

Release the Supernatural by Meditation on Christ

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Greater Impartation Through Formation

The truth of the impartation of spiritual gifts has been emphasized by many leaders in the Church in the past decade. Unfortunately, in many places, this has been an unbalanced teaching promising an instantaneous empowering of believers simply by the laying on of hands. Repeatedly, I have been asked by believers to *impart* the healing and miracle anointing. While this is entirely possible, I understand what believers *actually receive* when I pray for them is highly dependent upon their spiritual *formation*.

The term *formation* describes the kind of vessel that a believer is for the Spirit of Christ. Indeed, we should never overlook the fact that the Holy Spirit seeks to conform us to Christ. *Formation* of a believer has to do with Christ-like character, child-like faith in Christ and sincere love for God. Formation has to do with our capacity to love and serve people in need. Formation has to do with pure motives and most certainly the clarity of our understanding of the will of the Father. While many English-speaking believers have sufficient Christ-like character to have a significant healing flow, faulty understanding robs them of simple faith and often prevents them from consistently and reliably healing the sick and injured in Christ's name.

Childhood Lessons on Formation

When I was eight years old, my family lived in northern Louisiana. I remember some of the rain storms that came in certain seasons of the year. These rain storms have become a parable to me about formation. The rain was so intense, so dense, that you couldn't see across the street. I found a way to entertain myself even though I couldn't go outside to play. I would go into our garage and open the door. I would then place various vessels in the garage out into the rain. Glass Coke bottles were generally numerous in the garage and I'd place them where they would begin to collect the rain. My mother always had a few Mason jars in the garage also. I'd place them in the rain as well. There were lids to various vessels as well that I would put in the rain as well. There were also a mop bucket and dried out paint cans and other assorted vessels of different types. I put all these into the rain.

I learned a great deal about vessels and their capacity to receive the rain on those days. For instance, no matter how deep the vessel was, its capacity to receive the rain was dependent upon the size of the opening at the top. There were numerous Coke bottles in the rain, but they didn't collect much rain

water because the opening at the top was small. While the Mason jars were about the same height as the Coke bottles, they did much better at receiving the rain. The mop bucket collected a great deal of the rain because the opening at its top was very large. The mop bucket was very *open* to the rain, while the Coke bottles were in comparison very closed to the rain. Likewise, if our opening at the top, *our head*, is not open, we also will receive little of the presence and power of Holy Spirit that is abundantly being poured out like abundant rain in our day. Our understanding of God's will is critical for us to receive properly God's work through us. For example, many of us rejected or were suspicious of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit when we first heard about this experience. In many cases, we had misunderstandings that had to be overcome before we received what the Lord wished. Healing is no different except that there are more misunderstandings to overcome.

In those days as a child, I learned that the depth of a vessel does not determine how quickly it receives. There are many Christian people who are of good character but receive little from Christ because their understanding of the will of God is faulty. Faulty understanding of the will of God produces doubt and unbelief. Doubt and unbelief do not allow us to receive what Christ has done for us. Christians with little understanding of God's will revealed in Jesus Christ are like the Coke bottles. They may have depth of character but they have little capacity to receive from God.

I placed lids of various vessels in the rain. Some of the lids were able to receive rain very quickly because they were large lids. However, they were not able to contain as much rain because they were too shallow and quickly reached their capacity. In other words, our understanding of God's will allows us to receive from God quickly and abundantly and our depth of character determines how much power and blessing from God we can actually contain.

What kind of vessel are you? Are you a mop bucket or a Coke bottle? You can receive an impartation of the healing power of the Holy Spirit but your understanding will determine exactly how much you actually receive. Your character then will then determine how much you can actually contain and maintain. Thankfully, no one has to remain a Coke bottle. We can become a vessel of honor. We can enlarge our understanding of the gracious and merciful nature of Father's will revealed in Jesus Christ. As our understanding is enlarged, our faith in Christ will grow and we will receive more and more grace and mercy from the Lord. As we receive more and more from Christ, we will be enlarged in character as well. We will become more like Christ as we receive continuously from Him.

