

Series - Family

Date/s - 30 October 2016

Topic - A Healthy Understanding on Healing and Our Healing Ministry
(Part 2)

Speaker/s - Pastor Lionel Goh

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like "Heal me, Oh Lord" (Don Moen), "Healer" (Kari Jobe), "For You Alone"

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Understand what is healing
2. Learn to minister to the sick biblically

Word [45 min]

Pastor Lionel started with a quick recap about last Sunday's sermon when we learn how to reconcile the mandate we have to go forth to heal the sick and to recognise that there will still be people who remain sick despite our persistent prayer for healing. Therefore, if not all sick people are healed physically today, why then does God still command us to pray for them? (Luke 9:1-2, 10:9 and James 5:14-15)*

Firstly, we need to understand what 'Biblical Wholeness' is. The triune nature of Man – Man has 3 parts, i.e., body, soul and spirit (1 Thess 5:23). It is only when these parts are healthy that the person will enjoy wholeness (Psalm 32:3-5). According to Jewish culture, the understanding of Shalom is that it encompasses more than just its equivalent meaning in English - 'peace' especially in Numbers 6:24-26. It refers to completeness, wholeness, health, peace, welfare, safety, soundness, tranquility, prosperity, perfectness, fullness, rest, harmony, the absence of agitation or discord. It means, most significantly, in i) peace between man and God, ii) peace between man and fellow men, and iii) peace with his own soul (inner peace). Not only is our relationship with God important, our relationships with others is vital for a person's well-being too.

Jesus' ministry was a holistic one. In Luke 19:1-9, Jesus identified Zacchaeus from the on-looking crowd when he was least conspicuous in the crowd. Being a tax collector, he was despised by people. However, as he sought Jesus sincerely, salvation came to his house as his soul, spirit and relationship was healed. Leo Thomas says 'In our healing ministry, the yardstick of success is not measured by how much a person becomes well physically, but by how much closer he is drawn towards God.' We focus on the whole person – body, soul, spirit and relationship, not just the physical bodily healing alone. Jesus' desire for his disciples is in their destinies with Him (John 14:1-4). God's ultimate yearning is for us (Rev 21:3-4 and Phil 1:21-24). Going home to the Lord should not be a setback in our Healing Ministry as death is not a defeat for those in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

A healthy approach to praying for the sick is first to obey the Lord's command to pray for the sick (see * above). When we pray, we minister to the whole person with God's compassion (Matthew 14:14, Luke 7:13) and we pray with faith, expectation and perseverance (Mark 11:24, 2 Samuel 12:16). Most importantly, it is not

about how hard we have prayed, but that we rest in God's sovereignty and leave the outcome to our God. Upon occasions when the sick becomes terminally ill, do not despair but know God is sovereign and gravitate towards his or her and loved ones' spiritual, emotional and relational needs. When finality comes, we play an important role to prepare them to boldly embrace his or her eternal destiny (2 Timothy 4:6-8) and for the loved ones to let him 'return home' to be with our Lord.

In conclusion, Pastor Lionel taught on three reasons why God want us to pray for the sick and he encouraged us to continue to do so unceasingly: (i) to show His compassion (Matthew 14:14, Luke 7:13), (ii) to bring holistic restoration (Luke 5:18-25), and (iii) to testify that God's Kingdom is here on earth and advancing (Mark 16:17-18).

Discussion Questions

1. **Pastor shared about how we should reconcile God's mandate to pray for the sick and His sovereignty over the life and death of individuals. What must we first understand about healing?** [10 mins]

Leader's notes: Recall the basis of our healing ministry that Pastor taught. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:23, we must understand that the well-being of a person is composed of the triune nature of man, i.e., emphasize that no one part is greater than the other. Healing is not dependent on how hard we have been interceding for people but that there are many factors involved regarding life and death issues. Faith is not about answered prayers in the here and now, but rather the greatness and glorification of His Name – His Sovereignty. Note that the posture behind our prayers for the sick is important be they believers or pre-believers that we are ministering to. We need to impart the right and true knowledge of who Christ is to those we minister to.

2. **Read Matthew 17:20. This is a verse commonly used when praying for the sick. What does faith do when it comes to the ministry of healing with regards to God's sovereignty?** [10 mins]

Leader's notes: This question requires understanding the context of the verse. Although the disciples were empowered by the Holy Spirit, they were not 'little gods' representing Christ Himself. This is to teach them total reliance on Christ and to keep them in humility and to submit to the sovereignty of Jesus Christ. It is to glorify Him and His power alone. In the ministry of healing, we must always remember that it is God who does the healing and that faith in God and His sovereign power is central when we pray for healing. Christ's rebuke of the 'faithless and perverse generation' in the verse is not spoken to the disciples (although we know unbelief/faithless is opposite of faith and also note they are described as 'perverse') but rather, it is spoken to the people around them (Mark 9:14-20). Is God not sovereign when there are those who were sick and they died not receiving Christ in their hearts? Refer to Romans 9:14-17. God is sovereign. Faith means believing that God knows best and to trust Him for the outcomes or as Pastor said 'rest in God's sovereignty and leave our ministry outcome to the Lord'.

3. **How have you ever struggled with praying for the sick with dwindling faith as you witness the sick weakening physically as time passes?** [10 mins]

Leader's notes: This is a relate & reflect question and leader might highlight the triune nature of man and the destination that God wants us to be at – is eternal life with Him. God's redemption plan is key to all ministries we are involved in. Whether the sick is healed or not, it does not change the fact that God is still Jehovah Rapha and that He is God. Let us recognize that our mandate is to pray for the sick with a good measure of faith God has given to all of us (for without faith, we cannot please God). Yet we are mindful that we do not minister to people as if we play 'god', dictating God to heal every single persons we pray for. Instead, we can persevere in prayer for His grace and mercy. We reconcile such expectations especially for those who are sick with much prayer and wisdom from God in faith. Leaders can end off the discussion by recapping the reasons Pastor taught on why God wants us to pray for the sick (see sermon outline), even though we may not see immediate physical results of our prayers.

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. We would always have a healthy approach in praying for the sick. Ministering to the whole person with God's compassion, praying with faith, having expectation and perseverance. Leaving the outcome to the Lord.

Announcements

1. MEN'S FELLOWSHIP EVENT WITH JASON WONG

Sat, 19 Nov | 3.30-6.30pm | Worship Centre

Free admission. Dinner will be provided.

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 13 Nov.

For enquiries, please contact Christine Tan at 65114141, or email her at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg.

2. APPLE OF MY EYE: A FATHER DAUGHTER BONDING EVENT BY FAMILY LIFE

Sat, 26 Nov | 7pm | The Sapling, 20 Lengkok Bahru

Cost: \$100 per dad & daughter pair (age 13 to 21 years)

If you are bringing along more than one daughter, the additional cost will be \$50 per pax.

Sign up with payment at the Information Counter by Sun, 13 Nov.

For enquiries, please contact Christine Tan at 65114141, or email her at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg.

3. WATER BAPTISM

Sun, 13 Nov | 2.30-5pm | Victory Chapel

30 RiverLifers will be getting baptised. Come and show them your support!