

CHRIST'S HEALING WAY

Introductory notes on the Healing Way of Christ

Published by the Maranatha Community ©
Maranatha is a movement of Christians in all the churches.
Committed to Christian healing
Christian unity and Christian renewal.
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£2.25

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The Maranatha Community
Christ's Healing Way
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1. What is Healing?

- 1.1 Healing is a **basic** activity of God.
- 1.2 Healing is putting **right** what is wrong.
- 1.3 Healing is bringing **wholeness** in place of impairment.
- 1.4 Healing is bringing **peace** in place of disturbance.
- 1.5 Healing is bringing **equilibrium** in place of imbalance.
- 1.6 Healing is **accepting** the authority and rule of God over our lives.
- 1.7 Healing is **recognising** that when God does not rule there is sickness.
- 1.8 Healing is **admitting** that we are damaged.
- 1.9 Healing is the recognition that **wholeness comes from God**.
- 1.10 Healing is knowing that it is the **will** of God that we should be made whole.

2. Do we need healing?

- 2.1 Our sickness is rooted in our **fallen world** and our alienation from God.
- 2.2 **Alienation** from God is the source of disharmony, disturbance and imbalance in our lives.
- 2.3 Our separation from God is manifest in our **fallen nature**.
- 2.4 **Sin separates**. Separation and division from God and one another hurts.
- 2.5 Our disease is rooted in our **rejection** of the rule of God.
- 2.6 We have **all** fallen short of His glory.
- 2.7 We are not **at peace** with ourselves, with God, or with others.
- 2.8 We shall never be at peace until we discover who **we** are and who **God** is.
- 2.9 We **all** need healing.

3. Our Identity

- 3.1 Today humanity is restlessly searching for **peace**.
- 3.2 We face a **crisis of identity**. It is the root of mankind's sickness.
- 3.3 We ask the question - **who am I?**
- 3.4 I am certainly not the person **others** think I am.
- 3.5 I am not even the person **I** think I am.
- 3.6 The **only** one who knows me, and my real identity, is the One who has made me and who loves me, God Himself.
- 3.7 If I am to begin to discover my identity I must endeavour to see myself through **His** eyes.

- 3.8 Jesus **enables** me to do this.
- 3.9 He has made it clear that I am made in **God's image**, that He calls me by my **name**, that He **knew** me in my mother's womb, and that He wants me to be His **child**.
- 3.10 I can only be His child if I respond to Him as **Father**.
- 3.11 When I cry out - **lost** in the crowd, without any individual identity, He calls me by my name, which is carved in the palm of His hand and tells me that He has known me since my creation.
- 3.12 When I express my feeling of **worthlessness**, He tells me that I am worth more than gold and lays down His own Son's life for me.
- 3.13 When I shout aloud, fearful and **alone** in the wilderness, He tells me "I love you with an everlasting love", He tells me "the very hairs on your head are numbered".
- 3.14 When I feel I do not **belong** He assures me that I can be His dwelling place. He calls me to be His child and to be a member of His family, and to share in His inheritance.
- 3.15 Thus, He comes to **heal** me of my loneliness, my low self esteem, my sense of not belonging, and my confusion.
- 3.16 He comes to tell me who I am and to establish my **identity**.
- 3.17 I discover where **I am**, where **I have come from**, and where **I am going to**.
- 3.18 This is the **fundamental** healing for which humankind cries out.

4. Reconciliation

- 4.1 Our healing is brought by our **reconciliation with God** from whom we may be separate and distant and whom we may even have dismissed from our lives.
- 4.2 We **alienate** ourselves from God by our sin, often deliberately. We reject Him and consequently we suffer and stand in need of healing and forgiveness. But even our sin can lead us along the path to God. It is only after being separated from Him we can learn the true nature of His heart in being reconciled to Him.
- 4.3 God created humankind to live in **communion** with Him and although we have rejected Him He continues to love us without limit.
- 4.4 So great is His desire for us to be **reconciled** to Him that He came to us in the person of His Son to be the means of our reconciliation.
- 4.5 We are healed by God's action in reconciling us to Himself through His Son who bears our **sins** and **pains**. The ultimate reconciliation is with God in eternal life.
- 4.6 His Son, Jesus Christ, not only reconciles us with **God** the Father, but also with **ourselves** and with our **brothers and sisters**.
- 4.7 Healing is about putting right wrong **relationships**.
- 4.8 The **Gospel** is about reconciliation.
- 4.9 **Christ** comes to deal with failed relationships.
- 4.10 When we are put in a right relationship with God we are reconciled also with ourselves and with **others**.
- 4.11 Walls of **division** are removed, bridges are built.
- 4.12 We are reconciled with God, others and ourselves, by the **giving and receiving of forgiveness and love** in the name of Christ.

- 4.13 Many ills are rooted in our **inability** or **refusal** to forgive or be forgiven, to love or be loved. These are dealt with in the process of reconciliation which is empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- 4.14 Lack of reconciliation **inevitably** leads to continuing pain and disorder - mentally, emotionally, spiritually, physically.
- 4.15 The world has the right to see God's reconciling love in action in the **lives** of Christians and in the **corporate life** of His Church.

