

This is tape number SHS317. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical references are quoted from the King James Version.

Let us turn to 1 Corinthians 12:9, where Paul is listing the gifts or the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. In the last study we looked at the gift of faith and we pointed out that faith is really related to the gifts of healing. We read, “to another faith by the same Spirit and to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.”

Now throughout biblical history, God has manifested His power to heal. In Genesis 17, we find the recording of the healing of Abimelech, his wife, and his maid servants in answer to Abraham’s prayer. We find that God gave wonderful promises of healing to the children of Israel.

In Exodus 15:26, God said,

If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.

He is saying, “I am the Lord that healeth thee.” He is *Jehovah Rapha*, the Lord Our Healer.

In Deuteronomy 32:29, God said,

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

As David is talking about the wonderful benefits of God in Psalm 103:3, he said,

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.

And then in the New Testament we find that James 5:14-15 says,

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.

And so, there are promises both in the Old and New Testament of healing.

Again in the Old Testament we find Miriam, the sister of Moses, was healed of leprosy in answer to the prayer of Moses. Hezekiah was actually healed from a deathbed as the result of prayer. And it is interesting to me that in Leviticus 14, God made provision for the leper in the day of his cleansing. Though leprosy was incurable, God left the opening to heal the leprous person, and thus a way of restoration back into society. This was the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing:

He shall be brought to the priest. And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper. (Leviticus 14:2-3)

And as we look at the ministry of Jesus, there can be no denial that healing of the sick was one of the dominant factors of His ministry. We read such passages as Matthew 4:23,

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Then in Matthew 9:35,

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

When Jesus sent the disciples out on their mission to preach the kingdom and to heal the sick, He said,

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. (Matthew 9:1-2)

It seemed to be sort of the preaching of the kingdom and the healing of the sick in the ministry of Jesus. And now in the command to His disciples:

And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where. (Matthew 9:3-6)

So the healing of the sick was a dominant part of the ministry of Christ and also of the disciples.

As we go on in the book of Acts when the disciples were telling about Jesus, they said,

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. (Acts 10:38)

But in Acts 5:12-16,

And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

After the ascension of Jesus, the ministry of the healing of the sick through the power of the Holy Spirit continued working through the disciples.

Acts 28:8-9 says,

It came to pass that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. So when this was done, others also which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed.

There were Old Testament manifestations of God's healing as well as the promises and the declaration that He is the Lord who heals them. And in the New Testament during the ministry of Christ, one of the prominent features of His ministry was the healing of the sick. And then the power was given to the disciples and a prominent aspect of their ministry, when they went out to preach the gospel, was the healing of the sick. Later when Christ ascended into heaven, they went out proclaiming the kingdom of God and again healing was a very important part of their ministry to people.

Now there are those who say that the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the divine miraculous manifestations of God ceased with the apostles. They say that God gave the apostles the supernatural power and these extraordinary manifestations to help get them started in a world that was antagonistic toward Jesus Christ—a world for the most part that did not know of Jesus Christ. Since they did not have seminaries and great cathedrals, the disciples needed a little extra boost in the beginning. But now that we have our educational facilities and now that we are so well organized, we no longer really need the divine manifestations of the Spirit to convince the world. They believe we can intellectually challenge the world and give our apologetics, and thus, we can convince this world that they need Jesus Christ. That might sound good in theory but it has not worked practically, as they have tried to put it into practice.

In the book called *The Ministry of Healing*, Dr. A. G. Gordon, who is the founder of the Christian Missionary and Alliance Church (which is a fellowship or denomination of churches) goes through church history from the early church fathers. He shows that throughout church history the gifts of healing have been manifested and there were men who wrote about the many people who were cured of their sickness and many people who were healed through prayer. Even John Wesley experienced seeing many people healed from their sicknesses as the result of prayer. Thus throughout church history, there are those manifestations of healing among certain groups—so that to say that it ceased completely with the apostles is to deny the validity of what some of the early church fathers have written and recorded.

