

HEALING LINE

Winter 2015/16

Encountering Angels

How to Have Your Own Personal Pentecost

Healing & the Church

The Imagination in Healing Prayer

HEALING LINE

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Letter from the



Dear Healing Line Family,

In our last edition of the Healing Line, we asked you to sign up for your 2016 subscription of the Healing Line, so if you haven't done that already, please do so to ensure that your subscription will continue uninterrupted.

In 2015 we enjoyed meeting new prayer recipients, prayer ministers, and interns joining us in our efforts to teach healing prayer, practice it and to spread the good news that Jesus is still healing today. Our Schools of Healing Prayer and our ministry conferences were full of people who "caught the fire" and will be going to different parts of the world with God's ministry of healing. Please consider joining us or sending a minister, priest, loved one or friend to join us for one of our ministry or teaching events for 2016. Our goal is to continue to reach others with the good news of Jesus' healing ministry.

We send you our blessings and love during this holiday season from our staff here at Christian Healing Ministries. Many people have family and friends surrounding them during this time. And yet, for those who don't, it is sometimes the loneliest time of the year, when those alone compare themselves to others who "appear" happy and full of joy. We are praying for those people! My encouragement to you is to include those around you in activities and invitations to spread God's love. Stop during this busy time. Save some time to rest and remember to listen to someone, love on that person and pray for that one who God has put in your pathway.

God bless you,

Kathi Smith



KATHI SMITH

Kathi Smith is the Senior Editor of *Healing Line* and an active prayer minister and volunteer at CHM.



Photo by Deborah S. Riemann

AN IMPORTANT NOTE TO Our Faithful Readers

THANK YOU for being so interested in healing prayer, and for being part of our CHM family! It is our joy and honor to share with you teachings, testimonies, and news from CHM, and we look forward to continuing that work for many years to come!

To help us expand both CHM training and prayer ministry opportunities, we have decided to make a few changes to our Healing Line distribution to help reduce costs. Beginning with our Spring 2016 issue **every person currently on our mailing list will receive Healing Line magazine in digital form via email if we have your email address on file.** The digital format allows you to easily share the magazine with friends and family.

We will continue to provide the Healing Line in print format through regular mail to everyone that either participates in a CHM event or makes a purchase from the CHM bookstore within each 12-month period. Additionally, if you have not participated in an event or made a purchase within the past 12 months, and would like to continue to receive the Healing Line in the full color print format, just let us know by following the steps below. The annual cost of printing and mailing the Healing Line is approximately \$20 per recipient, so please consider making a \$20.00 donation to help cover our publishing costs if you chose to continue to receive the Healing Line via regular mail in print format.

FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW:

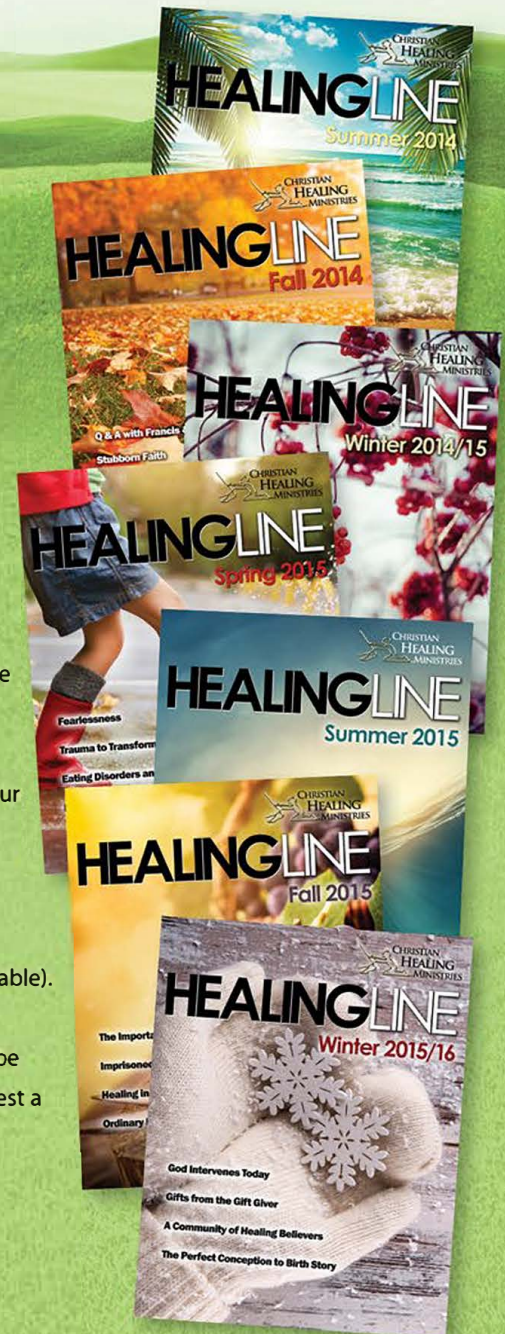
In the middle of the magazine you will find a small envelope:

- Detach the envelope and fill out your name, address, phone number, and email (if applicable).
- Check the box of preferred delivery: complimentary annual subscription of the Healing Line in electronic format by email OR annual printed subscription of the Healing Line to be delivered through regular mail. (If you check Healing Line through regular mail, we suggest a minimum donation of \$20.00 to offset our publishing costs.)
- Return the pre-addressed envelope to CHM.

To request a physical copy on our website, please follow these steps:

- Go to the CHM website (www.christianhealingmin.org)
- Click on the **Healing Line** magazine image
- Click on Tab: **Healing Line Donation**
- Enter all information requested to receive your annual complimentary subscription in electronic format or to continue to receive the Healing Line in print format

Thank you so much for reading the Healing Line and for your support of Christian Healing Ministries. We look forward to serving you in the years to come through articles dedicated to the practice and teaching of healing prayer.



An Excerpt from ENCOUNTERING *Angels*

And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." In speaking of the angels, he says, "He makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire."

— Hebrews 1:6-7

The archangel Gabriel was entrusted with the greatest message of all time, given to a young virgin named Mary in the small village of Nazareth in Galilee. This message would radically change the course of human history.

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." — Luke 1:26-33

When Jesus was conceived, He became God Incarnate. The second Person of the Trinity became flesh in Mary's womb, miraculously conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through the Incarnation the divine nature of the Son (while remaining God) was seen as being united with human nature in one divine person. From the time of His conception, Jesus was both fully man and fully God. His birth by a virgin is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies about the salvation of the world. Emmanuel: God with us!

When I reread the familiar account of Jesus' birth, I am struck by the way the sovereign hand of God orchestrated each event to provide safety for His Son. God's plan would not be altered by the Law, by the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus, nor by Satan, the evil one.

At that moment in history the entire angelic realm must have been on high alert. Every movement, every threat was monitored by the angels' watchful protection. Warring angels

under assignment from the archangel Michael battled the demonic forces attempting to threaten the life of the unborn Jesus.

When Jesus was born, it was an angel of God who proclaimed the glorious good news. God chose lowly shepherds, tending their sheep in the fields near Bethlehem, to hear the most magnificent, triumphant announcement of all times: the Savior of the world had been born! These uneducated, simple shepherds received the message that would forever after change human destiny. The shepherds were terrified as the glory of God filled the skies. But the angel reassured them and said, "I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." — Luke 2:10-12

Before the shepherds could even react, the entire blackened sky split open with the brilliant, blinding light of heaven. Then the voice of the angel was multiplied a thousand times over.