5. Oneness in God

- 5.1 God is **love**. Therefore He loves me and desires my healing.
- 5.2 God is **omnipotent**. Therefore He has the ability to heal.
- 5.3 God is in **Christ**. Therefore He willingly exercises His power to heal.
- 5.4 He takes the **initiative** in coming to heal us.
- 5.5 He invites us to **allow** Him to live within us and to be one with us.
- 5.6 He reveals His **oneness** in the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- 5.7 He invites us to live in such close unity with Him that we actually become **part** of the Body of Christ.
- 5.8 He is one with all creation and is **transcendent**.
- 5.9 He is close to each one of us and is **imminent**.
- 5.10 We have the **freedom** to keep Him remote from us, to prevent Him from getting close to us, to ignore Him, or simply expel Him from our lives.
- 5.11 We have the freedom **immediately** to be one with Him in the Spirit and to receive His healing.

6. Where does healing come from?

- 6.1 **God** is the source of all goodness, love and healing.
- 6.2 There is **no other source**.
- 6.3 His healing flows through **many** - priests, doctors, nurses, social workers, counsellors and the whole Body of Christ.
- 6.4 God may choose **any** person, instrument, situation or time to use for His healing work. He has no limitations, therefore we should put no limitations on His work amongst us today.
- 6.5 He **gives** skills and facilities to those professionally trained in many disciplines.
- 6.6 He gives insights, He anoints, He **enables**, He **empowers**.
- 6.7 **Whoever** we are, **wherever** we are, our role is to collaborate with Him in His healing.
- 6.8 We **cannot** heal ourselves - contrary to the teaching of the New Age and other similar movements.

7. The Person of Christ

7.1 God comes to us in the person of **Christ**.

7.2 Christ comes to share our **life**.

7.3 He was fully human and shared our **bodily** form.

7.4 He understands all about our disease, pain and suffering because He has personally **experienced** them all.

7.5 He has promised to **be with** us always.

7.6 Any day and any moment can be -

- the time of His **birth** into our lives (our Christmas)

- the time of our **defeat** and rejection (Our Cross)

- the time of our **victory** and resurrection (Our Easter)

- the time of His **anointing** of our lives (our Pentecost)

This is **incarnational truth** - the presence of Christ here and now to heal and save.

7.7 He comes as **light** in the darkness and he offers **life** in place of death.

7.8 **In** Him we meet God the Father and **through** Him we are healed.

8. The Way of Christ

8.1 His way **contrasts** with the way of the world.

8.2 He comes to **serve** and not to be served.

8.3 He comes to **give** and not to receive.

8.4 He comes to **forgive** and not seek retribution.

8.5 His way is the way of total **love**.

8.6 His love is without **limit** and without **condition**.

8.7 In the measure that we love **Him** we are enabled to love **others**.

8.8 We are healed when we **respond** to His enabling power.

8.9 The start and completion of all healing lies in the **love** and **forgiveness** of Jesus.

8.10 We cannot be used as instruments of healing if we do not **love** as He loved, **forgive** as He forgave and if we do not, like Him, have compassion for others.

8.11 His way is the way of **peace**.

8.12 His followers who walked with Him were called people of **The Way**.

8.13 He invites us to be **peacemakers**, that the world might be healed.

9. The Healing of Christ

- 9.1 The life and teaching of Jesus all focus upon **healing** and **liberation**. This is His total commitment.
- 9.2 The Bible and the Church proclaim that **Christ is the Healer** and Saviour of the world.
- 9.3 The New Testament shows us that Christ **changes** people's lives and makes them whole.
- 9.4 A meeting with Christ is a direct and personal **encounter** with healing and powerful love.
- 9.5 He comes to make the blind **see**, the deaf **hear**, the lame **walk**, the dead **live**. He comes to **feed** the hungry, to **free** the prisoner, to make the crooked **straight** and to wipe away all tears.
- 9.6 He comes to announce the **Kingdom** and His great healings both today and in the gospels are **signs** of His Kingdom.
- 9.7 In Christ, **God took the initiative** in coming to us and bring healing.
- 9.8 Our joy as Christians is to **receive** healing from Him.
- 9.9 Our duty is to **proclaim** Christ the Healer.
- 9.10 Our responsibility is to give **evidence** of His healing.
- 9.11 Our role is to be **instruments** of His healing.
- 9.12 Our witness is to be seen as **healed** and **healing** people.

10. How Christ Heals

- 10.1 God takes the initiative in coming to us personally in **Christ**.
- 10.2 Christ responds to our need by being **one of us** fully sharing our life.
- 10.3 He comes to us in close proximity, associating with us and **identifying** our specific needs.
- 10.4 Because He is the same yesterday, today, tomorrow He is able to see us as we really **were, are** and **can be**.
- 10.5 He exercises His power by **identifying the truth** - the root cause of our disease and He reaches out to heal us.
- 10.6 He brings hope and healing. He shows us the rule of God in His Kingdom in our midst, **here** and **now**.

11. The Pattern of Christ's Healing

- 11.1 Christ's way of healing is through the **giving** and **receiving** of forgiveness and love. In our prayers for healing we must always recognise this.
- 11.2 We are incapable of doing this without the gift of the **Holy Spirit**.
- 11.3 We are healed when we give our lives to God. This involves laying ourselves open to Him - **past, present** and **future**.
- 11.4 We may invite Christ into every moment and situation of our lives because He is the same **yesterday, today** and **forever**.

