

## GOD, HEALING, THE CHURCH, AND ME

The problem with writing of personal experiences several years after the fact is that it is easy to confuse dates and sometimes the “facts” might become a little mixed up. Nevertheless, my goal in putting my experiences within Christian healing prayer is to share how the Holy Spirit has been involved in this process and to give credit also to the people who were with me and guiding me through the process. I hope the details I share below can somehow be valuable to those who read them. Throughout it is my desire to let everyone know that GOD IS THE HEALER and we are just the tools that he sometimes uses when the gifts of healing are manifest through the Holy Spirit. In some cases names have been changed for privacy reasons but where I have received permission to share information I have used the real names of the persons who guided me in whatever manner.

My connection with healing prayer began around November 15, 2004. A friend of mine and I had been involved in working with the Parker Task Force (which is the local food) bank for over a year and met frequently to discuss how to expand the donations collections from local supermarkets. On this particular Monday I was at home about mid morning when the phone rang. It was my friend. His comment was: “Don, the EMT was just here and they are taking (his wife) to the emergency room. She is dying.” I told him that I would be right there and took off to the closest hospital hoping that was the one she was going to. As I arrived at the emergency room one of the women at the check in desk was a friend of mine and she told me the wife had just arrived and for me to wait in the waiting area. I had gotten to the hospital before my friend and when he arrived a doctor came out and told us to notify her family because she was not going to make it.

Shortly thereafter our pastor and the associate pastor arrived because my friend had called them right after he had called me. Then the pastor took charge and gave us each assignments to carry out – contacting prayer teams, family, etc. We stayed at the waiting area until other family members arrived. Meanwhile the doctors had continued to give us updates and they had no confidence that the wife would survive. I left with the promise that I would keep in touch with my friend and the pastors.

Somehow the wife survived the first night but the doctors held out little hope. In the meantime we offered what prayers we could. At the end of Tuesday the doctors still held out no hope.

Wednesday morning I attended a men’s bible study group at our church. We were in the process of praying for my friend’s wife and for others and discussing our study when my flip phone rang. I left the meeting and went to another room because I was expecting the call to confirm that the wife had died. It was my friend. He said: “The doctors say they don’t know what we are doing, but keep doing it!”. His wife was not improving but was still with us.

My friend’s wife remained in critical condition and in a coma for the next few days and through Thanksgiving day. About the 16<sup>th</sup> day after her admission I was at the hospital to visit her. She was still in a coma. There was an administrator from our church already there and one of our Elders arrived shortly after I did. He was on his way for a mission trip to Ethiopia and bent over the wife and said gently to her that he was on his way for the trip but wanted to pray for her before he left. He bent over her and said a prayer – almost immediately her limbs started moving and she started coming out of her coma. Praise God.

After a couple of weeks my friend’s wife was released from the hospital needing physical therapy and other medical followups. As far as I know there were no followups for psychiatric needs. One day she called me to see if I could take her to a doctor’s visit, which I did. On the way home after the visit she started having a conversation with someone who was present only in her mind. I suggested we stop for a cup of coffee at a Christian Book Store/Coffee Shop so we could talk. She did not provide any further information about her conversation and I did not have enough experience to guide the conversation further.

During the week between Christmas and New Year’s my wife and I were scheduled to attend an exhibit at the Museum of Natural Science in Denver. On the day we were to attend, my friend’s wife called me to see if I could pick her up after a doctor’s appointment. I told her that I could not because of the previous commitment

with my wife. I directed her to the church to see if they could make arrangements for someone to help her.

My wife and I attended the exhibit and during lunch we discovered that because of the crowds seating in the dining area was very scarce. My wife, who is normally very reserved, looked around the dining area and indicated a table where two people were sitting and there were two empty chairs. She went to them and asked if we could join them at the table. They were very courteous and indicated we were welcome.

As we made ourselves comfortable we exchanged information about each other and they said their were from Seattle, here to visit family. The lady's name was Jan Alkire. I asked Jan "and what do you do in Seattle?". Her answer was that she wrote books. "What kind of books?". She said "you wouldn't probably know" so I responded: "try me". Her reply was "I write Christian books on healing prayer". Immediately the hair on the back of my neck rose with thoughts of my friend's wife, how she had been healed and also how I had let her down today.

After Jan had returned to Seattle we were in contact a couple of times. I purchased her books and some tapes she had produced. During one of the discussions I asked her about healing prayer teams in the Denver area and she directed me to Father Walsh who was with a Catholic Parish in Denver. I contacted him and he suggested that I talk to and meet with Dr. Tom Newman who was actively involved with the healing ministry in another parish.