As their eyes focused, the shepherds realized the dazzling light was the brilliance of the shining angels who filled the entire sky, thousands upon thousands praising God, unable to contain their overwhelming joy!

Luke describes it: "Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to [those] on whom his favor rests.'" — Luke 2:13-14

*I hope you enjoyed this short excerpt from my new book, *Encountering Angels*. The birth of Jesus remains the greatest gift of love of all time. May you and yours experience the same joy and wonder that the angels proclaimed on that first Christmas.*

Judith MacNutt

Written by Judith MacNutt, excerpt taken from *Encountering Angels*, copyright 2016, with written permission from Chosen Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group (<http://www.bakerpublishinggroup.com>)

ENCOUNTERING

Angels

by Judith MacNutt

Coming February 2016

Angels Are Among Us

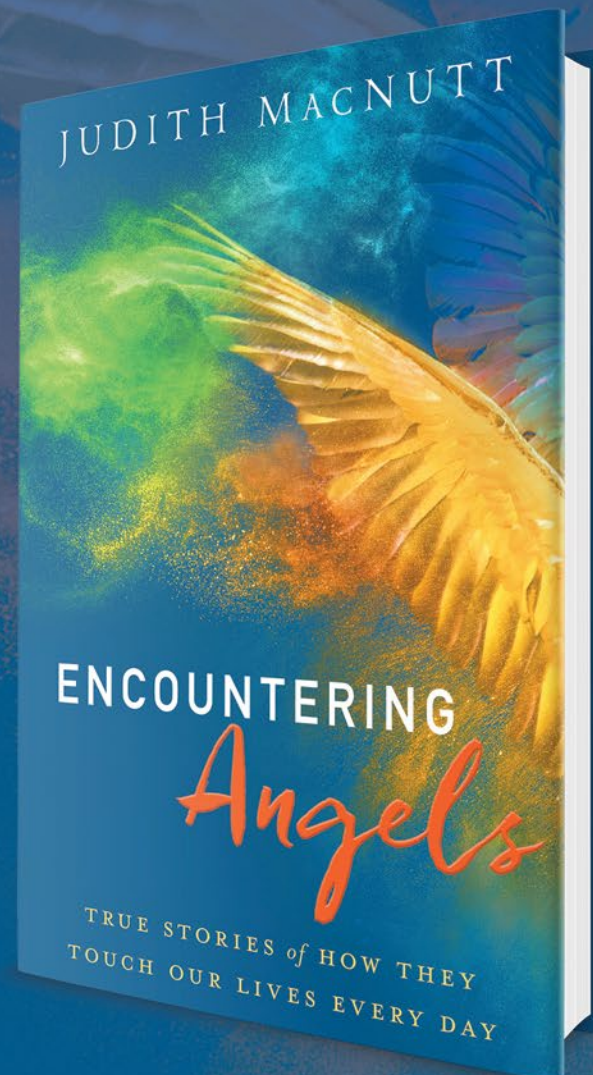
Every day the supernatural realm is reaching into your physical world. Have you ever noticed, just for a moment, the smell of fragrant flowers or glimpsed a breathtaking light from the corner of your eye? Or felt a comforting presence even though no one was near?

You may have just encountered an angel.

In this page-turning book, Judith MacNutt shares incredible, true-life stories of angelic encounters from people around the world. Through these accounts and biblical passages, you will discover the gifts and guidance God offers through these heavenly beings--and the truth about their roles in your life as bringers of peace, comfort, warning, protection and love.

Any time you feel lost, afraid, confused or desperate, the amazing stories in this book will connect you to God's encouragement, comfort and healing.

\$13.99 » Item #B107



PRE ORDER your signed copy today!

HOW TO HAVE YOUR OWN PERSONAL PENTECOST

J. LEE GRADY

One of my life goals is to stay "hot" for God. When I look at the spiritual giants of the Bible, I see men and women who carried a holy fire inside them—a fire that produced much more than personal piety. After heaven's coals touched their lips, the flames drove them to pursue God's radical agenda.

The prophets of the Old Testament knew this fire. Jeremiah felt as if God's flames were shut up in his bones (Jeremiah 20:9), and his spiritual passion drove him to weep in the streets as he confronted the sins of Israel. Elijah called down God's fire from heaven and relentlessly opposed Jezebel's plot against God's faithful remnant. Huldah's fiery prophetic zeal provoked King Josiah to destroy all the idols in the Temple. King David said the zeal of the Lord "consumed" him (Psalm 69:9)—and Jesus cited that verse when He drove the money-changers out of the Temple with a whip.

This fire blazed in the hearts of believers who were torn apart by Caesar's lions in the first century. It burned in the hearts of the Reformers who risked their lives to publish the Bible. If more recent spiritual heroes such as Charles Finney, George Whitefield, John Wesley and Catherine Booth had anything in common, it was their white-hot zeal. Lukewarm Christians never changed their world.

You may think that such unusual fervor is an emotion reserved only for full-time evangelists or missionaries. But the apostle Paul tells us that *all Christians* should have a spiritual temperature that reaches the boiling point. In Romans 12:11 he commands us to be "fervent in spirit." The Greek word for fervent is *zeo*, which means "to boil like hot liquid or to glow like hot metal."

I see this boiling hot zeal in Christian heroes of the past two centuries. These are my true heroes. When I read the writings of John Wesley, Charles Finney, Charles Spurgeon, Andrew Murray, William Seymour, E.M. Bounds, Watchman Nee, Oswald Chambers, A.B. Simpson, Brother Andrew or Corrie ten Boom, their words speak more deeply to me than most contemporary authors. For these people, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was not just a momentary experience or an

emotional high. They walked through serious trials and suffering. Total surrender was their lifestyle.

As we seek God for a new season of spiritual renewal (and none of us at this point knows what the new movement will look like), I believe we need to look backward as we move forward. There is something from the past that we must recover. We can learn it from these fire-tested saints.

The charismatic renewal of the last forty years has been a time of refreshing for the Church, to be sure. But I fear it was short-lived because we allowed it to be shallow. And this is because we have trivialized the message of Pentecost. We cheapened it. We made it easy for anyone to come to a church altar, stand in a line and have hands laid on them. They could fall backward, speak in tongues and—bam!—they've been anointed by the Spirit.

Is it really that easy? I am not suggesting that we have to work for the anointing of the Spirit. The grace of God is free. But a sanctified life is not something we receive in a line. It is something we wrestle for. If the early disciples tarried for weeks before the blessing of Pentecost, why do we encourage people to pray for this blessing before they've had a chance to even count the cost of discipleship?

During the holiness revivals of the late 1800s, America's preachers called God's people to embrace the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Their focus was not on speaking in tongues or the gifts of the Spirit; churches in those days did not understand that revelation from God's Word. But they proclaimed convincingly that God had a second blessing for His people. They saw the baptism of the Holy Spirit as an act of full consecration. They saw it as a step into the sanctified life. They cherished it as a pearl of great price.