- 11.5 What happened yesterday is known to Him today in full. **Every** experience of our life is stored and retrievable. Words, pictures, feelings, sounds and smells can all be remembered with remarkable clarity in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 11.6 When we raise up and review a life span, Christ will **identify** and deal with the areas of need. We consciously go into that situation with Him in prayer. Even in situations of great pain the recall will not be so traumatic because Christ is present.
- 11.7 Our memory of an event goes far beyond our recall ability - it is Christ who identifies the area of need. This process of identification will start at **conception** or even with **previous generations**.
- 11.8 When we share in the life prayer (or similar prayers for healing of memories or inner healing) we are not counselling or using any therapy or technique. We are simply **presenting** to God that life and that particular situation.
- 11.9 There is no guessing or cross examination. We **listen**, we **wait**, we seek **confirmation** and this is always given. We are enabled to come to terms with the hurts and wrongs we have received or caused. We then have the opportunity to give and receive forgiveness and love in the name of Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 11.10 In prayer and sharing and silent waiting upon God we allow Christ to **touch** our wounds and heal us.
- 11.11 Contrary to the beliefs of the 'New Age' movement and some contemporary teaching disciplines **we cannot heal ourselves**.
- 11.12 Our need is to **collaborate** with God from whom all healing flows, with those who are ministering to us such as doctors, nurses, priests and counsellors and with the whole Body of Christ.
- 11.13 We cannot stand **alone**, isolate or insulate ourselves from the polluting influences of a fallen world. Similarly, in our sickness we cannot stand alone, apart from God and those who are fulfilling His purposes in His world and who may be used as instruments of our healing.

12. The Healing Body of Christ - The Church

- 12.1 The Church is **Christ's Body** - His healing body.
- 12.2 Its members are to **function** as parts of the Body.
- 12.3 Our **inheritance** is a healing Church - which has healed throughout the centuries. The early Church healed. The Church fathers healed. The Saints and Evangelists healed.
- 12.4 The Spiritual gifts including the gift of healing were specifically given for use by the **Body of the Church**.
- 12.5 Healing does not flow from the **human** healer but through him from God to the healed.
- 12.6 We need to ask ourselves 'to what extent am I a **stumbling block** to the healing of myself and others? To what extent am I part of the **problem** rather than the **solution**? Am I truly a member of the Body of Christ?'
- 12.7 For the Body of Christ to be effective in its healing ministry its members must work closely together in harmony. As they draw **nearer to God** as a family they inevitably draw **nearer to one another**.
- 12.8 Christ uses the whole assembly of believers to heal when they fully accept that they are **joined together** as His living Body. (See Eph.1.22,23)

- 12.9 If we are one and held together in the unity of the Holy Spirit (Eph.4.4-6) in being used as a united body to heal, we too are healed. We are called to a **servant** role (diakonos). Just as Jesus knelt and washed His disciples' feet in the same way we must minister to others.
- 12.10 Healing is a powerful gift of the Spirit to the **Church**.
- 12.11 The Church is a powerful healing force when its people allow God to **fill** them with His Spirit.
- 12.12 The Church **throughout its history** in all the centuries has been engaged in a healing ministry.
- 12.13 The emphasis upon its healing role has invariably coincided with **renewal** of faith and **revival**.
- 12.14 It is unquestionable that we are seeing evidence **throughout the world** today of churches of all traditions re-discovering the healing ministry and being empowered by the Holy Spirit to fulfil the healing work of Christ.

13. What is Sickness?

- 13.1 Sickness is our experience of the **alienation** of the world from God.
- 13.2 Sickness is the pain we bear when we are **separated** from God and one another.
- 13.3 Sickness is the **negative bond** which holds us back to past relationships and situations.
- 13.4 Sickness is evident in **family** inheritances, physically and emotionally, and in **national** inheritances.
- 13.5 Sickness is a **disintegrating** process.
- 13.6 Sickness is **imbalance** whether in body mind or spirit.
- 13.7 Sickness is **captivity** - being in the grip of destructive habits, fears, addictions etc.
- 13.8 Sickness is **imperfection** - the flaws and faults which disfigure us.
- 13.9 Sickness is **negative** and can involve submission to life-denying influences such as fatalism and nihilism.

14. How is our Sickness healed?

We may be healed by -

- 14.1 A **natural** recuperative process which may be accelerated by physical or spiritual means.
- 14.2 A release of **natural** or **supernatural** forces through prayer, love and suggestion.
- 14.3 A radical change in our **spiritual** position and our **emotional** state.
- 14.4 **Miraculous** events which are at present beyond our immediate explanation or understanding.

15. The Roots of our Sickness

- 15.1 Much of our sickness is a mental or physical expression of **concealed emotions**.

- 15.2 There are four emotions which are particularly associated with states of disease - **anxiety, anger, guilt and fear**.
- 15.3 These emotions may be **expressed healthily**.
- 15.4 Alternatively we can **repress** - deny the existence of our emotions. We can **suppress** - prevent the expression of our emotions. Both of these may be conscious or unconscious actions.
- 15.5 Emotion which is not expressed appropriately may generate **physical** or **mental** suffering.
- 15.6 These emotions are in themselves the expression of our **fundamental** disorders which are in need of healing.
- 15.7 People need healing of the **root causes** of their emotional distresses. Christ enables us to answer the questions about why we are anxious, angry, guilty and afraid.
- 15.8 We carry these **burdens** around with us for years, often deeply embedded within our memories. When they are **removed** the consequential condition is radically changed or even disappears.

16. Cause and Effect - Personally

Christian healing recognises that the **direct link** between our physical condition and our spiritual and emotional state is beyond dispute.

16.1 Rejection

A child living in cringing fear because of rejection or violence may develop a stooping posture in later life.

A person who has experienced years of low self-esteem may develop rounded shoulders and a pronounced curvature of the spine.

