

# Healing Prayer

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and...he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.”

**Acts 10:38**

“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing – and he will do even greater works than these, because I go to the Father.”

**John 14:12**

“Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective...”

**James 5:16-17**

These three Scriptures provide a clear mandate for us as disciples of Jesus to be instruments of grace that bring healing on multiple levels in diverse ways. Praying for the emotional, mental, spiritual, and/or physical healing of someone dearly loved by God is one of the most awesome experiences we can have as believers – and few things can terrify us more! We can literally be paralyzed with questions: “How do I do it? What do I say? What if nothing happens? etc. etc.” Since healing prayer is not so much a science as it is an act of love, I wouldn’t attempt to give you a comprehensive manual presenting rules that cover all situations. But there are some straightforward steps we can use as guidelines to help us be a true means of blessing to others as we pray. Let’s face it, few if any of us will have a grand healing ministry before thousands in packed auditoriums – but all of us will encounter abundant opportunities through the ordinary course of our routine days to bring his healing touch to the hearts and lives of those around us. Here is a simple approach to healing prayer that will hopefully be of some help in the ordinary situations you will face as you “go about doing good”:

## ❶ BE PREPARED

An excellent example of healing prayer to ponder carefully is found in Mark 9:2-29. Jesus takes Peter, James and John up onto the mountain to pray, and is transfigured before them – although they almost missed it due to falling asleep! When they went back down into the valley they met a disbelieving generation...a child under oppression...a parent in pain. The disciples who had not been on the mountain with Jesus were powerless to deal with the situation – and Peter, James and John probably wouldn’t have fared much better since they evidently did more sleeping than praying. The point is that if we are not with Jesus on the mountain, we will not be ready for the

### The Vineyard Prayer Model

1. **Interview**  
Answers the question, “Where does it hurt?” “What would you like Jesus to do for you?”
2. **Diagnosis**  
Answers the question: “What’s the root cause of the problem?” “What really is going on here?”
3. **Prayer Selection**  
We decide how to pray...petition, command, intercede, rebuke (demonic)
4. **Ministry**  
Pray and observe...look for signs of what God is doing
5. **Follow-up**  
Post-prayer direction...help the person process & digest.

challenges of the valley. When the disciples asked the reason for their failure, Jesus simply responded, “This kind only comes out by prayer.” Do you see Jesus praying over this child or this situation? Sure, he used the prayer of command in telling the spirit to leave the child – but so had the unsuccessful disciples evidently. I think rather that what was lacking was a heart previously prepared by the Father through personal, prayerful communion with him “on the mountain.” Be prepared for prayer over others by the passionate pursuit of God in your own prayer life.

## ② LISTEN

“Let everyone be swift to hear, slow to speak...” James 1:19 No matter how ready we might feel to jump in with a prayer, first listen. Listen to people, and listen to God. Foster tells us, “Sometimes people share their deepest needs in the most casual, offhand way. But if we are listening, really listening, there is often a rise within us, an inner ‘yes’ which is a divine invitation to prayer.” Listen. Listen to the person in front of you, hear the tone, watch the body language, be alert to those ‘casual clues’ that can tell us what is really going on. Listen to God – ask him to show you the key to the heart of whatever problem is being faced. Such keys can be placed right in our hands in a variety of ways, if we will but take the time to listen to Him. Listen!

## ③ ASK

Now we come to it – eventually we have to ask God to move based upon what we have seen, heard, and sensed from the person and from the Lord. As specifically, directly, and boldly as God gives us the grace, we must ask the Lord to intervene! “You have not because you ask not,” James tells us. When you sense what God is doing or feel the rising of your heart in one direction or another, ask. If you still are uncertain what God is doing, then ask for greater clarity – be humble and transparent with the person, no “posing” or posturing please! If you don’t know what to pray, confess that and pray with the person for divine insight into the situation. Don’t be afraid to be bold when you “know in your knower” what the Lord is up to. Martin Luther said this about praying for his sick friend Melancthon: “I besought the Almighty with great vigor...quoting from Scripture all the promises I could remember, that prayers should be granted, and said that he must grant my prayer, if I was henceforth to put faith in his promises.” We could use a little of that in our prayers!

## ④ BELIEVE

“Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe you have received it, and it will be yours...” (Mark 11:24) The disciples’ mouths all hang open as they see the tree Jesus had just cursed (a form of prayer we hopefully we not be called upon often to exercise!) lying withered to the roots. Surprise and astonishment is all over their faces. “Have faith in God,” he says. “I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go jump in the lake’ (rough paraphrase), and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him...” “The prayer of

faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven,” chimes in James (Jas. 5:15). There is tremendous power in the prayer that flows from a settled assurance in the presence and working of the God “who has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all” (Psalm 103:19). If such faith seems way beyond you, recall that it is but a mustard seed (tiny speck) of it that will do, and that at times we can only confess with the demonized boy’s father, “I believe, help my unbelief!” To believe in prayer is to focus on his faithfulness, his steadfast love, rather than to conjure up some special feeling.

## ⑤ GIVE THANKS

“In everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God...” Thanksgiving is like **A1** sauce for steak – it’s not done until we give thanks! Thank the Lord for listening, for loving – and looking ahead just a bit, for what he is about to do in response to your prayer.

Don’t think of these five steps as a comprehensive or scientific method of prayer – just think of them as characteristics of healthy prayer, and let them sink into your heart and soul. Stay loose. Be flexible. Watch. Pray for increasing freedom and boldness to pray as you are called upon to do so!

“My LORD and my God, I have a thousand arguments against healing prayer. You are the one argument for it...You win. Help me to be a conduit through which your healing love can flow to others. For Jesus’ sake. Amen.”