

MINISTRY OF HEALING: Five-Step Prayer Model



Introduction

This model is not the only way to pray for healing, but is the model that has been taught and used by ministry teams all over the world bearing powerful fruit in peoples lives. It is quiet, loving, and effective. It can be used by anyone and anywhere--in the home; in the gathering of believers; and for reaching out into the streets, marketplace, and workplace!

The Five Steps are:

1. The Interview
2. The Diagnosis
3. The Prayer Selection
4. The Prayer Ministry (Pray for Effect)
5. Post-Prayer Suggestions

Step 1: The Interview

A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not....So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" "From childhood," he answered. - Mark 9:17-18, 20-21

Briefly interview the person requesting prayer. Be attentive and gentle. A loving attitude on your part will do much to reassure the person that he or she is in good hands.

Ask the person what the physical need is, but do not go into lengthy detail. For example:

- "What is your name?" (A question or two to put the person at ease.)
- "What would you like prayer for?"
- "How long have you had this condition?"
- "Do you know what the cause is?"
- "Have you seen a doctor?" "What does he say is the matter?"
- "Do you remember what was happening in your life when this condition started?"
- "Did anything traumatic happen to you about the time your condition began, or within a few months prior to it starting?"

[You may need to explain to the prayee why you are asking these last two questions.]

This is often sufficient for the initial interview. You may now know the nature and cause of the condition. In some cases you won't know, so ask the Holy Spirit for His leading and maybe ask additional questions. If His leading isn't clear to you, you must make an educated guess as to the nature and cause of the condition.

Step 2: The Diagnosis

The goal of the diagnosis is to answer the question, “What is the root cause of this sickness or infirmity? (NOTE: We use the term diagnosis in the sense of “how to pray.” We are NOT speaking of natural, medical diagnosis. While we seek from the prayee to understand what they are aware of in this area during the interview process of Step One, medical diagnosis is properly the domain of trained, licensed professionals.) The purpose is so that we may better understand HOW TO PRAY.

If you now know the cause of the condition, go at once to “Step 3: Prayer Selection.”

Possible roots may be:

- An afflicting spirit.
- Sickness of the soul, psychosomatic.
- Natural cause, such an accident, break, cut, or other injury.
- A violation of God’s laws for living.

Some examples:

- Perhaps there was an accident, which would usually suggest a natural cause. (But, he may need to forgive the person who caused the accident. This could mean himself, if he caused it.)
- Perhaps the person was born with the condition, which would often suggest a natural cause, or possibly a generational curse.
- The condition may be partly or totally caused by emotional stress.
 - Perhaps the person has had headaches ever since he lost a job.
 - Perhaps his back has hurt ever since someone cheated him.
 - Perhaps cancer was discovered a few months after a divorce, or after the death of a parent or child.
- The cause might be spiritual.
 - Perhaps the person has had nightmares since an occult experience he had.
 - Perhaps his condition is the result of a habitual sin.
 - Perhaps it is the effect of a curse of some kind.

As noted above, if the cause is not known, ask the Holy Spirit for His leading as to the nature and possible cause of the condition. You may want to go back to the interview stage and ask further questions.

Step 3: The Prayer Selection

The ultimate goal here is to PRAY FOR EFFECT. So, led by the Holy Spirit, select the prayer ministry to be most effective in dealing with the specific need(s).

A. Types of ministry:

i. **Petition:** A request to heal, addressed to God, to Jesus, or to the Holy Spirit. For example:

- “Father, in the name of Jesus I ask you to restore sight to this eye.”
- “Father, I pray in Jesus’ name, come and straighten this spine.”
- “Father, release Your power to heal, in Jim’s body, in the name of Jesus.”
- “Come, Holy Spirit. Release your power. Touch Jim’s back, in Jesus’ name.”

ii. **Command:** A command addressed to a condition of the body, or to a part of the body, or to a troubling spirit such as a spirit of pain, or infirmity, or of affliction.

A command is appropriate:

- As your initial step, unless you are led otherwise by the Holy Spirit.
- When there has been a word of knowledge for healing, or some other indication that God wants to heal the person at this time.
- When petition prayers have been tried and progress has stopped.
- When casting out an afflicting spirit, or any other spirit.
- When a curse or vow is broken.
- Whenever you are so led by the Holy Spirit.

Examples of commanding prayer:

- “In the name of Jesus, I command this tumor to shrivel up and dissolve.”
- “In the name of Jesus, spine, be straight! Be healed!”
- “In Jesus’ name, I command every afflicting spirit, get out of Jim’s body.”
- “In the name of Jesus, I command all pain and swelling to leave this ankle.”

B. Preliminaries to praying for healing itself:

i. **Forgiveness** of another’s wrong conduct.