16.2 Nervousness

Prolonged periods of nervousness and impatience, or sustained and extreme anxiety may be manifest in abnormal patterns of respiration. It may produce an increase in muscular tension and may also generate involuntary movements.

16.3 Emotional Upset

Frequently severe emotional upset will directly contribute to a variety of skin disorders including eczema and psoriasis.

16.4 Guilt and Anger

Extreme guilt or anger can have a major influence in causing or be the primary cause of inflammatory conditions of the skin and other organs.

16.5 Nursed Hurts

There is little doubt that nursed hurts, bitterness and sustained worry may in many, although not in all instances, be the root of severe arthritic conditions.

16.6 Lack of Love

Deprivation of love, an antipathy to life, low self esteem or nihilism lead many into anorexia nervosa and other serious conditions.

16.7 Abnormal Patterns of Life

Tension, worry and abnormal living, eating and sleeping patterns undoubtedly lead to peptic ulcers and disorders of digestion as well as cardiovascular stress which may be manifest as hypertension or ischaemic heart disease.

16.8 **Shock**

A shock, sudden accident or bereavement may lead to marked attitudinal and temperamental changes which in turn can give rise to a range of physical and mental disorders.

Divorce, redundancy, retirement, change of job or home are all highly significant factors in the generation of insecurity and fear which directly or indirectly contribute to a broad range of illnesses, especially depression.

17. **Cause and Effect - Socially**

17.1 A considerable proportion of organic disease is derived from **lifestyle**, patterns of behaviour, attitudes, societal influences and other factors. Our contemporary culture does not readily acknowledge that this is fundamentally part of our bodily condition.

17.2 The questions about human suffering are so profound and complex that we will never arrive at answers which completely satisfy us. We do know, however, that **we put the organs of our bodies at great risk** both by the kind of society in which we live and the lifestyle we choose.

17.3 We **injure** and even **kill** ourselves through our own wilful folly.

17.3.1 **Drink**

Prolonged high alcohol intake leads to liver disease, heart disease, neuropathy and brain damage.

17.3.2 **Smoking**

Smoking leads to lung cancer, emphysema and peripheral vascular disease.

17.3.3 **Drugs**

Drug abuse causes multi-organ damage ranging from septicaemia with endocarditis, to infection with hepatitis B and HIV.

17.3.4 **Sexual Promiscuity**

Sexual promiscuity leads to a range of sexually transmitted diseases some of which are responsible for infertility and others of which cause neurological damage. There is also strong evidence that multiple sexual partners and intercourse from an early age is associated with development of cancer of the cervix.

17.3.5 **Environment**

We are abusing ourselves on a scale which may ultimately prove to be environmentally disastrous. Wilfully or in astonishing ignorance we are taking great risks with the health of millions of people.

Our water supplies are polluted. Much of our food is contaminated by chemicals. The air we breathe is poisoned by cars, factories and power stations.

17.3.6 **Poisoned Minds**

The minds of millions of people and young children are poisoned by television programmes saturated with violence and aggression. This is then replicated in real life. Patterns of living and language are established by the media generating a range of destructive activities including joy-riding, mugging and sexual abuse of the young and the elderly.

The massive increase in pornographic videos and films is a further manifestation of a fundamental sickness in society. British Telecom is now making vast profits out of obscenely advertised chat lines which any child can use - and many do. The price to be paid for this sickness in future generations will be enormous.

17.3.7 **Neglected souls**

We have now developed a society in which we are obsessed with preening our bodies, educating our minds and either totally neglecting our spiritual life or searching for spiritual satisfaction in destructive areas such as the occult.

18. Our approach to our Sickness

- 18.1 We suffer in our fallen world because humanity persistently rejects God's ways. **This does not mean that each individual illness is attributable to a personal sin.** Our lung cancer may be due to our folly in smoking or it may be due to living near to a source of pollution.
- 18.2 We can be the sole **cause** of our condition, the major contributory **element**, one of several causal **influences** or completely **innocent**.
- 18.3 **Responsibility** for illness may be totally attributable to a specific external influence e.g. injury caused to an innocent bystander because of a road accident. We may, however, have made ourselves vulnerable by being a drunken bystander and therefore putting ourselves (and others) at risk. We may even have positively caused the accident by drunkenly staggering into the road. There are thus degrees of responsibility for our damage and sickness and also degrees of destructive influence upon our well-being.
- 18.4 Even though our illness may not be attributable to any fault of our own, we can allow God to **use** it and to **speak** to us through it.
- 18.5 Illness can bring us **closer** to God - our sickness can itself become a healing.
- 18.6 There is a real danger in treating the evidence of disease without identifying and dealing with its root cause. In contemporary society we devote enormous resources in response to the immediate evidence of personal and social need, but comparatively little to those things which directly and indirectly create the need. We persistently concentrate on the **effect** while ignoring the **cause**.
- 18.6 If we are to allow God to heal us we must give Him the opportunity to penetrate to the **roots** of our diseases, both personal and social.
- 18.8 Ultimately we have to ask ourselves the question '**do we want to be healed?**'

19. Wholeness in Christ

- 19.1 Christ's healing helps us to discover the **value** of life and our own infinite worth as individuals.
- 19.2 Christ's healing helps us to discover the **purpose** of our existence.
- 19.3 When man expels God he has **no point of reference** other than himself. He is self-centred. He is his own absolute. He searches for healing within himself and he searches in vain. The New Age teachings about our healing being within us is in effect a claim that man is God. This leads to frustration and hopelessness and ultimately to nihilism.
- 19.4 Our healing is not the consequence of our striving for God but the consequence of **God's initiative** in coming to us.
- 19.5 Wholeness involves **loving ourselves**. This love reflects the love which God has for us. It prevents us from being obsessed with ourselves, falling victim to morbid introspection because it is a love which is primarily focused upon God.
- 19.6 The core of our healing lies in our relationship with God as Father, Son & Holy Spirit. From this flows our relationship with ourselves and with others. Our starting point must not be **ourselves** but God **Himself** and God in **others**.
- 19.7 Our understanding of Christian healing depends upon our recognition that God is at once immediately **personal** (imminent) and **wholly other** (transcendent).

