

The Christian Fellowship of Healing (Scotland) worked from the early 1950's to support and spread the healing ministry within churches and to encourage engagement with the medical profession. To further these aims a centre was run in Edinburgh where people could come for prayer, listening and healing. A loving and supportive prayer community formed, which came to an end in 2011. This document is part of a legacy of resources which we hope will support others in their engagement with the healing ministry. More archived material is available to the public at the National Library of Scotland.

Who said it was incurable?

By Ian Cowie (Chaplain 1976-88)

There are some illnesses for which the medical profession at the moment knows no cure, although there are ways in which it can help. Examples include cancer, HIV, multiple sclerosis, and Parkinson's disease. If we face one of these diseases in ourselves or in somebody close to us, we naturally turn to seek an answer in Jesus Christ, for whom nothing is incurable.

"We're hoping for a miracle", people say. It is a real cry from the heart, and we want to respond to it. But miracles don't happen by wishful thinking. Neither is it a question of getting God to change His mind.

Miracles are "wrought" (think of wrought iron, forged in the fire). Miracles are the result of years of living in communion with God, being cleansed of selfishness, pride and greed so that the Healing Love of God can flow unhindered. Whether we can help you or not depends partly on the depth of our prayer-life and the reality of our communion with God.

Miracles do happen..., we know because we have seen them. We have many cases of people who have come to us with a tumour, and when they have gone back to the hospital the tumour has gone. Of course, the medical profession can say, "That was a case of spontaneous remission and these happen occasionally even to people with no religious element.". That is true, and all we can say is that the rate of coincidence is high!

On the other hand, we have cases in which the person dies, but without the expected distress. For instance, a young boy with leukaemia was brought in by his mother. She had a very vivid sense of the presence of Christ as we prayed over him. He died some weeks later, but without the symptoms she had been warned to expect. He went peacefully and happily in her arms at home, and she emerged stronger in faith than ever.

In some cases we find that medical treatment becomes more effective or side-effects less drastic when there is concentrated prayer. In our

Former CFH Resources can be found at:

www.st-cuthberts.net | www.mindandsoul.info
www.emmaushouse-edinburgh.co.uk

leaflet "[You and your doctor](#)" we look at the way in which the medical and spiritual approaches can work together.

Sometimes healing is fast, other times it is a slow process. We often hear people saying, "Since I have been coming to the Fellowship Jesus has become a living person to me". There has not been one particular moment of vision, but the light has dawned slowly. It is that experience of Him which will bring you healing, or else prepare you to go through the "valley of the shadow of death" fearing no evil. Either way you need Him

If you are to find healing, you need to find God in a new way. If you are already a "believer" you must be ready to throw everything into the melting-pot in order to find an even deeper relationship with Him.

If you are not a believer then be ready to throw your doubts, criticisms of the church, everything into the melting-pot in order to be able to find reality for yourself. People can know God directly, it is not just a case of believing in Him. It was through meeting God in Jesus that the people in the Gospels found healing. It can happen for you.

Your illness is a call to a spiritual adventure, and you are going to be a very different person when you have come through it. Do not just hope that somebody, medical or "miracle worker", is going to provide an answer for you. The answer is there deep within you for, as the Bible says, God is closer than hands and feet.

The maker's instructions on how to work the human life have been given to us. They are (Mark 12:29-31)

- Love God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength
- Love your neighbour as yourself

We ignore these instructions and then wonder why we break down. If we want God to heal us, perhaps we should take His instructions more seriously. Jesus came to make it possible for us to love God, and since He is God's own picture of Himself (John 1:14, John 14:9, Colossians 2:9), then we can begin to love Him. The quest for healing begins here.

Know Yourself

These words were written over a healing centre centuries before Jesus came. They remain a real challenge today. It is interesting that the Bristol Cancer Help Centre begins by helping patients to make a new assessment of themselves and of their relationships. Many people want a cure but are not prepared to face this radical new look at their lives.

Here is an instance of "knowing yourself" and of how it affects us. A lady we shall call Jean was an enthusiastic Christian full of faith and good works, a pillar of her church. She came to us with advanced cancer. Her church had prayed for her and her priest had laid hands on her and anointed her. There seemed little else we could do, but to my own surprise

I found myself asking her, "Are you sure there's nothing in your life that's making you feel 'I've had enough'?" At this she broke down and blurted out something she felt ashamed about as a Christian and had never admitted to anyone. Now, in her fifties, she had had enough of hiding it. She died soon afterwards. Our prayers and the fact that at last she had shared it with somebody, helped her die in peace.

Hidden Tensions

So we have to face those hidden tensions which may well have been the reason for the breakdown of the body's natural resistance to disease. In the same way we often find that about a year or two before the onset of a disease there was a shock or an emotional upset, perhaps a bereavement or a divorce. In this case the whole experience must be looked at again. It has often undermined the person's will-to-live, or has allowed fear to play havoc deep down. Before bodily healing can take place these memories have to be healed. (See our leaflet "[The Healing of Memories](#)").