I called Dr. Newman and we made arrangements to meet for lunch. I asked one of my pastors to accompany me to the meeting with Dr. Newman. As Dr. Newman (a retired Internal Medicine Specialist) shared his background and his involvement in a healing prayer ministry it made me very aware that I needed to followup on this and perhaps try to get our church involved in this type of ministry. While we had prayer teams and groups that followed up with prayer requests nothing formal established previously that dealt with healing prayer.

As I progressed further in discussions with pastors and elders at PEPC it was suggested by Pastor Bud Sparling that I contact Dr. Mark Sheehan, a Denver area cardiologist (now retired) who had collected data on near death experiences and was in a small group with Pastor Bud Sparling. Additionally Dr. Randy McFarland, an elder of our church and provost of Denver Seminary, suggested that I contact Dr. L (a G.P.) who had been teaching on the power of healing prayer at Denver Seminary.

I started by calling each doctor. Each doctor agreed to take part in any presentation sessions centered around the subject taken from the **Alpha Course** entitled "**Does God Heal Today?**". Dr. L suggested that I should select and ask one person to be the primary resource. I had originally planned to ask Dr. Newman if he would be the primary coordinator but after prayer it became clear to me to ask Dr. L if she would take the responsibility of coordinating a presentation of all three doctors.

The first session was held at Parker Adventist Hospital on June 12, 2005.

There were about 40 people attending the presentation by the doctors. Included was the prayer team from Christ the King of which Dr. Newman was a participant and two pastors from Parker Evangelical Presbyterian Church (PEPC). The first to present was Dr. L who presented on "Let God be God" which was teaching on healing references from the Bible as well as personal testimony of healing in her medical practice, on mission trips, and of her personal healing. (Dr. L has since added a Psychiatrist credential from Harvard Medical School to her resume and ministers to adult patients.) Dr. Sheehan presented on healing prayer and near death experiences of some of his patients. Last to speak was Dr. Newman who gave personal testimony about approaching prayer in a medical setting.

The sessions were well received but additional presentations were not made until June 16, 2007 when it was arranged to have the three doctors present in longer sessions held on a Saturday morning at PEPC. Copies of these talks by the medical doctors are on the web site <http://www.pray4healing.me>.

From time to time I would try to get healing service at our church and one was held with my cardiologist, Dr. Mark Sheehan, giving testimony based upon his book Healing Prayer – On Holy Ground.

Fast forward to late November 2013.

I had some sort of medical problem in late November 2013 where I had become dizzy (not vertigo) and was wall walking and nauseous. I had my wife take me to the Parker Adventist Hospital emergency room. Many tests, MRI, ECG, EEG, hearing tests, etc. and two days later there was no cause found for the problem. My initial concern was that I might have been having a stroke.

Almost immediately after arriving home from the hospital I received a telephone call from a lady from a local Lutheran church who is a nurse and her husband suffering from cancer. She said my name had been given to her by one of my pastors in regard to having a healing service. She wanted to hold it on a hill on our church property that had some seating and three crosses set up for outdoor meetings. She wanted to bring sheep, the whole works. I told her that I was just home from hospital and I would call her back later.

A few weeks passed and early January 2014 I was walking through our bedroom and I called out: ***“Lord, I just don’t want to do it!”***. Almost immediately the reply (not verbal) came: ***“It is not about you!”***. So I replied: “OK “- with eyes toward the ceiling and immediately my mind started to try to figure out what I was being directed to do.

My first step was to contact my three medical doctor friends for input. I already had an appointment with my cardiologist, Dr. Sheehan, so when I met with him he took me to the CEO of the hospital group and I explained what I felt I was being led to do and wanted his permission and blessing. He replied that he thought it would be a good idea but he wanted to make sure that we “would not be doing any Benny Hinn type of healing service.”

Dr. Sheehan and I explained that we would start with talks by medical doctors wherein science and scripture would be intertwined and then follow with teachings offered by Christian Healing Ministry through DVD’s (Francis and Judith MacNutt).

After setting up a schedule of talks I was invited to present the information to a Charismatic Catholic Healing group, several of whom came to the talks. Dr. Newman, being Catholic, had many contacts and he arranged for a Deacon who is a medical doctor serving in a hospice environment. He also invited a Sister involved in healing ministry but she was unavailable during the time we were to offer the talks.

Since meeting with the Charismatic Prayer group I have been blessed with many new experiences in how the Holy Spirit works, including “Resting In the Spirit”, Prophecy, and Speaking in Tongues.

15 weekly talks and training sessions were scheduled, starting in mid-May and running until early September. The healing service asked for was held as the last of the 15 sessions the hill overlooking the Parker area and views of the Rocky Mountains (but no sheep) on September 6, 2014. About 45 people attended.

Our next step now in 2019 is training and praying for Inner Healing and Deliverance as our church starts gathering funds for a Mental Health Counseling Center within the next two years.

God is Good, and has much more patience than I, but 15 years is not long in his time table and that is how long he has used me so far.