We need to accept that at one and the same time He is the Lord of the **universe** and the one with whom we have an **intimate** relationship. Our healing is thus dependent upon a **balanced** experience of God.

20. Integration

20.1 Healing brings wholeness. To be whole persons - integrated - every facet of our being must be held in perfect **balance**. This can only happen in and through our relationship with our Creator who is Himself within us.

20.2 There is a danger in artificially **separating** what the secular world calls 'reality' from the spiritual. Secular mankind is suffering because of its failure to understand the spiritual dimension of living.

20.3 In seeking God we need to approach Him with our whole being - senses, heart and mind. We have to **live** rather than reason; we have to be **silent** rather than speak.

20.4 God heals us when we are truly silent before Him. In the silence we can hear Him **speak**. In the stillness we may feel His **touch**.

20.5 In our silent waiting upon God we find the distinction between **doing** and **being**. The atheistic and materialistic society places great stress upon doing and speaking. Even when we try to be still we continue to analyse and dissect, to wrestle and to postulate. When we are still, in the presence of God, what matters is our being. Simply **being** in the presence of God brings true stillness.

20.6 When we practise interior silence there are two dangers to be recognised.

Firstly, we may be so self-conscious that our contemplation is focused upon ourselves. We then fall victim to self-pity with crippling guilt and fear, or self-righteousness with a complacent lack of self-criticism. If in our silence we persist in looking in on ourselves consciously or unconsciously we exclude God.

Secondly, we may in the manner of a number of Eastern religions expel everything and everyone from our thinking, and contemplate a total void. This is extremely dangerous because quite literally we open ourselves to any external influence or presence however dark and destructive. We can in fact create for ourselves a black hole.

20.7 In our silent waiting it is important that we make ourselves **alert** to the real presence of God and what He has to say to us.

20.8 Giving God this moment of our lives, this place where we are, this stillness, this breathing, this being, immediately enables Him to make contact with the depth of our being. Our defences are down, our masks are removed, we allow ourselves to be one with Him. This is the **starting point** of His healing within us.

20.9 We need to come **naked** before God. He then enables us to see ourselves through His eyes. Pascal wrote "not only do we know God through Jesus Christ alone, but we do not even know ourselves except through Jesus Christ."

20.10 We experience disintegration of personality when we are torn between our natural **human** instincts and desires and the **moral** standards which we have set or have had set for ourselves.

20.11 We are shaped and moulded by personal and social circumstances during the whole course of our lives. We inevitably become 'unbalanced' when there is a **lack** or an **excess** of any one type of influence exerted upon us. This contributes to disintegration, particularly in the context of the family.

20.12 Too much emphasis based upon social or academic achievement early in our lives leads us to believe that the love of our parents and others is dependent upon

success rather than our uniqueness as individuals. We do not believe that we can be loved for simply being **ourselves**.

- 20.13 Our self-image may be **distorted** by persistent criticism as children.
- 20.14 The **lack** of one parent or **dominance** by one party may affect our identity as man or woman - our sexuality.
- 20.15 The integration of our personal sexuality is inevitably dependent upon the balance and nature of **male** and **female** influences in our lives.
A young woman may find it difficult to relate to men if she has been subject to sexual assault or if she has rejected (consciously or unconsciously) the role of womanhood portrayed by her mother.

A young man who has never known his father and whose experience of women has been one of smothering may seek out the companionship of men.
- 20.16 Contrary to popular belief **homosexuality** is rarely, if ever, a genetic defect. This is the view held by many engaged in Christian ministry in this field, such as Leanne Payne.
- 20.17 If we are to be integrated people, we must be willing to allow God continually to identify **specific** areas in our lives which militate against wholeness.
- 20.18 God heals us by the power of His Spirit, through the person of Jesus so that we become the fullness of the man or woman He intended us to be. Thus we may have **life** in abundance.
- 20.19 We can only be **fully human** by the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Our own striving after ideals only leads to failure, frustration and ultimately despair.
- 20.20 Integration involves finding our true **identity** which only God can reveal to us.

