

Healing Worship

There is something about a **healing worship** service that gives rise to divine expression. There is something about coming together to worship God and pray for the healing of others that invites us to consider our frailties. Whether we are openly or privately facing issues of physical illness or emotional need; or whether we are suffering sadness, each of these issues should require us to worship more deeply. And all of them are suitable for worshipping today. They are all areas where we must trust God, and praise Him in spite of them.

When Jesus got involved in healing, it wasn't always a simple thing. When he cast out demons, fed the hungry, healed the lame and restored the blind, it often caused controversy, confusion, and condemnation. In **John** we have a whole chapter dedicated to helping the blind, but only about four of the forty-one verses concern the actual act, and the rest are taken up by criticism, conflict, and blame. This is why **worship is powerful**. Even when things aren't straight forward, or even difficult, worship keeps our eyes on the Author and Finisher of our faith – Jesus Christ.

Notice, Jesus is very *hands-on* when it comes to healing; He **touches** people. What's more, He's faithful in His approach, too. He gives God all the credit. And He sometimes takes the very thing that some of us might consider to be a problem, and He makes it the medium of the miracle. Didn't He use mud (the dirty substance that is under foot) to create a new eye for someone?

When it comes to healing Jesus is original, fruitful and creative. He does it His way and in His own timing! It's entirely as He wills (by the Holy Spirit). You cannot manipulate Jesus into healing you a certain way. Your role is simply to trust and believe that He will do exactly what He has promised – to **destroy** the works of the devil and heal all who are oppressed. And, worship is a powerful means of receiving healing from God because He "inhabits the praises of His people!"

Several decades ago, A. W. Tozer said, "*Worship is the missing jewel in the Christian Church!*" In many ways things have changed since Tozer wrote those words. Over the past 50 years the Holy Spirit has been **renewing** his church in a remarkable way and bringing Christians everywhere a new understanding of the meaning and importance of **worship**. And as restoration takes place in the church, this is set to continue. Our primary task in life is to worship God. Deep within everyone there is an urge to worship. It was placed there by God Himself. If we do not worship the Most High God, then we will worship ourselves, or an extension of ourselves, for we must worship something.

Our greatest challenge is that we intellectualise God. We allow him access to the mind, but steadfastly resist any approach by God to our emotions or our bodies. Why do we find it difficult to express ourselves with our emotions and our physical bodies in worship? When sin came into the world through Adam and Eve, so did embarrassment, self-consciousness, wrong kinds of self-awareness, lust, and so on?

When Jesus died on the cross, he died for the 'shame' which put us in bondage to self-consciousness. Only through him can we experience total **freedom** in our emotions and bodies (in true worship). We are the ones who prevent God working in His wholeness in us. True worship can only take place when we agree to God sitting not only on his throne in the centre of the universe but also on the throne that stands in the centre of our heart.

Let's be invaded by God. Unless the central core of our being is invaded by God and maintained by Him, then there can be no proper object on which to focus our worship. Many of us are caught up in an inner fight with ourselves because we never understood that to become the person God wants us to be, we must stop fighting ourselves, and **surrender to God**. Then he can come in, take up his rightful place in the centre of our lives, and rule and reign as Lord. Unless we surrender totally to God then the inevitable result will be inner conflict and disharmony. Our human ego functions best when it functions in harmony with God, for, left to itself it becomes a dangerous and damaging force.

What does God require from us? **Romans 12:1** says, *'Therefore, I urge you ... in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual **act of worship***. You need to exercise your *free will* and decide to accept the freedom Jesus offers. It's in this atmosphere of freedom that the miracle you need will take place.

Then, when you learn to express yourself to God, with body, emotions, mind, will and spirit, you will enjoy a continuing, *freeing* experience. When you don't stifle your emotions; they don't get bottled up inside. And you begin to gain more confidence. Jesus takes you out of your self-awareness, and into awareness that **nothing is impossible**.

Note **healing** often starts with our personal time with the Lord. It's there that we can be free with God alone, and after spending time alone with him, we can become freer in worship. Both are essential if we are to know and experience complete restoration. **Worship** must become our whole life, involving *all* our being, and not reserved for a Sunday and for the intellect alone.

Perhaps that's our challenge today, as we worship a risen Saviour, is to try to navigate through the pride of our own intellect in order to receive a touch from Jesus. Remember, Jesus is very hands-on when it comes to healing; He touches people. In fact, He loves touching people because He knows that healing is rightfully theirs. He made sure of this!