This same understanding permeated the early Pentecostal revivals of the twentieth century. Preachers such as William Seymour, C.H. Mason and Gaston B. Cashwell did not view the baptism of the Holy Spirit simply as a momentary experience of empowerment. They saw it as an introduction into a life of holiness and consecration. They expected the baptism of the Holy Spirit to transform weak, hesitant, sin-sick churchgoers into courageous, impassioned, holy, fire-breathing disciples.

Where do you stand today? You may have never asked God to baptize you in the Holy Spirit. Or perhaps you had this experience, but you recognize now that your fire has been left to smolder. Perhaps the flame burned brightly at one point, but you became distracted by life's challenges. Perhaps you had a moral failure. Or perhaps you dipped your foot into carnal pleasures and kept going back for more, lulled into spiritual apathy with the encouragement of a hell-bent culture. Or perhaps problems in your church or ministry soured your attitude and you became disillusioned.

Spiritual zeal must be rekindled regularly. It is your responsibility to fan the flames. Perhaps you would like to pray for a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. First, prepare your heart so that you can settle this matter with God.

WHAT IS YOUR SPIRITUAL TEMPERATURE?

Many Christians struggle to live a life of faith because they have not surrendered their hearts fully to the Lord. They live on the proverbial fence, constantly wavering. They find it hard to believe that God loves them. They stumble into habitual sin constantly. They struggle with the simplest of spiritual disciplines.

The reason they seem to lack the ability to follow Christ wholeheartedly is that they have not fully yielded to His grace. Yes, they said a prayer of confession and asked Jesus to come and live in their hearts. But they are not fully convinced that Jesus loves them and that He gave His life for them on the cross. And they have not fully entrusted their lives into His care.

Other Christians serve Jesus faithfully for years but then crawl off of His altar. It is possible for any of us to run from God, just as Jonah did. Even some of the greatest spiritual giants of the past went through difficult times of wandering, doubt or discouragement. Sometimes because life's challenges hit us hard, we begin to backslide. Even if you

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RECOMMENDED READING

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT FOR SALE

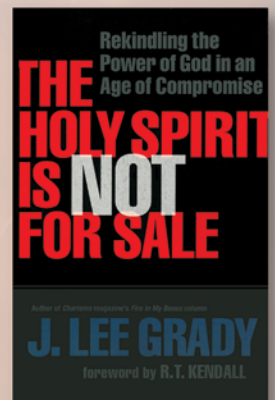
» by J. Lee Grady

As editor of *Charisma* magazine for more than ten years, J. Lee Grady kept his finger on the pulse of the charismatic and Pentecostal movements. Though an avid proponent of the charismatic experience, he has observed trends that both distress and anger him. And now he is overturning the money tables.

With extraordinary insight and godly discernment, Grady exposes the problems and scandals that plague today's churches and ministries—including abuse, showmanship, manipulation and infatuation with prosperity.

Yet his message is not one of condemnation and finger-pointing. Instead Grady challenges all who call themselves Spirit-empowered Christians to return to their biblical roots and restore boldness, integrity and humility to charismatic spirituality. He longs to see the Church purified and believers everywhere ignited with the genuine fire of God's Spirit for true spiritual renewal.

\$14.99 » Item #B1191



Personal Pentecost.....cont. from page 7

have thrown in the towel, it is not too late to get back onto His altar and ask for a new visitation of His Spirit.

Perhaps you believe that Christ is your Savior, but you have never truly yielded to Him as your Lord. He cannot be one and not the other. He is both Savior and Lord. He purchased your life when He redeemed you; now, He asks that you surrender your will, emotions, disappointments, failures, fears, plans, goals and dreams to Him. Making this important decision will certainly increase the spiritual temperature in your life.

Yielding to Jesus' Lordship is an act of faith as well as of consecration. Consecration is defined as: "The devoting or setting apart of anything to the worship or service of God." In the Old Testament, anything used in the Tabernacle or the Temple had to be consecrated first. The priests, the furniture, the utensils and the offerings were all consecrated. Most of all, God desired His people to be consecrated as His. The Lord told Israel: "You shall consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy, for I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 20:7).

As you prepare yourself to be freshly baptized in the Holy Spirit, ask yourself these questions:

1. **Have you broken all ties to your sinful past?** Jesus commanded us not only to believe and repent but also to be baptized in water. In water baptism we demonstrate that we belong to Christ. We also are renouncing the devil and any idols we have served in the past. If you have been involved in a false religion, the occult or any form of idolatry, it is especially important to break their control through your obedience in baptism.
2. **Are you ruthlessly dealing with all known sin in your life?** Many Christians live in a continual state of lukewarmness because they are not willing to lay the axe to the root of their sin. God wants you to bring all your sinful habits into the burning light of His presence. That will require you to be brutally honest by confessing to a trusted Christian friend who can pray for you.
3. **Are you grieved by the blatant sinfulness of the culture around you?** Jesus never called us to isolate ourselves from unbelievers. But if we compromise with the world's values, we will grow cold. Our entertainment choices, close relationships or selfish pleasures can subtly lure us away from wholehearted devotion. If you have pitched your tent

"Rise up and be healed!"

"Get up and walk!"

Jesus and His followers used these commands throughout Scripture and the results were always **instant and miraculous healing**.

The **same authority and power** that Jesus and His disciples demonstrated **live in us** and are waiting to be released!

Join Judith MacNutt and Randy Clarke as they take a deeper look at how we as believers can release healing by walking in and exercising that authority.

SPEAKERS



Judith
MacNutt



Randy
Clark

WORSHIP



Kelanie
Gloeckler



JUNE 22-25, 2016

at the Sheraton Burlington in Burlington, VT
Register online at www.christianhealingmin.org

too close to Sodom, your friendship with darkness will snuff out your spiritual passion.

- 4. Are you pursuing the things of God with more passion than other personal interests?** During the days of the prophet Haggai, Israel was guilty of the sin of misplaced priorities. People were building their own houses while God's house lay in ruins (Haggai 1:2-5). You may have admirable goals that don't seem "wrong" in themselves, but your desire for a career, material success, recognition, a mate or a stress-free life may be what is sapping your zeal.
- 5. Are you intimate with God?** Spiritual zeal is not about how long you pray, how many times you go to church each week or how many Bible verses you have memorized. True passion for God is fueled when you are close to Him. If your faith has become a rote formula, a dry tradition or an empty shell, run back into His arms and let Him melt your cold, backslidden heart.

You are called to be a worshipper, and intimacy with God requires devotion. Do the distractions of entertainment, work and relationships fill up your time? Does your heart beat fastest for Him, or have other interests replaced your first love? Do you truly live to please the Father alone, or have you become addicted to the praises of men?
- 6. Do you harbor unforgiveness?** Do you have resentment toward anyone who has wronged you? If so, a bitter poison is taking its toll—and you could infect others and start an epidemic. You must forgive every offense, release every judgment and drop every grudge. Are you jealous of another brother because he makes more money or seems more successful? You must rejoice with him instead of secretly resenting his blessings.
- 7. Do you need an attitude adjustment?** If you don't walk with the limp of humility, pride will cause you to strut. Do you radiate the love, joy and peace of the Holy Spirit—or are you better known for anxiety, rudeness, cutting remarks and irritability? What happens when you are under pressure? Do you manifest the sweet demeanor of a trusting heart, or throw a childish temper tantrum?
- 8. Does your tongue need an examination?** Does grateful thanksgiving pour out of your mouth regularly, or do you spend most of your time griping and complaining? Are you blessing people regularly with encouragement, or tearing them down with criticism and negativity? Have you grown so callous that you don't feel convicted when you malign a person's character by talking about him behind his back?