Unforgiveness can be a major obstacle to healing. If it appears that someone else caused the condition, or that someone wronged the person about the time the condition started, find out if the sick person has forgiven the other. If not, forgiveness should precede your prayer for healing.

Examples:

- A woman has had arthritis in her spine for five years, ever since her husband ran off with another woman. Has she forgiven her husband and the woman? Jesus said we must forgive,

not we ought to. Emotional stress can cause illness, prevent healing. Sometimes one can be angry at God and must forgive Him.

- A pastor has had back pain for ten years. Ten years ago there was a split in his church and some of his closest friends turned against him. Has he forgiven the ringleaders of the split, his former friends, and all others involved?

Note: Sometimes a person is healed before you even begin to pray for healing, just by forgiving the person who caused the hurt, or just by repenting and asking God's forgiveness for his own sin of resentment and anger. The pastor noted above was healed by forgiving, without any prayer for healing.

- ii. **Repentance** for one's own wrong conduct, and asking forgiveness for it. If it appears that the condition was brought on by sin, very gently inquire if the person agrees that this might be so. If he does, encourage him to repent and ask God's forgiveness. This should precede your prayer for healing. Sin that is not repented of can impede healing.

Be tender. Ask if perhaps the condition could be related to his lifestyle, or perhaps say, "I wonder if this condition could be related to things you have done in the past." **NEVER accuse the person confrontationally of causing his condition by his sin.**

If this leading is of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit will usually indicate the specific sin which is the problem, not sin in general. General accusations of sin are often destructive, and probably are from the enemy.

A person may need to forgive himself or herself from having caused the injury or sickness. This may seem unnecessary, but it sometimes releases healing.

Some examples:

- Anger can contribute to back pain and some depressions.
- AIDS might have resulted from a wrong lifestyle.
- Lung cancer might have been caused by smoking.

- iii. An attitude of **receiving**.

Ask the person not to pray while you are praying for him. Here again, be gentle and loving, and say something like: "I know this means a lot to you, and you have probably prayed a lot about your condition. But for now I need you to focus on your body. I want you to just relax and to let me know if anything begins to happen in your body."

Sometimes a person may find it very hard not to pray. Don't be hung up on this. Pray for the person anyway!

Step 4: The Prayer Ministry (Praying for Effect)



Now that the preliminaries are over, it is time for the actual prayer ministry!

When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out..."
- Mark 9:25-26

Now is the time to pray. At this point you will want to pray according to the prayer selection made in the previous step. Remember the goal was to select a prayer to effect healing and/or deliverance!

Following is a discussion of things to keep in mind during prayer ministry.

A. Audibly ask the Holy Spirit to come.

You can say simply, "Come, Holy Spirit!" Or, "Come, Holy Spirit, with Your healing power." If the presence of the Holy Spirit becomes evident, as by the person feeling heat, tingling, or some other manifestation, continue waiting on Him until He finishes what He wishes to do at that time. When the manifestation has ebbed, check to see if healing is complete. If it is not complete, continue your ministry.

B. Remember to always pray or command in the name of Jesus.

And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; ... they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well. - Mark 16:17a, 18b

You cannot use the name of Jesus too much! The power is in His name. Some who have anointed healing ministries sometimes simply repeat "In the name of Jesus", over and over as their prayer for healing.

C. Thank God for whatever He does.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. - Colossians 3:17

This honors the person and presence of the Holy Spirit and the Name of Jesus. You cannot thank God too much! Many times during worship and thanksgiving the level of healing power increases.

D. Keep prayers or commands short.

If changes in the seeker's condition can be readily determined, it is appropriate and often helpful to pray short prayers or give brief commands, interspersed with re-interviewing at frequent intervals to see if progress is being made:

- "Are you better?"
- "Did you feel anything?"
- "Are you still feeling anything?"
- "What has happened to the pain now?"
- "Did you feel any pain while I was praying?"

- “Did the pain move?”
- “See if you can read the sign now.”
- “Do you still feel heat in your stomach?”
- “Try moving your knee now.”

Note: A person may be partially or completely healed without feeling anything. He may not realize that healing has taken place until he uses the affected part. If he does something he could not do before, or that caused pain before, he can see if the prayer thus far has made a difference.)

E. Continue.

When a prayer or command results in a partial healing, continue to use it until you find that it no longer produces further healing. If you try one kind of prayer or command and get results, but not complete healing, continue. Explain why you are continuing, for the person receiving prayer may wonder about the repetition. If you try one kind of prayer or command and get no result after a few times, try another kind! Be persistent!

F. Interview again.

Consider whether further interviewing may reveal hindrances to healing.

