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November 2015 "Divine Healing is for Today"

Dear Friends,

Many churches and denominations question the reality of divine healing. They do not believe that God heals today as He did the way it is recorded in the New Testament. In fact, many teach that such healing was only prevalent during the earthly ministry of Jesus and then the Apostles after Him. Healing, they teach, along with the other Gifts of the Holy Spirit, was only to help get the Church established. These churches truly love God and definitely believe that faith in Jesus is the only way to salvation, but they do not believe it is God's will to heal people today as He did in the New Testament.

That was the kind of church our family attended as I was being raised. Repentance, faith in Jesus and the born again experience were heavily emphasized - along with water baptism - but we did not believe in divine healing. In fact, when we prayed for the sick, it went something like this: "God, if it be Thy will, heal Brother So-and-So." Some even went so far as to believe that God would make people sick to teach them a lesson.

Years later I began attending what some would call a "Full Gospel" church. The people there preached and believed in divine healing. Not only that, they would lay hands on people and pray for healing to manifest. Further, I heard testimonies of miraculous healings and even witnessed people I knew get healed. All of this resulted in me taking another look at the subject of divine healing and how people are used by God for healing to manifest. In this month's letter I hope to help you understand more about the reality of divine healing.

In Matthew 17, Jesus, Peter, James and John had been on what is called the Mount of Transfiguration where Jesus had an encounter with Moses and Elijah. Coming down from that mountain, they encountered an interesting situation recorded in Matthew 17:14-21,

¹⁴And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, ¹⁵Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. ¹⁶And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

¹⁷Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. ¹⁸And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

¹⁹Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

²⁰And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. ²¹Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

As I meditated on this passage, some very interesting points began to stand out.

- 1) The disciples did not ask how much sin was in the boy's or his dad's life that hindered the deliverance and healing.
- 2) They did not accuse the dad or the boy of not having enough faith. (After all, the dad brought the boy to the disciples. Isn't that faith?)
- 3) They did not question if it was God's timing for the boy to be delivered and healed.
- 4) They did not say, "Well, maybe God's trying to teach him a lesson."
- 5) They did not ask if the dad had been tithing.
- 6) They did not tell the dad to sow a seed offering for the deliverance and healing of his son.
- 7) There was NEVER any question that the boy was supposed to be delivered and healed right then and there.
- 8) The disciples anticipated that they, NOT GOD, would cast out the devil and heal the boy.
- 9) They wanted to know why THEY couldn't cast it out, NOT why God didn't cast it out and heal the boy.
- 10) They did not declare, "Only Jesus can do this kind of deliverance and healing; we are incapable because man cannot do the works of Jesus."
- 11) They never questioned that they could operate by God's power, not having to rely on their own abilities.
- 12) They came to the conclusion that they SHOULD have been able to cast out the devil and heal the boy and that the problem was with them, no one else. *They did not blame God.*

No doubt the disciples prayed, demanded the devil and sickness to leave the son and probably used the Name of Jesus over and over. But consider what they did when they were unable to get the man's son delivered and healed:

- A. Instead of reasoning it out among themselves or consulting with their religious leaders, the disciples went to Jesus to find out what had gone wrong.
- B. Jesus did not tell them the problem was a lack of faith on the part of the dad and his son. He told them they weren't able to cast the devil out and get the boy healed because of *their* unbelief.
- C. Even though the disciples had acted in faith to try and get the son delivered and healed, Jesus revealed that in this situation, they had a greater level of unbelief than they did of faith.
- D. If the disciples had known they had unbelief for this kind of deliverance and healing, they would never have asked Jesus why they had been unsuccessful.

It is very possible that someone might respond, "*But Brother Martin, those men were the Apostles. They had every right to expect that they could get that son healed.*" While I do understand that line of thought, here are some other points to consider.

- 1) Do you realize that the disciples in this story were not born again, let alone filled with the Holy Spirit?
- 2) Are you saying that Christians should be less capable of minister healing than the spiritually lost disciples?
- 3) Are you saying that the spiritually lost disciples had a capacity for more faith than Christians?

- 4) You're focusing on Apostles; but what about the 70 in Luke 10:1-17 who cast devils out and got people healed? There is no record in scripture that they were Apostles.
- 5) If the expectation of the spiritually lost disciples was that they should have been able to get the boy delivered and healed, how much more should the expectation be of those who are washed in the blood of Jesus and born of God's Spirit?

Jesus told the disciples their unbelief was the hindrance. If unbelief was the problem then, would it not be the problem now? Just because we're born again does not mean we automatically have faith necessary and developed for each and every situation. When we pray and lay hands on people for a healing or a deliverance, we are always doing it in faith; otherwise, we wouldn't pray in the first place.

