

## I. Prioritizing Fruit of the Spirit over Gifts of the Spirit

- A. This morning's session will be Part 2 of a mini-series on prayer ministry within the broader series of walking in the practicals of our faith. This four part mini-series will serve as the baseline for ministry methodology and theology for our church family. Part 2 this morning will specifically be looking at prayer ministry for physical healing.
- B. The Paramount Guideline - When it comes to prayer ministry here at Restoration, the love and care for individual's hearts, comfort, and safety during the ministry process must and will supersede all other things. (Matt. 22:39)

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, **but have not love, I am nothing.**" (1 Cor. 13:2)

## II. Healing Prayer Model

- A. We are going to be using a 5-step prayer model here at Restoration for a baseline and onramp for the healing ministry.
  - 1. **Ask and Wait (Interview)** - Step one is to interview the person. Ask the person, "How can I pray for you?" or "Where does it hurt?" Have the individual tell you what's going on with them and why (sometimes they don't know why). Then wait on the Lord for a moment and ask Him to bring more insight to the issue (both to you and the individual receiving prayer. There are many reasons for sickness and many times there is more going on than meets the eye.
    - Just get the facts; not a medical interview or a counseling session.
    - What can you see on a natural level?
    - What do you sense on a supernatural level? Ask God for scriptures, words of knowledge, insights, visions, or images.
  - 2. **Discern the Diagnosis** - Step two is to try and discern what has caused the physical symptoms or pain. When it comes to physical infirmity, there may be a variety of biblical reasons the person has a condition. The cause of a condition could be: a) **disease** - natural causation – the person is just sick or has had an accident, b) **sin** (the person has committed a sin, or someone has sinned against them), c) **emotional hurts** (these can trigger

physical symptoms), d) **relationship problems** (issues of unforgiveness or anger), or e) **demonic influence** (spiritual powers afflicting the person)

3. **Prayer Selection** - Step 3 is to determine how to pray. There are two general categories into which healing prayers fall. We always start by asking God how we should pray for a sick person or a person requesting prayer. We are always in a listening posture.
  1. General Biblical Prayers directed toward God - Prayers of intercession, in which we ask God to touch a person and the condition. This is how we should pray when we do not have direct unction of the Spirit concerning the ministry method.
  2. Words received from God - Sometimes God wants to speak something through us to the person. We may sense we are to pray the following type of prayers.
    1. Prayers of command ("Cancer, be gone in Jesus' name.")
    2. Words of pronouncement ("I sense the Lord is healing you, or the Lord is ministering to you.")
    3. Prayers of rebuke ("In Jesus' name, I rebuke the enemy.") [Mark 9:25]
    4. Prayers of agreement (agreeing with another person on your shared desire to see God's will accomplished in this person's life.) [Matt 18:19-20]
4. **Engage in Prayer** - Step 4 - Move into prayer, laying our hands (after asking permission) on the person and asking further interview questions as necessary. Having decided how we will pray, we move forward, trusting we are sensing what the Father is doing in this person's life.
  - Keep your eyes open and watch for any effect (warmth, tingling, shaking).
  - Ask questions of the person to find out what God might be doing.
  - Stop praying when: a) they think it's over, b) the Spirit tells you it's over, c) you've run out of things to pray, or d) it's going nowhere.

- Remove your hands and talk to them to indicate you are stopping

**5. Post Prayer Direction - Step 5** - If the prayer focus is on physical healing, the results of healing prayer can be many. Offering some simple 'next step' directions may be helpful.

- If the person was healed or had a significant breakthrough in some area - Encourage him or her to continue to walk closely with God, maintaining a rich life of worship, Bible reading, church connection, and avoidance of sin (Matt. 5-7 SOTM). Encourage the person to get the healing confirmed by a medical professional.
- If a person was not healed or did not have a significant breakthrough in their area of need - Reassure them that God loves them and can use all things for the good of those who love him. Encourage them to seek more prayer.

