion. The healing ministry of Jesus and the apostles was clearly distinct because of its emphasis on calling people to serve God. False teachers will generally direct people away from the true God. They promote themselves, or entice people away to serve something else. NT healing ministry also stood out by virtue of the freedom with which healing grace was offered and dispensed. There were no fees to be paid, or "gifts" to be offered to the healer, nor generally other "conditions" to be met. Usually, Jesus and the apostles did not even know the people they were ministering to, and the grace was offered freely (Matt. 10:8). Any response on the part of the person was left up to them. The NT healing ministry was also distinguished by the dramatic power of it in curing afflictions which no one else was able to heal (e.g., Jn. 9). Healing is a demonstration and a sign that the Kingdom of God is present, ...and is breaking into this present, broken world order, bringing life, restoration, and hope.

Did Jesus' death pay for all healing? Yes. Jesus' death and resurrection paid for the redemption of all created things, and the restoration, re-creation and "re-ordering" of all creation (Rom. 8:18-25; Acts 3:18-21). Without a doubt, He took upon Himself our sicknesses, sufferings, griefs and pains, along with our sin (Isa. 53:4; Matt. 8:16,17; I Pet. 2:24).

Is it God's desire that everyone be healed? Yes. He desires to remove every vestige of sin and evil, suffering, sickness and pain. These were not part of His original creation, and He wants to make all things new. The new world He will make will have no sin, evil, tears, mourning or pain.

Does that mean that everyone who comes to Him for healing will be immediately healed? No. Even though the Kingdom of God *is here*, and we can enjoy *many* of its benefits and provisions *now*, we do not presently possess *all* aspects of our inheritance in Jesus. This world is still, in many ways, "enemy territory". *There is much that goes on here that is not in accordance with the desires of God's heart, yet He still permits* (cf. Lam. 3:33-38). The purpose of the church is *not* to take over the world for Jesus. Jesus will do that when He returns. We are not here to establish His Kingdom *by force*, -- physically, politically, spiritually, or miraculously. **What are we here to do? We are to be followers and servants of Jesus to do the Father's will, as He reveals it to us. We are to be disciples and to make disciples.** We are on display before angelic beings, who watch to see if we will persevere in serving God because He is worth serving, ...even if we *don't* get what we want when we want it (Eph. 3:8-13; cf. Job 1:8-12; 2:3-6). Just as it is not in God's will that we preach the gospel to everybody at *any* time (cf. Acts 16:6-11), in the same way we cannot "claim" or "enforce" healing upon anybody and everybody at any time. God has a plan and a way that He wants us to walk in. **There is a time to heal, and God has made everything appropriate in its time** (Ecc. 3:3,11).

Did Jesus heal everybody He met that had an affliction? No. There were many times when He *did* heal everybody present, because the power of the Lord was with Him to do so (e.g., Lk. 6:18,19). There were other times where "many" were healed (Mk. 1:34; 3:10; Lk. 7:21), and on at least one occasion only a "few" were healed (Mk. 6:5). At the pool of Bethesda, He apparently only healed the one lame man, though the room was full of sick and afflicted people (Jn. 5:1-9). Jesus undoubtedly walked by the beggar sitting by the gate of the temple many times, and did not address his condition. Later, *it was at the initiative of the Holy Spirit* that Peter and John healed him (Acts 3).

Does God want us to seek Him for healing? Yes. He makes it very clear that He *desires* us to come to Him for this (Jas. 5:14-16). He *does* make provision to heal today, and we are encouraged to ask for healing individually (e.g., II Cor. 12:8), and as a group (Jas. 5:13-16; I Cor. 12,14).

What are "gifts of healings" in I Cor. 12? I believe that the giftings described in vss. 4-11 are temporary manifestations of the Spirit, which He may give to anyone in the Body to meet a specific need on a particular occasion, while the listings of gifts elsewhere tend to be more permanent. The "gifts of healings" in vss. 28,30 are described as almost a possession, "All do not *have* gifts of healings, do they?" The word "have" here is in a form that indicates an ongoing state. In vss. 4-11, however, the thrust is that the Holy Spirit distributes these giftings to various individuals as He desires. The gifts here are presented as indefinite, ...*a* word of wisdom, *a* word of knowledge, *a* faith..., indicating a momentary, episodic gifting, instead of a permanent deposit of some sort. These are all "manifestations" or "disclosures" of the Holy Spirit distributed among the people for the common good, i.e., literally, for the "carrying together" of some issue. **All of the gifts listed in these verses are "disclosure gifts" or revelatory abilities. I believe they are given to indicate to us what God desires to do, along with the ability to do it.**

There is a *prompting* of God by means of some kind of revelation, leading, or inner desire which is produced by Him, not us. *We must then engage with that*, respond to it, or express what God is prompting us to express, in some manner that is appropriate to the initiative that God is doing. *If we do that, then* He will act upon the person.

There is a three-step process:

- (1.) **God initiating** through some kind of revelation of what He desires to do;
- (2.) **Our active human response** to be a willing conduit through whom God can work;
- (3.) **The activity of the Holy Spirit actually doing the work.**

This is *exactly* how Jesus operated. He *saw* what the Father was doing (revelation -- Jn. 5:19,20,30), and He engaged with that by "*doing* what the Father was doing" (*active* human response -- Jn. 5:19), which unleashed the flow of God's Spirit to operate through Him (Jn. 5:1-9; cf. Lk. 5:17; 6:17-19). In a gathering with other believers, if the Holy Spirit prompts *you* to pray for healing, then *you* must act on that leading in order to see God work. God generally chooses to work *with* us and *through* us, instead of *in spite of* us. **The challenge for us is to discern what He wants to do, and how He wants us to do our part, ...and then to take the risk to do it.**

The fact that this distribution is called "gifts of healings" indicates that **there are different kinds of healings that God can work, and there are different ways He would like to operate.** We must not limit our perception to familiar patterns or methods. He may want to work differently through *us* than He does with other people we may know about, or He may want to work differently *in this particular case* than what we might expect. Jesus used many different methods in His dealing with people. **We should not be surprised if the Spirit would suggest something unexpected. Ask Him what He wants to do, and then follow as He leads.**