9. What's happening in your most private areas? We can't view sexual purity as optional. You cannot be spiritually healthy if you don't hate sin. Does lust control any area of your life? Have you bowed your knee to the spirit of Baal, who controls our culture with pornography and perversion? Do you flee from sexual temptation the very second you are confronted with an image? Or do you toy with it as long as you know no one is looking?

10. Do you have compassion for those who don't know Jesus?

If it has been a while since you've shared your faith with a non-Christian, that's a good indication that your zeal has waned. When the fire of God rages inside us, we cannot hold it in! And nothing will stoke your spiritual passion more than leading someone to Christ.

DEALING WITH AN UNWILLING SPIRIT

The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit is sensitive. He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30) and quenched (1 Thessalonians 5:19). This means we can do things that cause Him to withdraw His presence and blessing in our lives. To quench the Spirit is to throw cold water on His flames.

I believe we quench the Holy Spirit in many ways. One is with doubt and intellectual pride. If we base all our decisions on what we know, we leave no room for the realm of faith. The Spirit speaks to us in spiritual terms that cannot be understood by the natural man. As long as we live in that realm we will never be filled with the Spirit's power.

Another way we quench the Spirit is with religious tradition. Throughout history, religious people have persecuted believers who were led by the Holy Spirit. Just as the Pharisees hated Jesus and wanted Him dead, Christians who say they love God will criticize and oppose genuine spiritual renewal.

We also quench the Spirit with fear. You will never fully embrace the Holy Spirit's work if you are afraid of the supernatural. We must get beyond this. If you read the book of Acts, you will see that God did many strange and unusual things in the early Church! He not only healed the sick and raised the dead, but He shook buildings, caused doors to open by themselves, struck false prophets blind, gave people visions and transported a man instantaneously from one city to another.

The Holy Spirit's work can seem strange to us. But we must not let fear stop us from embracing His work. We must be people of faith who expect God to do miracles.

We can also quench the Spirit through unconfessed sin. This is why it is so important for us to be in close relationship with other Christians in a faith community. God never intended for us to walk alone. We need close friends who can help bear our burdens, share

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Personal Pentecost.....cont. from page 9

our struggles, pray for us and listen to our confession when necessary. Living a transparent life gives victory over any sin.

One of the most common ways we quench the Holy Spirit is by harboring an unwilling spirit. I had a dramatic experience in 1999 in which the Lord helped me overcome this. My church in Florida sponsored a conference on the Holy Spirit. At the close of one service I was lying on the floor near the altar asking God for a touch of His power. Several other people were kneeling at the communion rail and praying quietly for each other as soft music played in the background.

Suddenly I began to have a vision. In my mind I could see a large pipeline, at least eight feet in diameter. I was looking at it from the inside, and I could see a shallow stream of golden liquid flowing at the bottom. The oil in the giant pipe was only a few inches deep.

I began a conversation with the Lord. "What are You showing me?" I asked.

"This is the flow of the Holy Spirit in your life," He answered.

It was not an encouraging picture; it was pitiful! The capacity of the pipeline was huge—enough to convey tons of oil. Yet only a trickle was evident.

Then I noticed something else: Several large valves lined the sides of the pipeline, and each of them was shut. I wanted to ask the Lord why there was so little oil in my life. Instead I asked: "What are those valves, and why are they closed?"

"Those represent the times when you said no. Why should I increase the level of anointing if you aren't available to use it?"

The words stung. I wondered—when had I said no to God? I was overcome with emotion and began to repent. I recalled different excuses I had made and limitations I had placed on how He could use me.

For example, I had told Him I didn't want to be in front of crowds because I wasn't a good speaker. I had told Him that if I couldn't preach like T.D. Jakes does, then I didn't want to speak at all. I had told Him I didn't want to address certain issues or go certain places. I also knew I had a fear of flying because I did not like turbulence on airplanes. I recognized that this fear had become a blockage in my life.

After a while I began to envision something else in my spirit. I pictured a huge crowd of African men, assembled as if they were in a large arena. I saw myself preaching to them.

Nobody had ever asked me to minister in Africa, but I knew at that moment I needed to surrender my will. All I could think to say was the prayer of Isaiah: "Here am I. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8). I told God I would go anywhere and say anything He asked. I laid my insecurities, fears and inhibitions on the altar. I repented of my unwilling spirit.

You can probably guess what happened. Two years later, I stood behind a pulpit inside a sports arena in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. As I addressed a crowd of eight thousand pastors who had assembled

there for a training conference, I remembered seeing their faces in that vision. And I realized that God had opened a new valve in my life that day in 1999. Because I had said yes, He had increased the flow of His oil so that it could reach thousands.

Since that day I have traveled to more than 24 countries, preaching in churches, conferences and outdoor meetings. I had always considered myself a shy person and never dreamed I would be involved at such a level of public ministry. I saw myself as a journalist and preferred to hide behind my pen. But God had other plans. And He had to fill me with His Holy Spirit—and deal with all my excuses—to take me where He wanted me.

I encourage you to ask God for more. To do this, make sure you have surrendered every condition that you have ever placed on your obedience.

Those of us who call ourselves charismatics have a habit of asking for more of God's power and anointing. But what do we use it for? We love to go to the altar to get a touch from God. We love the goose bumps, the shaking, the emotion of the moment. We love to fall on the floor and receive prayer for more anointing. But I am afraid many of us are faking it. We get up off the floor and live just the way we want to.

If we truly want to be empowered, we must offer God an unqualified yes. We must crucify every no. We must leave our fears, insecurities and unwillingness at the cross.

Search your own heart today and see if there are any closed valves. Before you ask Him for a fresh baptism of the Spirit, make sure all is on the altar. As you surrender, the locked channels of your heart will open, and the flow of His oil will amaze you.

Receive His fresh anointing. I pray that the flame of the Spirit will become a raging fire shut up in your bones. I pray that, like Jeremiah, you will not be able to contain His zeal. And I pray that this fresh fire will fall from heaven, consume all the dross of our past mistakes and grant the Church a new grace to fulfill the Great Commission in our generation. ✠

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J. LEE GRADY

Contributing editor and former
editor of *Charisma*.



healing & the church: **AN INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTY WIMBER**

CHRISTY WIMBER

Christy, who are you, what church do you pastor and how long have you been in ministry?

My name is Christy Wimber. I've been pastoring the Yorba Linda, CA Vineyard for ten years, which is the city in which Vineyard began, so it feels as though we have come full circle. I am also a wife and a mother, which is a lot of juggling. I travel to different conferences and events about once a month, mostly internationally. I am writing a book right now, and am ghost writing for John Wimber. We have gone through all of John's papers and collected articles that he was writing before he passed, and for eighteen years I have been compiling and writing some books out of his notes, files and papers. My own book focuses on topics that the Lord has me working on as I hear from Him.

When were you first introduced to the power of the Holy Spirit and what kind of changes did you notice?

