

I remember the Sunday when my parents and I came home from church when I was about eight years old (1958). We turned on our TV which only had a black and white picture. There was a man with a white shirt with sleeves rolled up who was laying hands on a sick person in order to heal them. I asked my parents if that was for real. They said they didn't know. The man they referred to was Oral Roberts. Fast forward 27 years to 1985.

I was waiting for my visa to return to England to work with a church as their evangelism coordinator. I knew the task would be a challenge, because the dominant culture in that community was of Indian descent and they were mostly of the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim religions. As I prepared to go to London, God led me to have a greater interest in the healing ministry. People of other religions would not be reached with only words. They would need to see the character of Christ in me but it would also be good for them to see demonstrations of God's miraculous power.

A NEGATIVE NEPHEW IS SURPRISED

It was in early 1985 that I attended a series of healing meetings with Charles and Frances Hunter in Jamestown NY, near where I was staying with one of my sisters in upstate NY. I wanted to learn more about healing the sick from the "Happy Hunters" as they were known. They both had such childlike faith in Jesus and were always so joyful. When I returned to my sisters place at night, my nephew D. would query me about the meeting. Sometimes he would extend his arm out towards me and derisively say:H...E....A....L !!! H... E....E...E..A..L !!!

One day that week my nephew surprised me when he asked me to pray for him, as he had the flu and a sore throat. I was reluctant at first because he had been mocking the healing ministry all that week, but I finally gave in to his request. I went over to where he was laying in bed and laid my hands on his throat (something I had thought about doing before for other reasons!) I prayed against his sore throat in Jesus name and then I went downstairs for a few minutes. When I returned upstairs and entered his room, D. exclaimed to me: "It's gone! My sore throat is gone!". Although his flu remained for a day or two, God had given us both a sign of his divine healing power. That was my first healing miracle..

The following week I went to stay with my brother and his family for while on the dairy farm where I had grown up. I was excited to tell them about the miracles I had seen at the healing meetings. My stories drew the interest of Paulette, my sister-in-law, who then told me that she had back problems. She was unable to sit comfortably at church due to her back pain so she asked me if I would pray for her. I told her I would be glad to, but replied I would do so after I did some barn chores first. (I figured this would give me some time to prepare myself mentally and spiritually in prayer before I came back to pray for her). A couple of hours later I returned to the house just after 7 PM. As I entered the dining room, I could see that Paulette was in the living room watching TV. I was a bit anxious as I slowly walked towards the living room to tell her that I was ready to pray for her. I noticed that a man on the TV program was in Israel and was walking towards a large rock. I then heard him say:

'This is one place that we know for sure that Jesus Christ stood nearly 2000 years ago.'

To me.....that was a God moment. One that God set up to encourage me as I was ready to obey him in praying for the sick. Jesus was reminding me of his presence. Paulette came into the dining room and sat in a chair. I had her extend her legs out to check the lengths and then I prayed and spoke a command of healing to her back and legs. I don't think I asked her if she felt any better. I had done my part, now I would trust God to do his part. She then asked me if I

would pray for her son Mike who was about 12 years old as he had a hole in his eardrum. I placed my fingers in his ears and prayed and commanded his ear to be healed in Jesus' name.

The next day Paulette told me that her back was 90% better. As for Mike's ears, that would have to wait until he returned to the doctor two weeks later. At that time Paulette came back and told me that the doctor told her that Mike no longer had a hole in his eardrum! These healing stories remind me of that special time in my life when I was learning to stretch out in faith in areas that were a little uncomfortable for me. Just like the first disciples, I was learning to obey Jesus. It was about 16 months later that I finally reached the city of London to begin my work among the Indians at Southall Baptist Church.

UNEXPECTED MOTIVATION FOR HEALING MEETINGS

One day a lady came to the church and asked if Sister Sophie was there. I told her that this was a church. She then showed me a leaflet that described a psychic healer named Sister Sophie who would tell your fortune and bring healing to you. Results guaranteed. At the bottom of the leaflet it read: next to the Southall Baptist Church. As I later thought about this, it provoked me to take action. Why should people be going to a person like Sister Sophie for healing? They should be coming to the church to meet Jesus the Healer!!

I got permission from the pastor to start weekly healing meetings on Thursday night at the church. We had some times for worship and a short word of scripture and then we prayed for the sick. I also helped bring an international healing evangelist Steve Ryder to the church for a series of healing meetings. God moved powerfully and I was the appointed journalist to write the report for their magazine. It was entitled: When Jesus Comes to Town. The weekly healing meetings carried on even after I left the church. The healing ministry is never meant to be about any one person, except Jesus Christ himself. We are only conduits of his glory and power. (Within the next two years I was asked to go teach new believers in three newly formed churches in the Czech Republic that were started from Evangelism meetings Steve Ryder had held there. We were able to pray for scores of hungry new Christians.

In essence.....none of us can teach, preach or heal effectively without the help of Jesus. We are co-laborers with Jesus. He works in and through us to do his good will. His great treasure lies in our earthen vessels, just waiting to be spilled out and spread to the world around us. As an eight year old, I had asked my parents if healing was for real. Now I know. Jesus heals. He is the same, yesterday, today and forever.

PRAYER: Jesus, you displayed to us in the gospels many times and ways that you healed people. We pray for the same compassion and faith to see the needs of people around us as he did in order to bring healing to them. In the next month may many of us step out in faith. Like the early disciples, we will report back to you what we have done and taught. Amen.

"The disciples gathered to Jesus and told him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught." - Mark 6:30 NKJV

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