They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?" He looked up and said, "I see people; they look like trees walking around." Once more Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. - Mark 8:22-25

If after a time you are making no progress, consider interviewing the person further.

Possible questions might be:

- “Would you try again to remember whether anything significant happened within six months or so of the beginning of this condition?” (Some event may require forgiveness that the person may have forgotten or may have been unwilling to disclose.)
- “Do any other members of your family have this condition?” (If so, perhaps there is a generational spirit affecting several members of the family.)
- “Do you have a strong fear of anything?” (Fear can be a cause of many physical and spiritual problems, and it sometimes interferes with healing.)
- “Is anyone in your family a member of the Freemasons or Eastern Star?” (Association with Masonic or other occult organizations is particularly likely to impede healing.)
- “Has anyone ever cursed you or your family that you know of?”
- “Have you had other accidents?” (If the person is accident-prone, consider whether he is under a curse.)
- “Have you ever participated in any kind of occult game or practice?”

G. Your manner.

- You need not necessarily pray aloud all the time. If you wish, tell the person that you may pray silently at times, that as long as you have your hand on his arm you are praying, even if not

aloud. And do pray silently. And listen to the Holy Spirit. He may give you some guidance you would otherwise miss.

- It is often very helpful to pray with your eyes open, and observe the person you are praying for. Look for signs that God is at work in his body: fluttering eyelids, trembling, perspiration. If you see something happening, or if the person reports a change in the pain, increased sight, or other progress, thank God for what He is doing, and bless it, and continue to pray in the manner that led to the progress.
- Use your normal tone of voice. Shouting, or praying loudly in tongues, will not increase your effectiveness.
- Ask permission to touch them: Shoulder, arm, etc.
 - Use discernment and be respectful of the opposite sex.
 - Ask their partner (if they have one) to participate in the prayer.
- Don't preach, don't give advice, and don't prophesy. Your job is to listen to the Holy Spirit and be a vessel of healing and deliverance!

H. Do everything in love.

If all is done in love, then even if the person is not healed, they can leave encouraged, loved, and full of hope, ready to come back for more prayer

- Let all that you do be done with love. (1 Cor. 16:14. (RSV))
- Love is patient... kind... not jealous...not arrogant or rude. (1 Cor. 13:4)
- Love is not anxious to impress ...not touchy. (1 Cor. 13:4-5. (Phillips))

I. Ministry to a person with multiple problems.

- As a general rule, it is better to finish praying for one condition before starting to pray for another, unless the Holy Spirit directs you differently. Flitting from one problem to another is distracting, and the person's faith will be built up for successive problems if one healing is completed.
- The sick person may ask you to pray for a second problem as soon as you finish your first prayer for one condition. He may not understand that you will pray further for the first condition. Tell him gently that you will pray for the second condition, but first you wish to finish praying for the first condition.
- If you are praying for a person's sinus infection, and his bad foot begins to tingle, stop praying for the sinus condition and pray for the foot. Bless what God is doing, and pray in cooperation with what He is doing. Go back to the sinus only when you have finished praying for the foot, or when the sinus begins to manifest the presence of God at work there.

J. Ministry to a person under medication.

Sometimes a person under medication (such as for diabetes, asthma, arthritis, heart disease, etc.) believes he has been healed when you pray for him. He may think he can discontinue his medication. You must instruct him to continue his medication after your ministry to him, even if he believes and even if you believe he has been healed. Have the person return to the doctor and

let the doctor change or withdraw medication. If they are tested and no longer need it, it will be a testimony to God's healing power.

K. Stop praying when:

- The person is completely healed.
- The person wants you to stop. He may be tired or simply feel you should stop.
- The Holy Spirit tells you it is time to stop.
- You are not given any other way to pray, and you are not gaining ground.

- Things to watch for:
 - Changes in condition
 - Changes in countenance
- Counseling Room and Extended Prayer Room
 - Know your limits
 - Walk them over
 - Be lead by the Holy Spirit to which room is relevant

Step 5: Post-Prayer Suggestions

It is always important to follow up the prayer session with final encouragement and/or instructions.

- A. Encourage the prayee's walk with the Lord. You might share a scripture verse. For some people, scriptural passages are extremely meaningful and encouraging.
- B. If he is not healed, or not completely healed, don't accuse him of lack of faith for healing, or of sin in his life as the cause.
 - Encourage the person to get prayer from others if there is little or no evidence of healing, or if his healing has not been completed.
 - Give them the healing handout. Tell the prayee not to be surprised if he experiences a spiritual attack after a healing, and help him to be prepared to resist it
 - If a symptom starts to recur, he can command it to leave in Jesus' name. If a bad habit is involved, he may be tempted for a short time to re-commence the habit. If he does yield, quick repentance is needed and asking God's help.