

GIFTED, Week 6

Participating in the Spirit, Divine Healing

Acts 1.8: You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

We tend to read Acts 1.8 this way; "You shall receive power when The Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will move in power." This interpretation shifts us towards a power culture rather than a witness culture. A witness culture is broader than a power culture. To be witnesses means that we have a relationship with the Lord and then reflect that relationship to others. Sometimes that looks like power, sometimes that looks like mercy, sometimes that looks like friendship, sometimes that looks like forgiveness.

In a power culture, we tend to primarily see ourselves as God's agents to whom He has delegated His authority. We consider ourselves in a partnership with the Holy Spirit, doing life *with* the Spirit. He is the senior partner of course, but He gives us power and authority in Christ's name to go out and do mighty things! This is both Biblical and part of our God given inheritance, the authority that is ours in Christ. But *only* seeing ourselves as a partnership with the Holy Spirit, commissioned with Christ's authority to go out and do the work of Jesus, can lead to the feeling of pressure that we must do our part in the partnership in order for there to be displays of power. And in moments when there's not experiences of power, we then feel the pressure to fix whatever we assume we aren't doing right or enough of.

In a witness culture, we are participating in what Jesus is doing just like how Jesus said, "I only do what I see the Father do." To witness something, you've got to be there to see it! This means active relationship with Jesus and a heightened sense of His presence. Participation is life *in* the Spirit, experiencing Christ in the moment and being a witness to it (including by exercising His authority). The phrase "in the Spirit" is huge for Paul. It is IN The Spirit that we experience His operations "through the Spirit, by the Spirit, according to the Spirit" [1 Corinthians 12].

Questions	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do we have a heightened sense of the presence of God?• Another approach to the Holy Spirit is passivity (God is going to do what God is going to do, so there isn't much reason for me to contend). What beliefs lead to this approach, and what is the outcome of this approach?• What type of unhealthy behavior/culture can come out of felt pressure to move in power?

When we view ourselves in a partnership with the Holy Spirit, we can view divine healing through the lens of a contract. If we do our part in the partnership, the power of healing is guaranteed. This can lead to pressure and performance. Under this partnership, contract mindset, we end up with the belief that if someone isn't healed it's due to human error or demonic interference. We say things like, "They lacked faith. They had agreement with some demonic stronghold."

This idea of partnership/contract in regards to healing raises a deeper question. Is physical healing guaranteed? More specifically, is physical healing guaranteed in the Atonement?

Isaiah 53.5: He [Messiah] was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

Does this passage teach that the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ heals our bodies as well as save our souls? Yes, but let's look at it closely!

This verse in its Old Testament Hebrew context is not speaking of physical healing by itself. Everything in this verse is about our sin and the spiritual sickness that our transgressions cause and so the 'by His stripes we are healed' is specifically

talking about spiritual healing. This is important because if we assume that the act of the atonement is the guarantee of physical healing, then if we are not physically healed it must mean that we are still under punishment.

So, how is healing in the Atonement? The cross brought spiritual healing, restoring us to union with God to experience and participate in the life and ministry of Jesus, which means access to all of His promises including healing! Instead of viewing the Atonement as a contract guaranteeing and entitling us to healing, we should view it as an invitation into the healing ministry of Jesus.

In the New Testament, Isaiah 53 is referenced twice. Peter uses it to focus on spiritual healing [1 Peter 2.24]. When Matthew quotes the Isaiah passage, he is applying it to physical healing. However, Matthew is saying that Jesus bore all of our diseases, not that the act of the atonement did. We could say healing is in the life of Christ!

Matthew 8.14-17: When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him. ¹⁶ When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases."

When we look at divine healing through the lens of participation in life in the Spirit, we continually look to Jesus who is physical healer and desires healing for us. Healing is provided for in the work of Jesus on the cross, but we access that healing by being sensitive to the Holy Spirit in the present. We participate in what we see/sense/hear the Spirit doing. If we see our lives as participating in the life of Christ, we will have a general faith to abide in God's promises and pray boldly for one another according to them. If we see our lives as participating in the life of Christ, then we should have the specific faith to command healing.

Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is true we have authority in Christ. What is the difference between walking in authority and walking in entitlement?• It is true faith, sin, and the demonic can have influence in regards to healing. What is the difference between a partnership/contract mindset in regards to those aspects vs a participating in the Holy Spirit?• If someone is sick do you only pray for them if you heard the Holy Spirit say He is going to heal them? What does it look like to pray for someone with sensitivity to what God is doing?• If by the Holy Spirit we are participating in the life and ministry of Jesus, would that imply participating in the body of Christ, the church?
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