I was about nine years old when I first experienced the Holy Spirit. I remember the day it happened—we were sitting in a meeting at the Vineyard church, and I was having trouble hearing. Suddenly my ears just popped open. That was one of my first encounters with the power of the Holy Spirit and it scared me to death, but was also amazing.

Tell me a story about something supernatural that you have encountered recently.

I think there are supernatural things happening all the time. I was just talking to a girl this morning—we had prayed for her dad for healing of prostate cancer a few months ago in England. After that, his bloodwork results showed great improvement. That is a supernatural event!

If you could give a piece of advice to every pastor in America, what would it be?

Keep your lamp full and lit. I think that time with Jesus, sitting with Him, getting our lamps filled, being full of the Holy Spirit—I don't think there is anything more important. I think that a lot of things in ministry fight against that—busy schedules, busy with church, busy meeting with people—these are all good things. As a minister, however, I feel that I am most effective after I have been ministered to, so this becomes

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An Interview....cont. from page 11

a priority for me. If leaders lived every day from the place where God defines us, speaks to us and reminds us of who we are—then we will minister from a place of health, instead of from a place of performance or hurt or rejection or whatever is happening to us at that moment. So that is my encouragement—keep your lamps full and get what you need from Jesus first.

How would you address someone who has just lost a close friend or family member despite folks around them having prayed for healing?

As spiritual leaders, we need to teach people how to live and that God heals, saves and delivers. As pastors, we also need to teach people how to die. Death is part of life. When I am walking someone through the possibility of death, we pray for healing. I tell them, “We pray for healing and we know you are going to get that healing, we just don’t know if it is going to be this side of heaven or the other side. The key is to not stop asking for prayer.” John Wimber taught me this early on. We never know what God is going to do and when He is going to do it. But in the process of that, we need to equip people and walk with them through it. We also need to be honest about what is happening. We cannot live in a place where we won’t admit when we see someone dying. It can create devastation in the family if not addressed. I tell them, “We are in a battle. In a battle people get hurt and people die. But we are going to keep fighting the battle and we are going to do it until you either get healed here or until you go to be with Jesus.”

If you were to give a piece of advice to someone struggling with anxiety and fear, what would it be?

Those two things are what I am encountering more and more in the world around me. It’s not just in the church—it’s in the world around us. People are really struggling with anxiety, and fear is how the enemy operates. He wants us to be in fear. I think that repeating the Scriptures out loud is a powerful tool. 2 Timothy 1:7 teaches us, “God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” Having other people pray for us is also very important. If I am ministering to someone struggling with anxiety, the worst thing I can do is tell them they don’t have enough faith, or they are encountering this because they have done something wrong, or they have anxiety because they aren’t living the Christian life correctly. Those are some of the things being taught in the church today that I see as so damaging.

If you were to encourage someone who has prayed for years and years for a physical healing and hasn’t received it, what would you say?

I would say that anyone dealing with something chronic, while at the same time living from a place of loving and trusting Jesus, is a hero. Those who don’t see the things that they want to see and are

still fighting for something—watching others being healed while they aren’t—these people are heroes. They say yes to Jesus in spite of what they are going through. My encouragement would be to tell them they have been a fine example because we need people like that who will love Jesus no matter what. I would also encourage them to explore the different kinds of healing. There is physical healing, and there is also emotional and spiritual healing. Get ministry in those areas as well, especially if you don’t see physical healing. Keep moving and getting ministry.

Do you have any books that you recommend on the subject of healing?

I think the Gospels give the best model for healing. All throughout, Jesus gives us examples of how we are to minister—models of compassion, love and acceptance. Even faith and risk are modeled. I also think Francis MacNutt’s book *Healing* and John Wimber’s book *Power Healing* are some of the best resources. Those are my staples.

Who were your mentors and what are some of the things that you remember them teaching you with regard to the Holy Spirit and healing?

When it comes to healing, my main mentor was John Wimber. The elders in my church also played a large role. They were the people that I saw doing the stuff—praying for people all the time, week in and week out. That is how I learned; “the church was the church” and ordinary people taught me.

What is your favorite area of praying for healing and why? Any story to tell about it?

I love when people get saved and encounter wholeness for the first time. That is my absolute favorite. With salvation, I think there is an instant healing that takes place. It’s a supernatural deal! These days, another one of my favorites is to see healing in the area of mental health, because that is what I am encountering and where I am being used right now. God is really giving me a heart for people struggling with anxiety and depression, and for those caring for people with these conditions. There is no outlet for the caregivers. I love to minister to both of them, to let them know they are not alone. This kind of prayer involves more spiritual and emotional healing rather than physical healing.

Can you list—besides anxiety and depression—conditions that you have seen healed lately?

When people come to me and say they have been healed on the spot of something such as bipolar disorder, I question it. Healing for mental illness is not an overnight fix; I think the church needs to see it differently. Obviously God can heal whatever, whenever. But I think that mental illnesses, and any other long-term conditions that have

to do with the brain, need more long-term prayer. Traumas, inner healing—these things need more time. I see a lot of people being healed who have kept secrets and have had no outlet to let their secrets be released. Then they encounter God for the first time and can be honest about it. That becomes a huge power encounter. There is so much stigma attached to telling their story, so something has to change—this is where the church can be a bridge and a place of healing. This is where Jesus would be hanging out, so that is where I want to hang out.

When you are not ministering, what do you like to do with your free time and how often do you get to do it?

I really value “checking out.” I think it is very important; it keeps me sane. There are some things that I do with the Lord that are invaluable to me. I also love the beach. I love water. Getting by water relaxes me in a way like nothing else does.

Do you have any personal testimonies of healing that you would like to share?

I have seen so many things healed with my kids; these are the most meaningful to me as a mother. One time I was with my daughter at the river when she had a freak accident. She tripped over backward on a big rock, and her arm looked like it was broken in half with her elbow upside down—it was very traumatic. When they went in to do the x-ray, it was confirmed that her elbow was broken in half, and her shoulder and wrist were both broken. They took her into surgery, and afterward the surgeon came out and said, “Boy, I had to put all of these pins into her elbow.” But her wrist and her shoulder were fine. I asked the Lord, “Why didn’t you just do the whole thing?” That was just weird, but it’s a great story.

What do you encounter most frequently as a block to healing?

I would say two things: 1) having a critical attitude—it puts up a massive wall and prevents the Spirit from moving; and 2) bitterness—I think bitterness eats people from the inside out, and becomes a roadblock preventing people from receiving wholeness.

What do you see as sources of critical spirits and bitterness?

They both can stem from disappointment, discouragement, false and unmet expectations; thinking that people, places and things should have given them more. Life turning out differently than desired. A victim mindset.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

I would encourage your readers to turn toward the Lord. He is giving us a huge invitation for healing, not just limited to physical healing, but for complete wholeness. In my research I’ve found that one in every four Americans deals with mental health issues in one

way or another. This is a healing point. We have an invitation all around us. People are being suffocated by things around them and they don’t feel they can share their struggles with anyone. Their stories and experiences cause them to feel weak or worthless—with symptoms of depression and anxiety. There is an invitation from the Lord for us to be that bridge and to remove that stigma. Those who are struggling—find a place where you can go and share what you are going through. Caregivers, you need to share also—find a place. Church, wake up and see the world around you. See the areas of healing through the Spirit as a massive bridge to Jesus. ✨

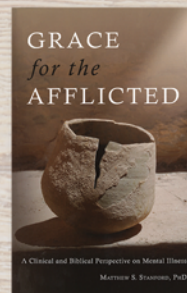
For more about Christy Wimber visit her church website at: YLvineyard.com

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CHRISTY WIMBER

Author, speaker, and worship director,
Christy is currently Senior Pastor of
Yorba Linda Vineyard Church.