21. Hindrances to Healing

- 21.1 God has given us the gift of freedom and we can exercise this freedom consciously or unconsciously to **inhibit** or **prevent** our healing or to **reject** it outright.
- 21.2 Our **mood** and **attitude** can militate against healing - anger, bitterness, guilt, unforgiveness, unforgiveness, pride, numbness and stupor, restlessness, blindness, capitulation and nihilism, untruthfulness and refusing to give up our hurts.
- 21.3 If we consider ourselves incapable of being healed we put a major **stumbling block** in the way of our healing.
- 21.4 If we cannot believe that Christ has come to heal and that it is God's will that we are healed then our **disbelief** will be a hindrance to our healing.
- 21.5 Human **reason** makes it very hard to accept God on the basis of experience or encounter. Our reasoning deters us from putting our trust in a God beyond our full understanding. But Jesus warns us " unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven".(Matthew 18.3) We are called to **trust** God as Father.
- 21.6 The lack of a genuine **desire** for total healing constitutes a major obstacle.
- 21.7 We may **perpetuate** our sickness in order to continue receiving the pity, help and attention which we need. We may do this consciously or unconsciously.
- 21.8 If we are to be healed we need to **admit** our sickness and be prepared to **ask** for healing and be ready to **receive** it.
- 21.9 We may perceive our immediate need to be the restoration of comfort, painlessness and freedom, whereas in fact our real need is more fundamental. Unless we are

prepared to allow God to deal with our real needs we may be **cured** but we will never be **healed**.

22. Spiritual Warfare

- 22.1 Spiritual warfare is an **inherent** part of the healing ministry of Christ. He cured diseases and drove out demons.
- 22.2 Those who are unable to accept the existence and activity of evil spirits face great difficulties when they are confronted with the **words** and **actions** of Jesus.
- 22.3 Jesus gave **authority** to His followers to heal and cast out demons.
- 22.4 The evil spirits which oppress may themselves often be the **root** of our ills.
- 22.5 Much psychiatric illness originates from involvement with the **occult**.
- 22.6 The growth in occult practices (much associated with the 'New Age') is today leading to an extension of the **deliverance** ministry.
- 22.7 Jesus took authority over the evil one and **set free** demonized people.
- 22.8 Even unbelievers recognise that there is a **darkness** in the world.
- 22.9 For many, sadly, the only confirmation of the activities and powers of evil spirits, which until recently our culture rejected, lies with **personal experience**.
- 22.10 There is a danger of attributing all ills to demonic activity and it is important to have the God-given gift of **discernment** which will enable us to have a balanced understanding.
- 22.11 God enables us to **recognise** and **identify** spiritual oppression.
- 22.12 We should approach oppression with **confidence** and joyful expectation, but also with humility and gentleness.
- 22.13 History is full of evidence of men committing the **foulest deeds** against one another. The Age of Enlightenment led us to believe that things were getting better and that man was becoming kinder, gentler, wiser by virtue of civilisation, education, and all the benefits of a welfare society. This was summed up in the word 'progress'. Victorian optimism has now been shattered and during this century more people have died violently than in all the previous centuries put together. The horror of genocide, concentration camps and torture, together with decades of persecution by despotic regimes have now demolished this confidence.
- 22.14 The acceptance of the existence of the **powers of darkness** is essential if we are to understand the nature of healing. Francis MacNutt says "My experience (and study) lead me to believe that evil spirits exist, that they can cause sickness....these powers are ultimately destructive and enslaving; it is important to recognise them rather than deny them, and to learn to apply the power of the Holy Spirit in healing so that sick people will not be driven to seek help from a dangerous and alien source".
- 22.15 We are today increasingly meeting people who have sought help from **dangerous** and alien sources such as the occult and countless so-called 'faith healers', and who have been very severely damaged.
- 22.16 Orthodox Christian teaching is once again being affirmed in the sense that spiritual warfare is increasingly being seen as an **integral** part of the healing ministry. The New Testament could not be clearer about this.

23. The Problem of Pain

- 23.1 We must never underestimate the crushing pain of real suffering - spiritual, mental or physical. Equally we must not underestimate the value of **redemptive** suffering.
- 23.2 Our starting point in coming to terms with our pain and the pain of others must inevitably be the pain of Christ on the **Cross**.
- 23.3 Our **suffering** can be related to the suffering of Christ on His Cross. Thus we are drawn closer to Him and experience a fuller understanding of the meaning of His pain which He actually bears for us.
- 23.4 By **associating** with Christ in the pain of His Cross, we have faith in what he has done for us. "If we died with Christ we believe that we will also live with Him" (Rom. 6.8).
- 23.5 As Christians we believe that our old self has been crucified with Christ (Rom. 6.6,7). Just as Christ rose from the dead, so we will be raised up to new freedom. Our pains are thus used **positively** in our pilgrimage from Good Friday to the great Day of Resurrection.
- 23.6 Our suffering underlines our humanity with all its weaknesses and vulnerability. In our disease we come to God empty-handed and **totally dependent** on Him.
- 23.7 By breaking down our self-confidence, self-sufficiency and perhaps pride, our suffering can itself enable us to **trust** God in a fuller way. In our suffering we can undoubtedly get to know God at a deeper level and therefore grow in faith.
- 23.8 Because our suffering is invariably rooted in the fallen world in which we live it may in fact even be seen as a **privilege**. Although we do not understand it, it can lead us from morbid introspection towards an association with all who suffer in the world. It is on our beds of pain that we are often most able to offer our prayers of intercession for others.
- 23.9 In our suffering we may strive to possess our pain, we may struggle to hide our disease, to hold on to our infirmity. This can be very damaging and we are repeatedly learning that God wants us to **give** our pain and suffering to Him, loosening our grip upon it and hearing His words "do not strive". By doing this we experience the healing process of being set free from all our questioning, doubting and fearing.
- 23.10 The Saints in all the centuries teach us that just as God can speak to us through the beauty of creation and through the word of truth, so **He can speak to us through our pain and suffering**, if we are prepared to lift it up to Him.
- 23.11 The Saints have also shown us that our suffering may have within it a special **meaning** and even a specific **purpose** in our life.