When we don't see results, it isn't that we aren't praying in faith, but that our faith is not at the level necessary to see results in the situation being faced at that time. This helps explain why some people I've prayed for have seen healing manifest in their bodies while other people have not. The problem isn't with God or that He is favoring one person over another. The problem is that my faith is at "Level 4" when I need "Level 6" faith to see the person I'm praying for get healed.

Unbelief hindered that boy's deliverance and healing. Jesus revealed that prayer and fasting address the unbelief so that deliverance and healing can manifest in the most challenging situations. *We* are the ones praying and fasting, not God. So again, it comes back to US ministering the healing and deliverance. Unlike some, I refuse to lay all the blame on sick people for not receiving healing when I pray for them. If someone has asked me to pray for his healing, then he must have faith to a certain point or he wouldn't have asked me to pray.

Jesus explained that unbelief was the reason the disciples could not cast the devil out of the man's son and get him healed. Then He said, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Many people teach that when Jesus said "this kind," He was speaking exclusively of the devil in that man's son. However, if the unbelief is not dealt with, then the deliverance and healing will not take place. Thus, we have to get rid of "this kind" of unbelief before we can adequately minister "this kind" of deliverance and healing when praying for people.

Some might ask, "Well, I don't understand what fasting and prayer have to do with it." Quite frankly, it really doesn't matter if we understand it or not. If Jesus tells us that prayer and fasting helps purge us of unbelief, then we should accept His words without first demanding a detailed formula to convince our minds. In John 6:63 Jesus said that His words are spirit and they are life. Therefore, His revelation that unbelief is addressed through prayer and fasting should be seen as an instruction of grace filled with the spiritual life of God. Why should we doubt that what Jesus said will work? (By the way, you can fast many different things, such as television, but as you study fasting in the Bible you will notice that over and over it is about food and drink.)

Praying with the understanding is of great benefit. But praying in the Spirit (praying in tongues) serves to accelerate the way we deal with unbelief. First Corinthians 14, verse 2 tells us praying in the Spirit means we are praying out mysteries, such as the mysteries of how to get rid of unbelief. Verse 4 states praying in the Spirit produces edification, which would include edification over unbelief. Jude 1:20 explains that praying in the

Spirit builds us up on our most holy faith. In Romans 8:26-27, God lets us know that praying in the Spirit enables us to pray about things even if in our mind we aren't sure how to pray; it is praying out the mind and the will of God, such as God's will that we get rid of unbelief. Knowing all this, why would I not want to pray in the Spirit?

Remember, the unbelief being discussed here is extremely subtle. It cannot be felt. It is not based on emotions. The only way we know it exists is by virtue of a lack of the results. When the sick ask us to lay hands on them and pray, and they do not recover, then we have just discovered we have unbelief we did not know existed. We can live our whole lives with this kind of unbelief and dismiss a lack of results on "God's will," God's timing," or any number of religious teachings that are not firmly established on scripture.

I have prayed for too many people and seen too many healings and miracles following to question if divine healing is for today. God wants to use all Christians to minister healing to others, including the lost. If you and I are not seeing the desired results when we pray for people, then we need to press further into prayer and fasting, just as Jesus said. God loves us and He does not want to see us sick, afflicted or injured. Our Father wants us healed...Hallelujah!

In His Grace,

Jim

P.S. - If you would like to have a CD of the sermon on which this month's letter is based, please complete and mail the order form on the next page. The title of the sermon is, "Healing is for Right Now."

**** 2016 Spring Prayer and Power Conference ****

The conference dates are Sunday, April 24 through Friday, April 29. Our host hotel is:

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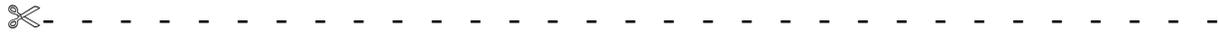
Discounted room rates are \$94 per night, plus tax. When you contact the hotel you must ask for the Grace Christian Center conference rate in order to receive the discount. Our Group Block Code is **0321GRACEC**. Many events take place in the Dayton area from March through June and hotels fill very quickly. It would be wise to make your reservations as soon as possible. For those traveling from other countries, our ministry will not be providing finances for your airplane ticket, hotel room and meals. If you have any questions about the conference send them to PastorJimGCC@gmail.com.

**** Facebook****

I use Facebook for various ministry announcements and updates. If you use Facebook, you are welcome to send me a "Friend Request." Enter my name - Jim Martin - in the "Search Facebook" box at the top of your Facebook page. Several Jim Martin pages may pop up. Mine is the one with a picture of Kathy and me sitting on a large rock in front of a lake with mountains in the background.

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