RECOMMENDED READING



GRACE FOR THE AFFLICTED

» by Matthew S. Stanford, Ph.D.

Each day men and women diagnosed with mental disorders are told they need to pray more and turn from their sin. Mental illness is equated with demonic possession, weak faith, and generational sin. Why is it that the church has struggled in ministering to those with mental illnesses?

Grace for the Afflicted is written to educate Christians about mental illness from both biblical and scientific perspectives.

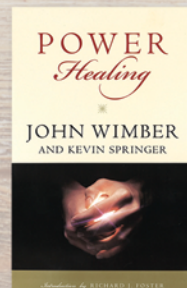
\$20.00 » Item #B1307

HEALING

» by Francis MacNutt, Ph.D.

Learn how the marvelous healing touch of God is available to you. The revolutionary yet balanced teaching of Francis MacNutt will open you to the experience of healing for you and those you love. The millions who have benefited from this book testify to its life-changing message. It is considered the classical work on the subject of Christian healing prayer.

\$19.95 » Item #B607



POWER HEALING

» by John Wimber and Kevin Springer

An illuminating and inspiring look at the power of divine healing.

John Wimber profoundly believes that healing is fundamental to the church's ministry and life. *Power Healing* dramatically relives his struggle to understand the nature of healing and how it brought him to a new understanding of why Jesus heals and how he heals through us.

\$14.99 » Item #B044

THE IMAGINATION IN HEALING PRAYER

REV. KEN POLSLEY

In 1987 I attended a small group where they were reading a book by Dr. David Seamands, a seminary professor who taught pastoral counseling. The book was titled *Putting Away Childish Things*. It was about dealing with emotional bonds or difficult memories that were blocks for many people, keeping them from growing to Christian maturity. I can't say that I was very interested in the subject, or that I discerned that I had any emotional blocks that I needed to have removed. However, I was intrigued by one of the stories that Seamands told about Anne, a woman with whom Dr. Seamands had a counseling session of what he called "healing prayer:"

About a week after we prayed, she awoke very early in the morning. She couldn't get back to sleep, so she lay in bed and began to pray. She said it was as if Christ Himself came into the bedroom, called her and said, "Come, Anne, take my hand. I want us to walk back through your life."

"Lord, I couldn't stand it again. It was so hard when I told the pastor."

"Anne, this time is going to be different. I am going to be with you each step of the way."

Anne then described that walk with Jesus in a most unusual fashion. The two of them were in a great art gallery where each painful incident was a picture on the wall. As Jesus led her they would stand before each vivid memory, like looking at a painting. And as she looked at them one by one, all the original emotions she had experienced swept over her. Once more she relived the fear, the pain, the shame, and the rage connected with those ghastly memories. Each time she would weep bitter tears and each time an inner voice would say, "My child, just turn it over to Me; forgive everyone involved and receive forgiveness for your own hate and rage." As she surrendered each memory to the Lord, it was as if Jesus reached up and took down that particular picture.

This went on for several hours until finally, when she looked around, all the pictures had been taken down and the walls of her mind were clean and whole. The scalding bitterness and the poisonous fangs had been removed from those destructive memories.

—*Putting Away Childish Things*, David A. Seamands, Victor Books, 1982

I was puzzled by this story. I had heard of guided imagery that was used therapeutically by some psychologists. I thought that this might be like guided imagery, except that there was no counselor present guiding her. The counselor seemed to be the Lord. As Anne told it, Jesus was guiding these pictures in her mind, and she was following as a willing but apprehensive observer. Was this possible? Was this desirable? Was this a Biblical encounter of some kind?

Does God really engage the imagination of people in this way, or was Anne making it up by means of auto-suggestion, guiding herself in a memory story? Was it even right to use imagination in prayer? I was puzzled by the story and only mildly interested because I didn't see that Anne's experience had much application for me. Her experience was certainly outside of anything that I had experienced, and quite naturally I was skeptical of any kind of prayer not precisely described in the Bible and outside of my experience.

A week later my wife, Sue, had a conversation with my grandmother. Sue had asked me how my mother had died and I told her that she had died during childbirth when I was two years old.

"But why, how did she die?"

"I don't know, I never asked."

"Why don't you know anything about your mother? It isn't right!"

I had learned at a very young age that it was taboo to ask questions about my mother's death. I did not even know her name until I was eight, nor had I seen a picture of her. My maternal grandmother was assigned to tell me about her when I was eight and to take me to the gravesite, but I asked no questions and only retained a few foggy facts. My wife, however, was not content to let the past lie forgotten, and she went to my father's mother and asked her all kinds of questions. They went upstairs to the cedar chest and out came all the pictures that had been put away the week of my mother's death and many stories were told that I had never heard. Grandma told my wife that when I was four or five, I used to go out by the road at her house and stand by the mailbox and look across the fields at the vacant house on the next hill, where my dad and mom and I lived before mother died. Grandma said that she felt so sorry for me. I told my wife quite matter-of-factly that I had no memory of doing that, nor did the story move me in any way that I could discern. I couldn't see how that story had anything to do with my life now – I was a stable pastor, an emotionally well-adjusted husband and a father of two. Let the past stay in the past. But my wife had noticed something else about me in our eight years of marriage – what I called emotionally stable could also be interpreted as aloof, living totally in my mind, emotionally cool, and not always present in the presence of other people.

This story that Grandma told me about the "young me" standing by the mailbox dogged me for about a week. I couldn't get it out of my mind. Then one night as I was praying all alone in my room, I began

to have a "daydream." I call it a daydream because it had that quality of playing out like a movie that I was watching. It was a picture of a four or five-year old boy standing by the mailbox. I recognized the boy in my mind's picture; it was my son. I watched him as he looked off across the valley to the next hill to the vacant house. After a while, in my mind's eye, Ryan changed, and I saw myself standing by the mailbox as a young boy. For a long time I watched myself stand alone at the edge of the gravel road looking intently. Then a man walked into the picture. I could only see his back but I knew it was Jesus. Then Jesus stood beside me looking with me across the fields to the house. Then he knelt beside me, still just looking. Then Jesus put his hand on my shoulder, and we looked across the fields together at the vacant house. I was waiting for him to say something to me, but he didn't speak. All he did was just kneel beside me and look with me. At this point, something in me broke, and I started weeping. I had never really wept before. I had been choked up on occasion, I had swallowed back lumps in my throat during sad movies, but I was thirty years old and had never wept. Now I was weeping, and I couldn't stop. I cried often for the next week; it was embarrassing. I remember that we had invited someone over for dinner, and he told a funny story. I started laughing at his story, and then I had to excuse myself from the table because my laughter had turned to tears. This was my first experience with a very common kind of prayer that we call inner healing that addressed unresolved grief in my life.