Cultural History of Misunderstanding

The primary reason for faulty understanding is the influence of western culture. Western culture has been strongly affected by medieval

misunderstandings of the value of sickness and the availability of healing. Western culture has been affected by the anti-supernatural bias of early Protestantism and then reinforced by the anti-supernatural tenets of the philosophies of rationalism and humanism. In other words, western culture has a long history of unbelief, doubting doctrines, and skepticism about healing.

North America, Europe, and many of those nations that were formerly part of the British Empire have been profoundly affected by the anti-supernatural bias of western culture. Those of us in North America and in Europe and elsewhere were born into cultures that already were strongly affected by doubt and unbelief about Christian healing. Let us not underestimate the power of our culture to affect us negatively.

The relative lack of healing in these affected nations also reinforces cultural doubts about healing. In other words since healing doesn't happen very often or reliably in most western churches, we assume that God does not wish to heal for specific reasons in those churches. The actual truth is very different from this. Humbly we submit that the great majority of Christian leaders in the western nations are Coke bottles and simply don't know it. Their understanding and attitudes are incorrect about healing and therefore they receive little for their congregations. These leaders often reproduce Coke bottles in their congregations without really knowing it. They impart distorted ideas and attitudes about healing that are not found in the New Testament.

The Church in the western nations has often thought arrogantly that it was superior to the Church in the third world. The Church, living in the western nations, has consistently demonstrated that it struggles with healing and the supernatural much more than the Church living in Asian, African, or even South American cultures. Those cultures generally have a superior experience with healing and miracles in general. Since Christ and the Gospel is the same for all cultures, we must conclude that we in the West have the problem.

The extent of the effect of western culture upon us personally as individuals is difficult to discern precisely. Our church's culture is often all we know until revelation about Christ begins to penetrate our hearts and minds. We simply don't know what we don't know. We are all *too close to the trees to see the forest*. We are very likely to over-estimate how much we actually understand because we have read books about healing or seen healing happen in our meetings a few times. Intellectual knowledge and mental acceptance of doctrine no matter how good is not the same thing as having our minds renewed and having the mind of Christ.

How do we determine if we need new formation in understanding? The best way of determining our need is comparison with the correct standard; Christ Himself. How Christ-like is our present capacity to heal the sick and injured? How do we compare with the believers revealed in the New Testament? We must remember that twelve ordinary men duplicated the healing ministry of Christ after being with Him for just a few years. Are we duplicating the healing ministry of Christ like these ordinary men? If not, then perhaps we do not understand what those twelve ordinary men understood. Perhaps we need to see Christ the Healer in the same ways that those twelve men saw Him.

Formation Through Scriptural Meditation

Overcoming the effects of western culture has to be a priority for believers. Believers must have proper formation. Thankfully, there is a biblical way to accomplish this. Biblical meditation is the answer. God told Joshua that meditation on the Scriptures would make him successful and prosperous.

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Joshua 1:8 (NASV)

...and the Psalmist declares this about the power of meditation:

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. And he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers. Psalm 1:2-3 (NASV)

If we meditate on Christ's healing in the New Testament, we will experience *success* and *prosperity* in healing. *Why?* Meditation allows the Holy Spirit to reform and renew our attitudes, feelings and thinking about healing. Meditation forms *the mind of Christ* within us allowing us to think about healing in exactly the same way Christ would think and feel. We move from being a Coke bottle to being a mop bucket.

Definition of Meditation

What exactly is biblical meditation? This is the author's definition.

Deep continued thought, reflection, pondering studying, musing and focusing upon matters revealed in the Bible as important.