24. The Evidence

- 24.1 We have inherited from the Age of Enlightenment a **rationalism** which seeks to discover the nature of reality with the sole guidance of reason.
- 24.2 **Reason** on its own cannot enable us to discover let alone understand spiritual truths which are equally as real as physical truths.
- 24.3 The route to grasping the reality of truth in our lives must inevitably be **experiential**. To say that God exists is not sufficient - we need to **know** Him.
- 24.4 There is a **knowledge** of things which lies beyond the scope of our senses (which are bound to the world of space and time) and even our imagination.
- 24.5 Thomas **doubted** until he personally experienced touching the wounds of Jesus. As Christians we believe in a new and living way in which we come face to face with God in prayer, feel the breath of Christ upon our lives and are able to reach out and touch His garment and be healed.

- 24.6 All this goes **beyond reason**. It was beyond reason that Jesus should ask His disciple to walk on water. Reason pointed to getting his feet wet and sinking. Faith and the power of Christ saw that reality could be different.
- 24.7 A purely materialistic attitude to humankind cannot accept any reality other than physical reality. Those who take this attitude close the door to the **ultimate** and **absolute** reality which is God.
- 24.8 In our understanding of healing if we are guided **only** by reason or physical phenomena we will never get to the root of disease. We have to admit that human reason is **limited** by our available knowledge. Therefore, we cannot say 'this is impossible' when faced with the apparently inexplicable. St. Augustine declared "we cannot say that a miracle is contrary to nature, but rather contrary to what is known of nature."
- 24.9 God wishes us to use both His gifts of reason and **imagination**. Our imagination may be directed towards nature or towards the supernatural. To use the God-given gift of imagination we can, in the faith of Christ, visualise the fruition of His purpose.
- When we pray for a sick person we may see that person completely well. Put in another way - God would not give us the ability to dream dreams if dreams could never come true. The ultimate coming of the Kingdom with all its joy, light, life and hope, can be realised in our prayers through imagination. On the other hand a healthy imaginative process can be displaced by an introspection which can be destructive and paralysing.
- 24.10 Christians have to operate within the **culture** of which they are an integral part today. We need to explain our encounter with God's healing grace in a way that will help rather than hinder those searching for faith.
- 24.11 What, for the Christian is **real** may, for some non-Christians, appear to be unreal.
- 24.12 Reality may easily be dismissed as illusion, delusion, imagination or dreaming if the spiritual dimension of living is rejected. Those who accept the spiritual dimension of life know this to be the dominant reality. Their experience of God deep within themselves, becomes the supreme reality of their life. Through Christ we find God in love and discover Him to be love.
- 24.13 To understand the reality of God and of His healing love we inevitably have to wrestle with the realities of relationships. We may say "I **think** I love you" or "I **perceive** I love you" or "I **feel** I love you" or "I **know** I love you" or simply "I **love** you". Does the reality lie in thinking, or perceiving, or feeling, or knowing or in simply declaring? Reality for the world is the external demonstration.
- 24.14 Jesus was very clear about the importance of the external demonstration. Firstly, He said "by this shall all men know that you are my disciples - that you have **love** one for another" and secondly He said "by their **fruits** shall you know them". In the first instance the love is **seen** and in the second the fruit is **tasted**. It is the seeing and tasting in which the confirmation of the reality of healing takes place. Similarly in the first Letter of John reference is made to that "which we have **heard**, which we have **seen** with our eyes, which we have **looked at** and our hands have **touched**".
- 24.15 If the risen Christ is **seen** healing and transforming sick people today we should have no difficulty in evangelizing our secular atheistic society - they have the right to **see** the fruits and **taste** them for themselves. Jesus said clearly, "You must believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; **or at least believe it on the evidence of these works**" (John 14.11)
- 24.16 **Knowledge** derived from reason is acquired indirectly on the basis of diverse pieces of information. Knowledge of God is direct, immediate and intuitive. Leanne Payne says "The truly imaginative experience is defined therefore as an intuition of the real".

- 24.17 The Christian healing ministry invites Christians to leap from the **theory** to the **practice** of the Gospel, to stop talking about healing and to start being healed and being used to heal. "The God of biblical faith is a God who is known only in the context of a shared and lived experience. Without that experience God remains an intellectual abstraction". - Kenneth Leach - Experiencing God
- 24.18 Throughout the world today we are seeing powerful evidence of Christ's healing within churches of all traditions. We are rediscovering that **healing and renewal of faith go hand in hand.**

25. Kingdom Healing - The Vision

- 25.1 The healing ministry of Christ is a **fundamental** part of His announcement of the Kingdom.
- 25.2 The Kingdom embraces the **total** healing of all creation.
- 25.3 We are called to be **Kingdom people** exercising a healing ministry in a world of violence, corruption, persecution, injustice, starvation and poverty. This ministry will inevitably involve every aspect of our lives including such areas as politics and international affairs, education and industry. Nothing is excluded. The Gospel is indivisible. Christ comes to heal and change **us** and to heal and change the **world.**
- 25.4 We cannot separate our personal sickness from the **sickness of the world.** This is why in Isaiah we are clearly told "is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen; to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and provide the poor wanderer with shelter?" (Isaiah 58)
- 25.5 The teaching of Jesus regarding our responsibility to be instruments of healing for **other** people is precise - "Whatever you did for the least of these brothers of mine you did for me." He warns "I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me." (Matthew 25)
- 25.6 Our vision of the Kingdom is of the time when **God rules.** This is when His perfect will is done and where there is no sickness of body, mind or spirit. The desert and the wilderness will be transformed. "Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer and the mute tongue shout for joy." There will be gladness and joy and "**sorrow and sighing will flee away.**" (Isaiah 35)

