

A Transforming Prayer Model for Healing¹

The healing ministry of Jesus Christ continues today. As with other aspects of his ministry, Jesus invites us to participate with him. He has come to heal the brokenhearted, to release and set free those who are in darkness, and to provide for those who grieve, blessing them with the oil of gladness instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair (Isa. 61:1-3).

Healing prayer is an aspect of the incarnational nature of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. According to Richard Foster, in *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*,

Healing Prayer is part of the normal Christian life. It should not be elevated above any other ministry in the community of faith, nor should it be undervalued; rather, it should be kept in proper balance. It is simply a normal aspect of what it means to live under the reign of God. This should not surprise us, for it is a clear recognition of the incarnational nature of our faith. God cares as much about the body as he does the soul, as much about the emotions as he does the spirit. The redemption that is in Jesus is total, involving every aspect of the person – body, soul, will, mind, emotions, spirit.²

Adele Calhoun, in the *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us*, says that

A ministry of inner healing prayer brings the wounded to Jesus in a place of safety and love. Healing-prayer ministers accompany those who honestly want to open their souls and grief to Jesus. Together they enter Christ's healing presence. Together they listen for the word Jesus has to speak. Together, in the light of Christ, they open the darkness, lies and stresses that damage and bind. Jesus is available. He is ready to be with the wounded in their pain. . . . In Jesus, pain has somewhere to go. On the cross Jesus absorbed and died for all the wounding and sin of the world. In him all pain can be transformed into something redemptive. The light of the presence of Jesus is a transforming ray that can radiate cancerous wounds of the soul.³

God is continually at work in our lives, bringing us to spiritual maturity as we are formed in Christ. This is true in healing prayer. God works in both the life of the one being prayed for and those who minister in prayer. Thus, it can be said that a healing

¹ Based upon principles from *Authority to Heal: Answers for Everyone Who Has Prayed for a Sick Friend* by Ken Blue (InterVarsity Press, 1987).

² Richard Foster, *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 203.

³ Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 228-229.

prayer ministry is transformational in nature as Jesus walks in the midst of our prayers and our care and concern for one another. Note Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 3:17-18,

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

The steps below present a general pattern to follow in praying for healing according to this model. In a prayer ministry it is best to have two prayer ministers participate as a team. One will take the lead and the other prays silently throughout the session, also adding any additional comments or verbal prayer as the Spirit prompts them to do so.

Preparation

1. **Step One:** Prayer Minister's Preparation prior to praying for others.

Invocation of the Presence of God.

- a. Ask for an awareness of the Presence of God in this time of prayer.
- b. Seek to follow Jesus' example in ministry, looking to join the Father in his work, asking God what He wants to do today in the life of those being prayed for. (John 5:19)

Example: "Lord, as your servants, we want to join you in your work and do what You are doing. What do You want to do here today? Increase in us the capacity for the work of the Holy Spirit to take place."

- c. Be in an attitude of expectancy as you begin ministering to others in prayer.

2. **Step Two:** Beginning the Prayer Session: The Blessing

- a. Speak a blessing into the person's life.
- b. Procedure:
 - (2) Ask the Holy Spirit to come and wait in silence for a moment opening up your heart to the Lord and to the other person, listening to what the Holy Spirit whispers.
 - (3) Bless the person with the blessing the Holy Spirit gives.
 - (a) Be brief. Less is more. Be specific. Say no more than 1-3 sentences using the first person—"I bless you with . . ." rather than, "The Lord blesses you with . . ."
 - (b) Ask the person how it felt to receive the blessing.

3. Step Three: Conversation

- a. Ask why have you come for prayer today?" Or, "What would you like the Lord to do for you today?"
- b. Determine your prayer strategy (your sense of how best to pray for this person).

4. Step Four: Prayer

- a. Ask permission for appropriate touch (laying on of hands) as you feel it may be helpful.
- b. Pray in faith, in the name of Jesus, with his authority, tenderness, and compassion.

5. Step Five: Second Conversation

- a. Following a time of prayer and brief discussion, ask: "What are you sensing God saying and doing?"
- b. Redirect prayer in additional areas as you sense the needs of this person that may have surfaced in your discussion.

6. Step Six: Seal the Work

- a. Ask the Lord in prayer to allow what He has done in this time of prayer to:
 - (1) Be sealed in the person's life.
 - (2) Take root in the inner man.
 - (3) Produce spiritual fruit in the person's life.
- b. Savor the moment in conversation about how God is at work in this person's life, seeking to help strengthen their faith by affirming his love, care, and concern for them.

7. Step Seven: Evaluation. Prayer Ministers evaluate how God has been at work during this time of healing prayer.

- a. The healing process that is begun in healing prayer often requires the intervention of other care-givers such as family members, pastors, professional counselors, physicians, and others, including close spiritual companions. Consider recommending further care-giving including post-prayer follow-up and counsel as may be needed.
- b. Take some time and prayer to think through how the Lord has been at work in you and those for whom you have prayed.