### **III. Immature and Wrong Practices or Understandings**

A. Immature Healing Practices or Beliefs - Let's face it, we are all on the journey of maturity in our Christian understanding and practice. The following list is practices or understandings that we label as immature or wrong when it comes to the theme of healing. If someone believes these things or practices these things, our approach is an obligation to point out the immature practice or belief to the individual and show them or lead them in a more mature or correct way.

1. Dramatic Delivery - The power to heal is from God through grace. The methodology itself is only powerful when it is led by the Spirit. There is not more healing power given through shouting, shaking, or even repeating the methodology the Spirit led you to do previously. A dramatic delivery or methodology is simply that, dramatic.
2. Formulaic Guarantee - Avoid promoting or walking out formulaic methodology when it comes to healing prayer. The healing that was manifested through the ministry of Jesus and his disciples was anything but formulaic. Seemingly, it was always a little different depending on what the Father was saying or doing through the Spirit.
3. High-Pressure Practice - People become uncomfortable or feel controlled when you walk out a methodology that puts the pressure on them to tell you they feel something or are healed in order for the ministry to end.

4. Inner Healing is not Deliverance - Inner healing is ministry geared toward helping an individual find freedom from strongholds (ungodly beliefs and lies) in the mind. Deliverance, on the other hand, is ministry geared towards seeing people set free from demonization at any level. When someone is demonized, deliverance is the only thing that will work. Conversely, when someone constantly operates out of lies they believe to be true based on their past, inner healing is the only thing that will work.
5. Satan or God is the source of every negative thing - It is an unbiblical idea to universally blame Satan or God for negative circumstances in your life or someone else's. Commonly in charismatic spaces, Satan is thought to be the source of sickness, and in non charismatic spaces, God is said to have caused the sickness in order to punish sinful behavior. Biblically, it's not that simple. The causes of sickness, for example, can be any of the following: God, Satan, personal sin, someone else's sin, results of the curse of the fall, and/or accidents caused by imperfection or poor judgement.

B. Harmful Healing Practices or Beliefs - The following list of practices or beliefs we believe to be very harmful and we will have a zero tolerance policy concerning them. If someone in our midst teaches or practices these things, leaders are going to bring strong, clear correction, informing them that we do not believe or practice that at Restoration. The leader would then report the "harmful" practice or belief to the elders. If the person persists in it, a second warning can be given directly by the elders. If the person still persists in the practice, elders will ask the person to leave the fellowship.

1. Putting the Burden on the Person rather than God - The common denominator of all of these harmful practices stems from a very wrong and umbilical understanding where the belief is that the individual bears the burden of producing the healing. In other words, if you don't get healed, it's your fault or your shortcomings that have kept you from your healing.
2. Your healing is dependent upon your psychological certainty that Jesus will heal you. - This wrong teaching stems from a misunderstanding of what biblical faith is. Faith is not psychological certainty that God is going to give you what you're praying for everytime you ask. Faith, biblically, is complete trust in the person and character of God. We have

multiple examples of individuals who did not have psychological certainty that God would heal them and yet were healed. Accusing an individual of not having enough "faith" to get healed puts the entire burden of power on them, not on God. It is cruel and arrogant and should be viewed as a form of spiritual abuse.

3. God's will is for you to be healed immediately all the time - This wrong belief stems from the truth that healing has been purchased for you in the atonement of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. The problem is that this truth has been wrongly applied to mean that you are guaranteed healing immediately, anytime you seek it. Once again, this simply is not the case biblically.
4. Your Sin is always the hindrance to your Healing - Though there are biblical examples of people's sin resulting in physical illness and the commands of Jesus to "go and sin no more", we have no biblical examples of individuals who are desiring to be healed being denied because of sin issues in their life. In fact, we have quite the opposite reality in the scriptures. Jesus and his disciples healed people all of the time with unrepentant sin. Once healed, they would believe and repent.