Meditation is the activity that changed my understanding. As my understanding changed, I became a different kind of vessel and was able to receive a better impartation. This new impartation gave me a more Christ-like experience with healing and miracles. *How did this happen?*

Experience of Meditation

Two years of daily meditation on Christ the Healer produced in me a new understanding of healing. Sometimes I spent several hours each day for a week or more reading and studying just one of Christ's healing events in the New Testament. On occasion I spent eight or more hours studying Christ in a single day. I began by reading the passages, and then I studied them with every study tool in my disposal. I read each passage in various English translations. I took extensive notes about what I was learning. I continued to read and study these passages to the extent that Christ the Healer was in my thoughts even when I was doing something else. Christ became my daily teacher as I meditated upon Him healing people in the Gospels. As I did this, I saw Jesus revealing the will of the Father. My understanding was changing. I began to understand that many things that I had been taught about healing were incorrect and contradicted by Christ. Christ's example dealt with my doubts one by one. I became a newly formed vessel. I ceased being a Coke bottle and was newly formed into a vessel that could receive more. *New formation preceded new impartation.* As I was reformed and renewed in understanding, a new impartation of Christ-like power to heal the sick followed. Christ became my instructor through the power of the Holy Spirit working through the New Testament. New understanding of Father's will revealed in Jesus Christ moved me from a sporadic, unpredictable experience with healing to a much more reliable increasingly Christ-like ministry of healing. I went from occasionally *hitting the lottery* in healing to seeing a great majority healed when I ministered to them.

Planting the Seed of the Word of God

The Parable of the Sower found in Mark Chapter 4 tells us that the seed that should be planted in good soil is the Word of God. As we meditate on Christ in the New Testament, spiritual seed gets planted in us that will bear the fruit of the Spirit; the character of Christ. We become conformed to the image of Jesus Christ through meditation on Christ Himself.

A few years ago, I observed an unusual thing about seed. We purchased a home in the country-side more than 30 minutes drive from any town or city in Virginia. Because I had a young family and we lived a distance from any public swimming pools, I decided to put a pool into my backyard. I chose a large above-ground pool. I was required to get all the grass and rocks out from where the pool would rest upon the ground. In order to do this, I dug down about 6 inches removed all the soil and placed sand in the cavity that I had created. I then set up the pool which was made of heavy vinyl approximately 3/8 of an inch thick. After putting the vinyl over the sand, I added thousands of pounds of water. The water pressure on the vinyl had to be very intense. About two weeks after setting up the pool, I began to notice that the water level had fallen. I looked carefully for a leak and found that

grass had split the vinyl and was growing at the bottom of the pool despite the water. Apparently, there had been grass seed in the sand. Despite the thickness of the vinyl and the pressure of the water against it, the seed had had enough strength to break through the vinyl. After sharing this story with a friend in the concrete business, he told me that he had seen occasions where seed had broken concrete. I believe that the seed of the Word of God has power to break the concrete of any unbelief or doubt. It simply must be planted in the heart. Meditation is a means of planting the seed of the Word of God in our hearts.

The Essential Centrality of Christ

What should we meditate on? Any plan that would equip believers with Christ-like power in healing would have to include meditation on Christ Himself. For instance, the apostle Paul tells us about the nature of Christ in God's plan for us. He writes:

But to those who are the called... Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God... But by His (the Father's) doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption... 1 Corinthians 1: 24, 30 (NASV)

Christ *is* the *power of God* and the *wisdom of God*. As we see Jesus in the Gospels, we see the wisdom of God revealed in human form. The disciples learned healing ministry by seeing Christ reveal the wisdom and power of God in healing moment by moment and situation by situation. We can see Christ, the Word of God made flesh, in the same way that the disciples saw by meditation upon Him in the Gospels.

Father has made Christ *righteousness*, *sanctification* and *redemption* to us. Power comes by focusing upon the very thing that Father has placed His emphasis upon and that is, Christ Himself. As we meditate upon Christ in the Gospels, the Holy Spirit will transform our understanding and minister righteousness, sanctification and redemption to us as we truly see Jesus as those things.