There were many more experiences of inner healing to come for me regarding abandonment by death, problems during conception to birth with my mother, and receiving a mother's blessing that I missed.

Francis MacNutt has written this definition of inner healing:

The basic idea of inner healing is simply this: that Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, can take the memories of our past and

1. *Heal them from the wounds that still remain and affect our present lives;*
2. *Fill with his love all these places in us that have been empty so long, once they have been healed and drained of the poison of past hurts and resentment.*

—*Healing*, Francis MacNutt, Ave Maria Press, 1974

Often in inner healing the Lord will engage the imagination. Most people with whom we pray for inner healing at Christian Healing Ministries, have a picture in their mind of a traumatic personal memory. When we ask, "Can you remember what happened?" and they say, "Yes, I can remember it clearly," it usually means that they can **picture** it. They have an image in their mind of where they were, what was happening, who was present, and how they felt. When we invite Jesus to come to the person in their memory in whatever way he may choose, often Jesus enters into the memory as an image of

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2015/16

focusing on
dec/jan/feb

December

For all Tuesday prayer ministry, be sure to call CHM first
at 904-765-3332 to verify there are no cancellations.

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
		1 Open Prayer Ministry on CHM campus: 1:30 pm	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 SCHOOL OF HEALING PRAYER LEVEL 4 EXPRESS - DOUBLETREE BY HILTON, JACKSONVILLE, FL	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Office closed	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS Office closed	26
27	28 Office closed	29 Office closed	30 Office closed	31 Office closed		

January

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
					1 Happy New Year Office closed	2
3	4	5 Open Prayer Ministry CHM campus: 1:30 pm Generational Eucharist CHM campus: 6:00 pm	6	7	8	9
10	11 Day of Healing Prayer on CHM campus	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY Office closed JOURNEY TO HEALING - SEABROOK, SC	19 Open Prayer Ministry CHM campus: 1:30 pm & 6:00 pm	20	21	22	23
24 31	25	26 Open Prayer Ministry CHM campus: 1:30 pm & 6:00 pm	27	28	29	30

February

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
	1	2 INTERNSHIP PROGRAM, JACKSONVILLE, FL JOURNEY TO HEALING RETREAT DOUBLETREE BY HILTON, JACKSONVILLE, FL	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Open Prayer Ministry CHM campus: 1:30 pm	10	11	12	13
14 Happy Valentine's Day	15 Day of Healing Prayer on CHM campus	16	17	18	19	20 SCHOOL OF HEALING PRAYER IN NYC NEW YORK CITY, NY
21	22	23 Open Prayer Ministry CHM campus: 1:30 pm & 6:00 pm	24	25	26	27
28	29					

chm's calendar of events

2015/16

CHM Schools, Conferences & Retreats

2015

[SCHOOLS OF HEALING PRAYER*]

Speakers: Judith MacNutt, and team

Registration: online at www.christianhealingmin.org

December 10-12 — Level 4 Express

Doubletree by Hilton, Jacksonville Airport

2016

[SCHOOLS OF HEALING PRAYER*]

CHM Campus, Jacksonville, Florida

Speakers: Judith MacNutt, and team

Registration: online at www.christianhealingmin.org

February 18-20 — SHP in NY (*New York City, NY*)

March 10-12 — Level 1 (*location TBD*)

April 7-9 — Level 2

May 12-14 — Level 3

July 14-16 — Level 1

August 25-27 — Level 2

October 27-29 — Level 3

December 1-3 — Level 4

2016 cont.

[JOURNEY TO HEALING RETREAT]

Speakers: Judith MacNutt and team

Registration: online at www.christianhealingmin.org

January 18-20

Camp St. Christopher, Seabrook Island, SC

February 4-6

Doubletree by Hilton, Jacksonville Airport

August 11-13

Doubletree by Hilton, Jacksonville Airport

November 17-19

Doubletree by Hilton, Jacksonville Airport

[CHM INTERNSHIP PROGRAM]

To apply, call 904-765-3332 ext. 221 or 212

February 2-6

August 9-13

November 15-19

[IGNITE CONFERENCE]

Sheraton Burlington, Burlington, Vermont

Speakers: Judith MacNutt and Randy Clark; worship led by Kelanie Gloeckler

Registration: online at www.christianhealingmin.org

June 22-25

[CAPTIVATE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE]

Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, Jacksonville, Florida

Speakers: Judith MacNutt and guest speaker; worship led by Kelanie Gloeckler

Registration: online at www.christianhealingmin.org

September 29 - October 1

[CHM IS STREAMING]

All CHM conferences are available for streaming. Not only can you enjoy each conference live from where you are, you will also have access to the archived teachings. Visit our website for more information and for pricing.

www.christianhealingmin.org

**Dates and schedules subject to change.*

Other Conferences

MARCH 3-5 » Women's Conference [Powhatan, VA]

Speaker: Judith MacNutt

APRIL 14-16 » Arise! Women's Conference [St. Paul, MN]

Speaker: Judith MacNutt

CHM BOOKSTORE

BRIAN WAGES

MUSIC
FOR
PRAYER
VOL 1

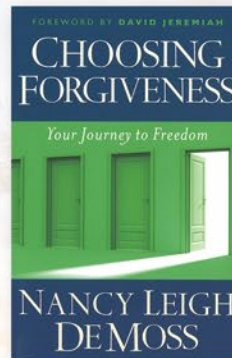
MUSIC FOR PRAYER VOL. 1

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An album of ambient soundscapes designed to set a prayerful tone in all situations...even the bad ones.

This CD, recorded by local worship leader Brian Wages, will be the perfect album to play during sweet times of soaking worship and personal devotion.

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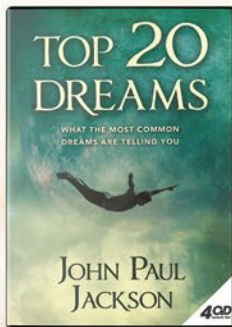
CHOOSING FORGIVENESS

» by Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Perhaps you still remember the moment when you were deeply hurt by someone you trusted. And since then your life has been put on hold, sabotaged by harbored resentment, dreams of revenge, or perhaps indifference and numbness. Or it may be just the "stuff" of every day life that has left you with a dull ache in your heart.

There are biblical principles that can help you break free from bitterness and pain. In *Choosing Forgiveness*, DeMoss delves into God's word to uncover the promises and expose the myths of forgiveness. Discover specific strategies for putting God's grace and mercy into practice, forgiving others as God has forgiven you.

\$14.99 » Item #B541



TOP 20 DREAMS

» a CD-set by John Paul Jackson

Taken from his *Advanced Workshop in Dreams & Visions* course, the *Top 20 Dreams* audio teaching contains over 100 rapid-fire interpretations of these common dreams and their variations. This teaching will help you understand the vital role context and detail play in a dream's meaning. In this 4-CD set listen as John Paul uncovers the meaning of these dreams.

\$26.00 » Item #C292



GLAD TIDINGS + GREAT JOY

» a CD by Brian Wages and Kelanie Gloeckler

This new Christmas album features your favorite traditional Christmas hymns that have been loved for generations, recorded in a manner that is faithful to their history.