26. Postscript

- 26.1 We live in a hopeless, faithless, loveless world. The Christian healing ministry depends upon us **receiving** and **using** the gifts of faith, hope and love. Without faith we are unable to remove mountains. Without love our efforts are futile. Without hope the world remains desolate and the Church impotent.
- 26.2 Christians are called to be **hope-filled.** Cardinal Suenens "To hope is a duty. To hope is not a dream, but to turn dream into reality. Happy are those who dream dreams and are ready to pay the price to make them come true."
- 26.3 Henri Nouwen says - "A Christian leader is a man of **hope** whose strength in the final analysis is based neither on self confidence derived from his personality nor on specific expectations for the future, but on a promise given to him." and also, "This promise not only made Abraham travel to unknown territory; it not only inspired Moses to lead his people out of slavery; it is also the guiding motive for any Christian who keeps pointing to life even in the face of corruption and death".
- 26.4 The Bible presents healing as a **victory.** Professor Jacques Courvoisier says "The healing of disease is always represented as God's victory, and more particular as

God's victory won in Jesus Christ over sin and death." and also "The healing of the sick and the proclamation of the Gospel go together."

26.5 The Bible presents healing as **all-embracing**; Professor Jacques Ellul emphasises "Healing is always both bodily and spiritual."

26.6 The **interaction** of the emotional, spiritual and physical is self-evident. Dr Paul Tournier writes "It is of special interest to us doctors that this confirmation of spiritual, psychological and physical effects in the divine action is not only doctrinal and theoretical, but has every appearance of being organic. We see in it the beneficent effects of the action of the Spirit upon the body, grace flooding into the whole person." Paul Tournier also says "many functional disturbances and in the long run many organic lesions as well, are the direct consequence of unresolved remorse. This is shown by the fact of their abrupt disappearance or reduction after confession." He refers to long-standing insomnia, palpitations, headaches, and disorders of the digestive organs and of the liver and emphasises that **confession** of sin is a healing process.

26.7 When we come to God in repentance, **confessing** our sins and weaknesses and declaring our need for Him, He always responds with a great outpouring of His love upon our lives. "He stands at the right hand of the needy one." (Psalm 109) "They cry to the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them from their distress. He brought them out of darkness and the deepest gloom and broke away their chains." "**He sent forth His word and healed them.**" (Psalm 107)

1992

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Note: See also other Maranatha Community publications: Introductory Ecumenical Notes "Christian Healing" and the Maranatha folders "Christian Healing" "A Life Prayer" "A Shalom Prayer" and also the Maranatha teaching cassette on Healing. All available from 102 Irlam Road, Flixton, Manchester, M41 6JT. Tel: 0161 748 4858.
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maranatha

The Maranatha Community is a growing Christian Community committed to Renewal, Unity and Healing. Its members include Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Salvationists, Pentecostalists and members of the United Reformed and Independent Churches. We are one in Christ. Our aim is to be more effective as Christians in the places where we live, worship and work. Maranatha has spread throughout the country.

Appendix A. - Readings

Biblical Readings for use in Healing Services

The following readings are extensively used for healing services in churches in this country and are to be found in recommended service notes and lectionaries.

Isaiah 40:1-11	Luke 11:5-13
Isaiah 53:4-12	Matthew 5:1-12
Isaiah 54:7-10	Matthew 6:25-34
Isaiah 58:1,6, & 9	Mark 1:21-34
John 9	Mark 2:1-12
John 14:12-7	Mark 9:14-29
Luke 4:14-21	Acts 3:1-16
Luke 7:18-29	Acts 28:7-10
Luke 9:1-6	2 Corinthians 12:7-10
Luke 10:1-9 & 38-42	James 5:13-16

See also Psalms 23,27,30,34,43,46,51,86,91,103,116,121,139 & 143 (omitting v12)

Appendix B - Three Prayers

Father,
I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you;
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me,
and in all your creatures.
I wish no more than this, O Lord.
Into your hands I commend my soul;
I offer it to you
with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord,
and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands,
without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father. Amen.
Charles de Foucauld

Father, the world is full of pain; each of us has a share; for some it is a slight burden, for others it is crushing. But every Christian can turn it into a blessing if he will seek the companionship of Christ in his sufferings; then the pain becomes a new point of fellowship with Christ; and even our suffering becomes part of the price of the world's redemption as we fill up what is left over of the suffering of Christ.

Pain does not then cease to be pain; but it ceases to be barren pain; and with fellowship with Christ upon the cross we find new strength for bearing it and even making it the means by which our hearts are more fully cleansed of selfishness and grow towards perfect love. Accomplish this in us through Christ our Lord.

William Temple

Lord make me an instrument of your peace
Where there is hate may I bring love,
Where there is offence may I bring pardon,
Where there is discord may I bring union,
Where there is error may I bring truth,
Where there is doubt may I bring faith,
Where there is despair may I bring hope,
Where there is darkness may I bring light,
Where there is sadness may I bring joy,
O Master, make me not so much to be consoled as to
console; not so much to be loved as to love;
not so much to be understood as to understand;
for it is in giving that we receive; it is in
self-forgetfulness that we find; it is in pardoning
that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are
born eternal life. *St. Francis of Assisi*