Now it does not seem consistent to me that if all through biblical history, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament times, God healed the sicknesses in answer to believing prayer, yet God would suddenly stop healing the sick today. Surely you cannot make either a biblical or historical case that God has ceased healing today. I believe that people can be healed today by the touch of God upon their life, from all manner of sicknesses. I do not believe that God is limited, nor has He limited Himself. But I do believe that a person can be healed in response to believing prayer.

Now though I believe that God can heal and God does heal, I also realize that not everyone is healed. And for that I have no answer or no explanation. I know that I have prayed for many people and God has healed them. I have prayed for many people and they died. So if I pray for you, you have a fifty-fifty chance. You may get healed and you may die.

But it is interesting that we read of the gifts of healing throughout Scripture. And I believe that if at any time you have been prayed for and you have been healed that you have received a gift of healing. The Bible does not really talk about the gift of healers—that men would have the gift of healing—it is just the gifts, plural, of healings, plural. So that on many occasions I personally have received a gift of healing, as God has touched and healed my body. And if at any time in response to prayer you have received a touch of God and healing in your body, you have received, in a sense, a gift of healing.

And yet, in saying that, I also recognize that there are certain people who God seems to use in helping people to have the faith to believe He will heal them. Certainly with Peter there was that faith and God used him in the healing of many people. So much so, that they would lay the sick people in the street so that just the shadow of Peter falling on them, they might be healed.

Paul the Apostle also seemed to have that certain faith, so that many people were healed as a result of his ministry. And yet Paul wrote to Timothy and suggested that he take a little wine for his stomach's sake because he had stomach problems. Now I believe that Paul, no doubt, prayed for Timothy—that God would heal him of that stomach disorder. And when God did not supernaturally heal him, Paul suggested a little wine for his stomach's sake.

Paul talked about Epaphroditus being sick almost unto death. He talked about leaving Trophimus in a place because he was too sick to travel. And Paul spoke of his own sickness, calling it a thorn in the flesh—a minister of Satan to buffet him—for which he sought the Lord three times. When Paul was in Galatia and he wanted to go to Bythinia to preach the gospel, he said, “the Spirit forbade us.” But we know that Paul was so sick he could not travel. So although there were many marvelous healings in response to Paul's prayers and his faith, not everyone was healed. When he was in Ephesus they used to take his sweat bands (or handkerchiefs) and lay them on the sick people and they would be healed. So there were many healings, but not everyone was healed.

Now why is it that some people are healed and some are not? I do not know. There are just a lot of things that I do not understand about divine healing. And I do know that many times there are people who think that they have developed some kind of formula about how to touch a person, where to touch them, and how to read the body language. They have developed a lot of formulas and they even hold seminars on healing. It is interesting that some of the people who conducted those seminars on healing are quite sick right now. But you know, when you think you have all of the answers, then God sort of shows you that you do not have all the answers. And you cannot put it down to a formula.

Again with the gifts of the Spirit, we read that the Holy Spirit divides to each man severally as He wills. And the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowal of the gifts. Thus in the gifts of healing, whether or not I am healed is a sovereign work of God's Spirit and we are helpless. If God does not do the healing we are helpless to heal ourselves. And there is no magic formula whereby you can bring healing just to everyone. In fact, we read that when Jesus was in Nazareth He really did not do many marvelous miracles there because of the unbelief of the people. The unbelief probably kept them from coming to Jesus to receive help. But not all are healed and we need to acknowledge that. Paul received the all-sufficient grace of the Lord. "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

And I think that many times it takes greater faith not to be healed than it does to be healed. To love the Lord and trust the Lord even though I have not been healed takes really greater faith than just to be healed. And it is a greater witness many times for me to just say, "Well, I have prayed. I have asked the Lord. And I know the Lord can heal me. He has not yet seen fit to heal me. He has a purpose and a plan for my sickness." And thus I have just committed myself to His plan and His will. And He knows what is best and I rest in that. I am not all upset. I am not all frantic because I am not healed. I have just committed it to God."

As Peter said,

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God
commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a
faithful Creator. (1 Peter 4:19)

And that takes tremendous faith to just say, "Well, it is all in the Lord's hands and He is doing what He knows to be best." And resting, not really struggling with it or fighting it, but just resting in that my life is in God's hands and He knows what is best.