The Gospels reveal Christ Himself and should be the starting place of meditation with anyone who wishes to have a Christ-like capacity to help the sick and suffering. Beyond that, the centrality of Christ in Father's plan for us is a powerful place of meditation in the Epistles. Father has made Christ preeminent. Father is building the Church as a Holy Temple on the cornerstone of Christ. Christ is the Master and we are His disciples. Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is Lord over His Kingdom. Christ is Bridegroom that will marry the Church at the end of the age. Christ is Head and we are His body. He is the vine and we are His branches. Christ is the Great Shepherd and we are His flock. Christ is the Lamb of God who takes

away the sins of the world. Christ is resurrection and life. Believe Christ as Savior, Healer and Deliverer and be saved, healed and delivered. Father puts all Christ's enemies under His feet. Father gave Christ the seven-sealed book. Therefore, Christ controls the flow of time. Christ is Alpha and Omega and is beginning and end. Father has sent the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ. The proclamation of the Gospel is about Christ, His cross and resurrection. Believers are being conformed into Christ's image. The Lord's Supper reminds of the importance of Christ-centered-ness. Believers dare not lose their first love, Christ Himself. These Christ-centered truths are worthy of extensive meditation. Meditation produces formation. Formation precedes impartation.

Christ Perfectly Reveals the Father

The more time I devoted to meditation on this second truth, the greater results I had in healing. The Amplified Version says this:

No man has seen God at any time; the only unique Son, the only-begotten God, Who is in the bosom (that is, in the intimate presence) of the Father, He has declared Him – He has revealed Him, brought Him out where He can be seen; He has interpreted Him, and He has made Him known. John 1:18

Christ alone reveals Father perfectly. Every attitude, action, and word of Christ revealed the perfect will of Father. The Gospels become Good News to us as we learn of the will of Father by what Christ reveals. Christ often describes Himself as doing Father's work and those works witnessed that Father had sent Him. Christ said that He did nothing on His own initiative. He only did what He saw Father doing. He said that He did not seek His own will but the will of Father. Christ said that when we see Him, we see Father. He said that He intimately knew Father and that when we know Him, we know Father. He said that He spoke Father's words and told us truth that He heard from Father. From the Epistles, the apostle Paul writes that Christ is the image of the invisible Father. The writer of Hebrews writes that before Christ, Father spoke through prophets but now Father speaks in His Son. He writes that Christ is the radiance of Father's glory and the exact representation of Father's nature. These are truths in the Epistles worthy of meditation. Meditation produces formation. Formation precedes impartation.

Father's will in healing can be known precisely by meditation upon Christ Himself. For instance, we discover Christ repeatedly heals everyone in the multitudes who comes to Him for healing. We discover that the only people who didn't receive healing were the people who didn't come to Him as Healer like in His own home town. When we are sure that Father always wants to heal everyone, we can pray with simple faith like Christ for the sick and injured.

We can by meditation discover that Christ does not need specific revelation to heal everyone. He does not need a word of knowledge ahead of the time of ministering a miracle to someone like some think today. He is sometimes surprised. The woman with the issue of blood receives healing and Christ does not know ahead of time who she is. Christ is sometimes amazed. Meditation on the story of the ten lepers will reveal that Christ is amazed that the other nine don't return to thank Him. Christ sometimes marvels at the faith of someone. The Roman Centurion received a greater miracle than Christ intended because of the greatness of His faith. In all these cases and many others, we find that Christ's healing ministry was not dependent upon receiving prior revelation of the specifics of the situation. When we are released from the common misconception that we must know specifics on each situation by revelation beforehand, then we will have more Christ-like experience in helping people find healing.

I had many other common misconceptions that prevent me from having simple faith in Christ as Healer. As I meditated upon Christ during those two years, I begin to see my doubts vanish and my experience of healing rapidly change. I began to see a much higher percentage of suffering people being healed. Successful meditation on Christ will change anyone's experience. Many are waiting for something supernatural to happen to them to change their present ability and yet they are not the right kind of vessels. It is the truth that sets us free. We become His disciples and learn the truth from the One who is the truth as we meditate upon Him. This kind of Christ-centered truth will set us free.