Other factors

There are often environmental factors in disease, such as exposure to radiation, smoking, too much alcohol, asbestos dust, etc. In other cases there are heredity factors, but even then the spiritual factor is vital when a person is facing the resulting disease. The Bristol Cancer Help Centre have found a special diet helpful. There is no doubt that some of the modern processed foods can be harmful, and it is worth seeing if the trouble lies there. Not everybody finds these diets helpful, but even facing the possibility of cutting out some favourite food or drink helps you to question as to how much your healing is worth to you. If giving up something is too much to ask, then your will-to-live must be low.

What are we to do, then?

Determine deep down within you that you are going to seek God in a new and deeper way. Decide what you will do with your life if a new lease of life is given to you.

Find somebody you can talk this over with, preferably outwith the family circle. Perhaps your minister, elder, or doctor will do. It should be somebody who is not too involved with you, and with whom you can be honest. Perhaps we in the Fellowship can help by finding a Christian listener, if you have no such person available.

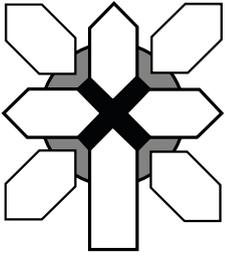
Face death realistically. Find out what the Bible says about eternal life. Various Christian bodies have their own ideas as to what the Bible verses mean. So do not think that the very dogmatic person speaks for the whole church. What is more, experiences of those who have been dead for a short time but have been revived also point us to some very interesting things. Listen, read and pray for light, until you form your own idea as to what it is all about.

Set aside a time each day. Many people like to arrange it at one of our prayertimes: 9.45am and 2pm each day. We keep their names before us, and it is good to feel part of a praying body when you focus afresh on your search for God. Perhaps you will begin by exploring part of the Bible story about Jesus. Having looked at Jesus, look back on your own life, especially remembering any who have hurt you ... and surprisingly often this includes parents. Jesus stresses repeatedly that we must forgive as we have been forgiven. If we do not forgive we undermine the whole effect of prayer. One bit of resentment can be like a fuse which blows and puts the whole power-system out of action. So pray for those who have wronged you. Then relax your body and mind, just saying "Jesus" quietly over and over again, calling Him gently. Try to "see" the light of His face shining on the affected part. Then take the word of advice from the Bible: "Be still and know that I am God".

Ask your church or this Fellowship for prayer, for the laying on of hands, and/or for anointing. The Bible tells us to send for the elders of the church, and it is your place to ask. If your church will not, or if you have no church, come to us. None of us can find healing on our own at the spiritual level any more than we can at the medical level. The more serious the trouble the more we need outside, trained help. Seek the most effective help at both spiritual and medical levels. Trust God to guide you.

Former CFH Resources can be found at:

www.st-cuthberts.net | www.mindandsoul.info
www.emmaushouse-edinburgh.co.uk



Credo

used by the

Christian Fellowship of Healing (Scotland)

The Christian Fellowship of Healing:

is united in its commitment to the practice of prayer as the foundation of all our ministry.

Prayer is the means through which we believe the Holy Spirit can use us, here and now, to continue the practice of healing incarnated by Jesus.

is an ecumenical group of Christians who openly embraces a range of theological understanding and language to describe 'how' God heals.

We accept that health and healing can and does come through medicine, counselling, complementary therapies and other means. This does not negate the real contribution of prayer, rather it upholds the role of prayer to support individuals to listen to the Holy Spirit within them, guiding them, facilitating health and healing.

is committed to being alongside people who are suffering and experiencing pain, struggle and distress whatever their background.

We acknowledge that suffering faces us all and challenges our understanding and belief. Yet we can, with integrity, offer reassurance of God's loving presence accompanying every human being as seen in Christ who has shown us the capacity of God to be vulnerable even to the point of death. Living in and from this truth of the ever present loving God we respond as authentically as possible from our hearts, and we can offer an understanding of the range of meaning of healing which includes miracles.

is convinced of the importance of the varied aspects of healing displayed by Jesus in the miracle stories.

This includes an intense personal encounter with Jesus; affirmation of the individual as a person of value, physical healing, restoration of meaning and purpose, social inclusion; as well as challenge to those in power; confronting rigid thinking and lack of compassion. We believe all these components are aspects of the transforming love of God and reflect the wholeness Jesus calls us into. We see healing as deeply linked with the Christian tradition of vocation through which the living God calls each of us to discover and fulfil our potential.

is united in our understanding that healing in the New Testament includes wholeness.

This links the transforming love that effects miracles with the transforming love that brings the disciples through their fear and resistances into their ministry of apostleship. Our experience is that the practice of prayer in small groups, with a commitment to sharing and listening, enables those of us offering healing prayer to grow in ourselves and in our capacity to experience and share God's love. This includes the reality that some people have a gift of healing and a greater capacity than average to bring about healing.