At the end of 1 Corinthians 12, Paul does ask the question,

Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all
workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak
with tongues? do all interpret? (1 Corinthians 12:29-30)

These are rhetorical questions and obviously the answer is, "No! Not all are apostles. Not all are prophets. Not all are teachers. Not all work miracles. Not all have the gifts of healings. Not all speak with tongues and not all interpret."

Now we are told however, there in the last verse of chapter 12, to "Covet earnestly the best gifts." And for years I coveted the gifts of working of miracles, faith, and healing. I would go out in the desert for prolonged periods of time, fasting and praying and waiting upon God for the gifts of healing faith. In my earlier years my ambition was to be a medical doctor. I was interested in the ills of humanity. I had a desire to help the sick. I had compassion. And thus when God called me into the ministry I felt perhaps I could still, through prayer, help a lot of people from their physical maladies. And knowing that the gifts of the Spirit are divided to each man severally as He wills, I was hoping it was His will that I might have these gifts. It never happened. And so I just committed it to the Lord.

But about twenty-eight years ago I was conducting a home Bible study down in Laguna Beach. It was the home of some people who were affiliated with the Church of Christ and they had become quite interested in the subject of the Holy Spirit. I was living in Corona and I was commuting to Laguna Beach for these studies. A good number of people were coming out on Monday night for

this home Bible study. One evening we had a couple of ladies from Laguna Beach who had been heavily into the New Age Movement, who came to the Bible study all excited. The previous day they had gone up to Los Angeles where Kathryn Kuhlman was having her services in the Shrine Auditorium. They had seen several people healed miraculously through her ministry. And as the result of what they saw there, they turned from the New Age Movement which they were deeply involved in. They had a genuine conversion. These women were excited. They had a genuine conversion experience.

And they were just bubbling with excitement in the Lord and in the power of Jesus Christ that they had seen manifested. And they were so changed, with such a dramatic change! That night as I was driving home to Corona, though I had not spoken to the Lord about it for a long time, I said, “Lord, You know if I just had the gifts of healing, the gift of faith, I could see these kind of dramatic transformations by people seeing the genuineness of Your power in healing.” And I was trying to convince the Lord that He ought to bestow these gifts upon me. And I told Him, “I understand why You did not give it to me in the early years of my ministry. I realize that I would not have been able to handle it then. But I feel I have matured and perhaps now...”

And I felt the Lord speaking to my heart saying, “I have called you to teach My Word.” You see, not all are teachers. Not all have the gifts of healing. So I was satisfied and I accepted that. I accepted just being what God had enabled me, gifted me, and called me to do. Teach His Word. And so for ten years I never talked to the Lord about that again. I just taught His Word.

But a little over fifteen years ago I was standing here in the pulpit after an evening service in which there was a beautiful move of the Spirit of God and there were scores of people that had gone back to the prayer room to pray to be saved. And for those who were still here in the auditorium, we were just worshipping the Lord. There was a beautiful spirit of worship that was among the people here. And as I was standing here at the pulpit, holding on to both sides and just basking in what God had done. I was praising Him for the people who had gone back to accept the Lord and just enjoying the sweet flowing and moving of the Spirit that we felt as we were just here worshipping God and giving thanks.

I said, “Lord, You have done so much here at Calvary Chapel. It is such a complete ministry. It is so exciting. There is probably only one aspect of the church of Acts, the New Testament church, that is missing and that is the gift of miracles and the gifts of healing. And although there are people who are being healed and though we have just seen a bunch of miracles, this is not quite what I read in the Book of Acts. And maybe, Lord, now I could handle it.” And as I was standing here the Lord again spoke to my heart and this time He said, “I have called you to the more excellent way.” And I remembered that Paul said, “Covet earnestly the best gifts,” which I thought I was doing. He said, “And yet I show you a more excellent way.”

A more excellent way than the gifts of healing, gifts of miracles, or whatever: that is the gift of love. Because scripture says, “though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and I have not love, it is meaningless noise. Though I have the gift of prophecy and I can understand all mysteries and I have all knowledge, and I have all faith, faith that I could remove mountains, if I don’t have love, I am nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:1-2). And so the Lord said, “I have led you in the more excellent way.” You know what? I just said, “Thank You, Lord. I will walk and show Your love.” And you know I have not talked to the Lord about it since. And I do not expect to. Why should I come down when He has led in the more excellent way?