Calvary's Finished Work

The third area that is highly significant to consistent power to heal the sick and injured is clarity about the work of Christ at His cross. Here it is important not to listen to what theologians say about the atonement but to meditate on what the apostles and prophets write about this matter. Matthew, one of the twelve apostles, and an eyewitness to Christ's ministry and resurrection writes this:

And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES, AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES." Matthew 8:16-17 (NASV)

Here Matthew points us to Isaiah Chapter 53. He states that Christ's ministry to the multitude fulfills this prophetic passage. Since this Old Testament messianic passage describes what Christ would accomplish at His cross, it is significant to understanding healing ministry. Even though the final price of redemption had not yet been paid, Father showed grace and mercy in healing all who believe in Christ as if the price was already paid. Father looked

forward in time to the cross showing grace and mercy to those who came to Christ in need. The Holy Spirit worked through Christ because of the coming work of the cross.

Patient meditation upon the power of the cross, discussed in the writings of Paul and Peter, will have a profound effect on creating greater success in healing. Christ-centered and cross-centered truth will penetrate our consciousness and becomes part of the inward nature.

A second quotation about healing being available through the cross is found in the apostle Peter's writings. This quotation is worthy of extensive meditation so that it becomes part of us. Peter, one of the twelve apostles and an eyewitness to the ministry, death and resurrection of Christ writes in 1 Peter 2:24:

He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness, for by His wounds you were healed.

Peter quotes from Isaiah 53:5. In this quotation, Peter connects the work of the cross very closely to physical healing in actual words of the verse above. He also quotes from the prophecy of Isaiah about healing that also connects healing with the atoning work of Christ.

Since both Matthew and Peter quote from Isaiah about healing it follows that meditation on this Old Testament chapter ought to help us be better vessels for healing ministry. Meditation on the passage in Isaiah Chapter 53 does reveal a few simple linguistic facts that should help our understanding of healing. For instance, only the phrase below separates the two quotes about healing with Matthew's quote just before it and Peter's quote just after it:

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities. Isaiah 53:5a

Again, the quote above is between the two quotes from Isaiah Chapter 53 used by Matthew and Peter. This portion of the verse is unmistakably about the atonement. Therefore, Isaiah does not separate healing from atonement for sin but mixes these biblical blessings. He mixes them because the cross purchases both these blessings for us in just the same way. Just after Peter's quote about healing this phrase is found:

All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. Isaiah 53:6

In other words, every other statement in these verses is about healing or atonement for sin (forgiveness). This is how this part of the passage is constructed:

- The **took/carried away** *sickness* phrase quoted by the apostle Matthew...
- Followed by the **pierced-transgression** phrase...
- Followed by the **wounds-healed** phrase quoted by the apostle Peter...
- Followed by **iniquity-on-Him** phrase.

Isaiah is mixing the ideas Christ paying the price for healing with Christ paying the price for the forgiveness of *transgression* and *iniquity*. *What are the implications of this?* Some have doubted that healing is *in* the atonement but meditation on these passages reveals that healing is indeed *in* the atonement. The passage does not separate the ideas. Nor does the passage regulate physical healing to some sort of secondary status. This is consistent with the strong emphasis that the Gospels give healing in the ministry of Christ.

In Conclusion

Christ in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John is presently seated at the right hand of the Father. This same Jesus does things now through the Church *in the same way* that He demonstrated consistently to His disciples. The disciples saw Christ and as a result duplicated His ministry. Christ was their doctrine. He was the Word made flesh to them. They saw that He was the wisdom and power of God. Meditation is a powerful way to see Christ and seeing Him will cause us to believe that He will work exactly the same way today through us in healing.

This booklet/article can be found on www.allnationsmin.org in the free files area. It is also available for order in a printed booklet with a beautiful full-color cover for distribution to those who do not use the internet. 1-302-729-0835.