

“Towing and healing – the dance of the Spirit”

March 2010

Hymn “for the healing of the nations” VU

Scripture *Luke 8: 49-56 (New Living Translation)*

While he was still speaking to her, a messenger arrived from the house of Jairus, the leader of the synagogue. He told him, “Your daughter is dead. There’s no use troubling the Teacher now.”

But when Jesus heard what had happened, he said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid, just have faith, and she will be healed.”

When they arrived at the house, Jesus wouldn’t let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, James, and the little girl’s father and mother. The house was filled with people weeping and wailing, but he said, “Stop the weeping! She isn’t dead; she’s only asleep.

But the crowd laughed at him because they all knew she had died. Then Jesus took her by the hand and said in a loud voice, “My child, get up!” and at that moment her spirit returned, and she immediately stood up! Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were overwhelmed, but Jesus insisted that they not tell anyone what had happened.

Prayer Let us pray – Great Healer, you have made us for health, for wholeness and for holiness. We know that you do not will the pain or suffering of your children. We earnestly pray for friends and family. May your spirit bring healing to those ailing persons we name in our hearts. Give them patience and serenity, knowing that you are near. May they be assured that underneath are the everlasting arms. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Lesson The healing miracles in the Bible are told in abbreviated form. They are there to witness to the healing powers that God has written into human life, and which Jesus relied on to bring relief to sufferers. In these stories relief is often immediate. Life today contains the same potential for recovery, but it occurs at a pace that belongs to daily life rather than miracle stories.

Sometimes we have to be towed, or pushed, or pulled until our spirit begins to dance and we begin to heal. Sometimes it is a member of our family or a friend that hits the right notes for the dance to begin. Sometimes we do not recognize the cause.

There are stories about a Father Peter Rookey having the gift of healing. As a youngster, he was blinded when a firecracker rocket exploded in his face. He promised he would become a priest if he could see again. His family prayed for him continuously. In about two years, his sight began to come back and eventually he could see well enough. As a priest he has healed many people.

Father Rookey does not feel responsible for the healings nor does he feel responsible for those who are not healed. God’s mercies are indeed a mystery. Father Rookey’s job, like our job, is to be faithful and to leave whatever healings take place to God. After all, the great healing is to be transformed into the likeness of Christ, and God knows best how to accomplish this within each soul.

Father Rookey spends a great deal of his time in prayer. When he prays for healing, he prays with the people seeking healing. He prays what he calls “the Miracle Prayer”, which is essentially a prayer of conversion: “Lord Jesus, I come before you just as I am...I repent of my sins...Lord Jesus, I accept you as my Lord, God, and Saviour. Heal me, change me, strengthen me in body, soul, and spirit.”

Sometimes it is us who need the healing. To be without one’s normal strength, reactions, resilience, is to be in chaos. Nietzsche wrote, “Chaos trusted becomes a dancing star.” Miraculously the Holy Spirit is present to bring order and shape out of the chaos in our own lives.

Psychiatrist David Spiegel states: “We are dependent for our emotional well-being, and it turns out in a lot of research, for our physical well-being, on our relationships with other people. Connect with people. Cope by seeking support from others.”

We are wonderfully made in the image of God. Jesus often used the phrase, “How much more....” when talking about the extravagance of God’s love. How much more than anything else we can know is God’s care for each of us who are not simply God’s creatures but God’s creations. Health, wholeness and holiness come from the same word-root. They obviously belong together. Our God-given human heritage allows us to seek sustenance through prayer and supplication during our time of restoration to wholeness.

Discussion In what ways are you a healer? In what ways is your AOTS or other men’s club a healer in your congregation or community?

Prayer Let us pray – Creator God, healer, we bring to you our prayers for all in pain, all those who await the result of diagnostic tests, all who face surgery or difficult medical treatment. Sustain those who are taking the first steps on the long road of recuperation. Grant patience and hope, serenity and endurance to those who linger long with illness. We ask your healing, loving, comforting presence with each. Amen.

This meditation is based on material from “God at the Corners” by Robert A. Wallace and “The Living Christ” by Harold Fickett