Now I still pray for the sick. And I believe in praying for the sick. I believe in laying hands on the sick in the name of Jesus. I believe in anointing with oil because it is scriptural. And thus, I do

that. And as I say, some are healed and some are not, but that I leave with God. I know that I cannot heal them. I know my own limitations. I mean I might have great compassion and great empathy for them, but I cannot heal them. I know God can. But I recognize my own limitations. And all I can do is anoint a person, lay hands on them, and ask God to heal them. But then it is in God's court. I cannot heal them. Nor can I work up faith or whatever. I mean, if God does it and it is there, praise the Lord! But again there is just an awful lot to the gifts of healing that I confess I do not understand.

Now Paul in talking about the gifts of the Spirit, said there are diversities of gifts and there are diversities of operations. And I do believe that in the gifts of healings that God can and does use medical science today. I believe that God has given to the researchers a lot of insight and knowledge of the human body and the chemical makeup of the human body. And I believe He has helped in the designing of drugs and helped in the designing of operation procedures in bringing healing to the sick. Because I believe that God has compassion on the sick. Surely it was manifested through Jesus. And if a person cannot be healed just through prayer, then God has provided men with skills to operate and to diagnose and to give prescriptions for medicines that will help people in their sicknesses. And I believe that here also we see the gifts of healing in operation. I believe that God can use human means, natural means, and supernatural means to help those who are sick.

And thus I am not opposed, as are some, to medical doctors. I believe that God does use them. But I also believe that when a doctor sews up a gash on your arm—puts the sutures in—that as he sews it up he has done all he can do. It is God who causes that flesh to adhere together and to heal over. I mean it is still a work of God in the healing process. They do what they know to do, but the actual healing has to come from God. And thus these are the gifts of divine healing.

Now I believe in the prophecy of Isaiah concerning Jesus, where he said,

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5)

I believe that God was declaring prophetically that Jesus was going to suffer not only for our sins but for our sicknesses. He bore our sins but He also bore our sicknesses. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, but by His stripes we are healed.

Now Matthew quotes this passage in Isaiah and he quotes it in the context of the many people who were being healed by Jesus. Matthew 8:16,

When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, "Himself took our infirmities, and bear our sicknesses."

So he makes reference to this prophecy in declaring that the healings of the sick by Jesus were the fulfillment of this prophecy, in that He bore or took our infirmities, and He bore our sicknesses.

Now when Peter wrote his first epistle he also quoted this prophecy of Isaiah declaring,

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. (1Peter 2:24)

Isaiah said, “By His stripes you *are* healed.” Now Peter looks back at the stripes or at the scourging of Jesus and said, “By whose stripes you *were* healed.”

Now we know that before Jesus was taken to the cross, Pilate gave Him over to the soldiers to scourge Him. The purpose of the Roman scourging was to illicit the confessions from the criminals before they were crucified. It was a third-degree kind of a process. They forced confessions by tying the prisoner to a post where his back was bent over and stretched and then laying on his back this cat-o-nine-tails whip. That is a leather whip embedded with little bits of lead and glass that, as it was pulled back, would pull out little chunks of flesh. And the purpose was to make the prisoner confess to his wrong doings.

At one time Paul almost received a scourging when the captain of the guard wanted to know what he had said that created the riot. He just said, “Examine him by scourging. Find out what he said that created all of the ruckus.” And as the guy was getting Paul ready to scourge him, Paul said, “Is it lawful for you to scourge a Roman citizen who has not been charged with anything?” The fellow said, “Are you a Roman citizen?” Paul said, “You bet.” And so he went to the captain of the guard and said, “Did you know that that guy is a Roman citizen?” So he came back and said, “Are you a Roman citizen?” Paul answered, “You bet I am.” Well they did not scourge him because it was not lawful to scourge a Roman citizen. But they scourged Jesus.

Now the scourging was by design. That is easy to prove. The fact that it is there prophetically shows that it was by design. The fact that it was prophesied, it shows it was part of God’s plan. Now the question is, “would God allow His Son to suffer needlessly?” To suffer this painful scourging, so painful and so debilitating that many, many prisoners never even got to the cross. They often died as a result of the scourging. It made your back look like hamburger. And would God allow His Son to go through that kind of torture if there was not a special purpose in it and for it?

Taking it one step further, in Matthew 26, when Jesus took the bread and broke it, He said, “This is My body which is broken for you” Then when He took the cup He said, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood which is shed for the remission of sins.” We all understand the cup. We all understand that through the blood of Jesus Christ atonement was made for our sins—the price was paid for our sins. So when we take the cup we are conscious that the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for us, and through that we have the forgiveness of our sins. But what about the bread? What about His body broken for us?

First of all, we recognize and realize that it was not a reference to broken bones, for the Bible is very specific in showing us that though they broke the bones of the other men who were crucified with Jesus, they did not break His bones. When they came to break Jesus’ legs they found He was already dead and thus they did not break His legs. But the soldier took the spear and put it through His heart and blood and water came forth. This of course, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, “a bone of Him shall not be broken” (John 19:36).

And in order to be the perfect sacrifice, you could not offer a sacrifice to God that had any broken bones. So we know that when Jesus said, “This is My body broken for you” He cannot be referring to broken bones. It would seem that He is referring to the scourging. Back to the

prophecy of Isaiah, “By whose stripes you are healed” (Isaiah 53:5). And it would seem that when He took the bread and said, “This is My body broken for you,” He is making reference to the scourging.

Now again, God would not allow His Son needless suffering—of that I am certain. There had to be a value, a spiritual value in the scourging of Jesus, otherwise God would not have ever allowed it. Could it be that the value in the scourging of Jesus is indeed healing for His people?

When Paul was writing to the Corinthians concerning their abuses in many areas, one of them was in their taking of the Lord’s Supper. And he wrote them to correct the abuses of the Communion service. And in writing he talked about how they were partaking in an unworthy way. But then he went on to say, “For this cause many are weak and sick among you and many have actually died”—because they did not discern the Lord’s body (1 Corinthians 11:30). When He took the bread and broke it and said, “This is My body broken for you,” they did not discern the Lord’s body, and as a result many of them were sick. The inference is that they perhaps could be healed if they only knew that by His stripes they were healed.

Now I know that there are many Bible expositors who say, “Well that is referring to spiritual healing.” I do not think that is encompassing enough. Yes, it probably is there too, but I do not think that such a solution answers it fully. I do believe that there is, through the scourging of Jesus, the availability of healing for us. And I think that we need to discern the Lord’s body, broken for us—“By His stripes you were healed.”

So I will continue to pray for the sick. And I will continue to rejoice as the result of prayer God gives gifts of healing to many. It is there. And I believe that if we only understood the Lord’s body many more would be healed. Jesus bore in His body our sicknesses and our infirmities, when He was scourged for us.

Shall we pray?

Father, we thank You for the love of Jesus Christ towards us. And we thank You that He bore our sins and by His stripes we are healed. Lord, we come to You in our limitations. We do not know Your ways. We do not understand Your ways. We know that they are beyond our finding out. But Lord, we come and we trust You and we believe in You. And if there is a failure and a weakness in the manifestations of Your Spirit and the power of Your Spirit, Lord, we recognize that it is not Your fault. It is our fault. So Lord, bring us to that place where You can do that which You are wanting to do. Give us, Lord, a greater openness to the working of Your Spirit. Take away any barrier, any restriction that might come from us that would hinder the flow of Your Spirit from our lives. Lord, help us, that we might be a witness to the world of the power and of the love of Jesus Christ. In His name, Father, we ask these things. Amen.

May the Lord be with you and fill you with His Holy Spirit. And may He divide to each of you severally as He wills of the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit. Now though He has seen fit not to give certain gifts to me, hey, that does not keep them from you. And really I have a longing and a desire to see the full- orbbed work of the Spirit in the church. And it does not have to happen through me and I know that it will not. That is not the whole body. We each make up a part of the

body. And it would be thrilling to me if God would give to many of you the gifts of faith or the working of miracles. I would love it. Let us just be open. Who knows what God wants to do in your life.