\$14.00 » Item #C295



PURGING YOUR HOUSE, PRUNING YOUR FAMILY TREE

» by Perry Stone

Is there a war going on in your home? Does a weeping willow describe your family tree? Do you wish you had been born to a different family? Did you pick up some bad DNA from someone in your lineage?

Our homes should be places of love and security, but demonic activity and hindrances often fill them with conflict, dissatisfaction, and disillusionment. *Purging Your House, Pruning Your Family Tree* takes you to the root of these issues, showing you how to rid your home and family of demonic influence and generational oppression.

\$16.99 » Item #B1246

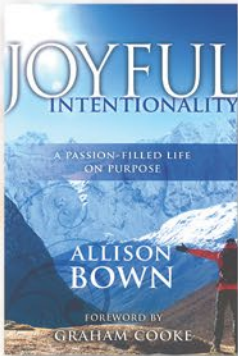


LETTING GO OF YOUR PAST

» by John Loren & Paula Sandford

Transform your past to victory! You have the choice. Your past contains a wealth of relationships, experiences, lessons and hurts. In *Letting Go of Your Past*, you will discover how past relationships and events are affecting your life today and what you can do to address them and find healing. By applying the scriptural principles in this book, you can confidently build and maintain healthy relationships with family members; create the right balance between "bearing one another's burdens" and allowing healthy separation as you empower others to grow; find true oneness in your marriage; and become an effective, contributing member of society.

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**JOYFUL INTENTIONALITY**

» by Allison Bown

Allison Bown artfully weaves Scriptural teaching with encouraging stories and creative tools that will practically equip and empower you on your own joy-fueled adventure with God. When "joyful" is separated from "intentionality"; when "purpose" precedes "passion", spirituality quickly turns into a discipline to be done instead of what it was meant to be: a relationship to be savored with a Friend. *Joyful Intentionality* will help you overturn mindsets that keep you duty-bound, and help you find the joy of the journey.

\$15.00 » Item #B1622**LEATHER JOURNALS**

Beautifully hand-crafted leather journals with rope enclosure.

Elephant Journal** » **\$26.00** » Item #N069Tree of Life Journal** » **\$27.00** » Item #N078**THE BIGGEST STORY**

» by Kevin DeYoung, illustrated by Don Clark

The Bible is full of exciting stories that fill children with awe and wonder. But kids need to know how all those classic stories connect to Scripture's overarching message about God's glorious plan to redeem his rebellious people. *The Biggest Story* by Kevin DeYoung, a best-selling author and father of six, leads kids and parents alike on an exciting journey through the Bible, connecting the dots from the garden of Eden to Christ's death on the cross to the new heaven and new earth.

With powerful illustrations by award-winning artist Don Clark, this imaginative retelling of the Bible's core message will draw children into the biblical story, teaching them that God's promises are even bigger and better than we think.

\$17.99 » Item #B1627**CHM BOOKSTORE****RAHAB'S ROPE JEWELRY**

Beautiful earrings from Rahab's Rope, a ministry that exists to give hope and opportunity to women and girls who are at risk or have been forced into the commercial sex trade of India.

***Cross Dangle Earrings** » **\$14.00** » Item #N157***Gold & White Enameled Earrings** » **\$19.00** » Item #N087

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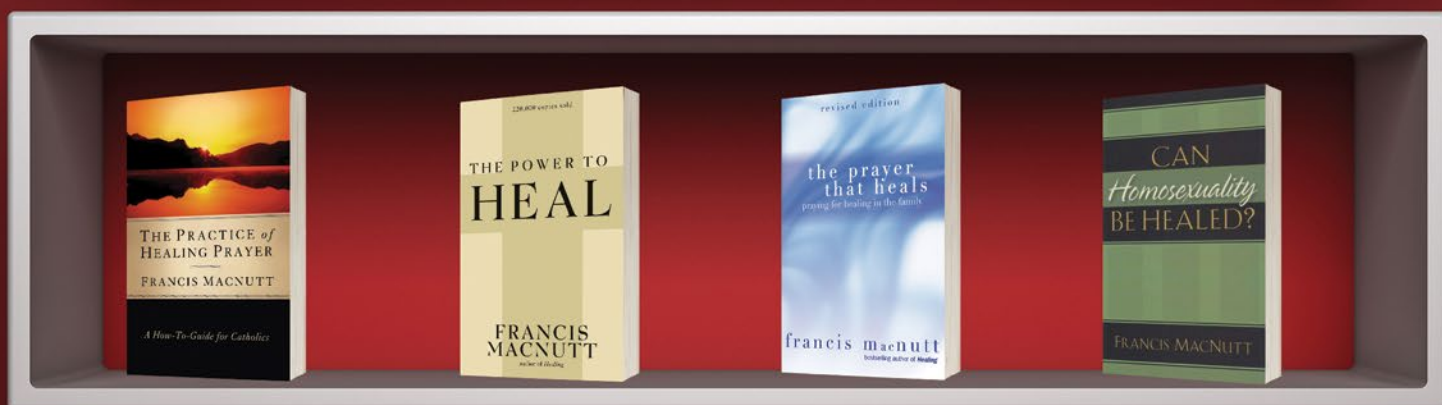
2015 Conferences

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HEALING

» Francis MacNutt
B607 » \$19.95

THE POWER TO HEAL

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B045 » \$16.95

THE PRACTICE OF HEALING PRAYER

» Francis MacNutt
B1208 » \$10.95

PRAYING FOR YOUR UNBORN CHILD

» Francis & Judith MacNutt
B107 » \$20.00

THE PRAYER THAT HEALS

» Francis MacNutt
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CAN HOMOSEXUALITY BE HEALED?

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himself. They see Jesus. We are often surprised by what Jesus does – he may speak to them, or he may shine a light into the memory, or the recipient may be aware of his presence without seeing anything. After this experience with Jesus in prayer they tell us things such as, “I was a baby and we were playing with the bubbles in the bathtub,” or “Jesus was swinging me on a swing,” or “Jesus was walking with me and holding my hand and we were picking flowers in a meadow.” Sometimes it is more simple – “Jesus held me,” or “Jesus looked at me and smiled,” or “Jesus took me out of that dark place.” Often these experiences lead to forgiving people who hurt them, or the release of fear from the memory because Jesus is with them, or the destruction of a lie that they were at fault for what happened to them. In our prayer ministry, we do not practice guided imagery. This is not a judgment against the practice of guided meditations that lead to encounter with Jesus. We prefer to invite Jesus into the memory in whatever way he chooses, but not suggest how that might happen.

We try not to suggest what Jesus might do. Often, but not always, Jesus enters the memory visually and drains the memory of its debilitating poison by his presence.

Does Jesus engage the imagination in this way in the Bible? I used to be skeptical of any use of images in prayer, because I was influenced by a faith tradition that frowned upon those kinds of experiences. However, we have descriptions in the Bible of similar experiences with God that use imagery, where the recipient watches a sequence of events play out in their mind. In the Bible, dreams given by God have this same movie-like quality. For instance we read in Matthew 2 that “the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.’” Joseph saw an image of the Lord in a dream, and the Lord spoke to Joseph and gave him meaningful direction. Joseph was asleep. Joseph was an observer and listener. Visions in the Bible also have that movie-like quality to them. In Acts 10, Peter has a vision that led him to be more open to the inclusion of Gentiles into the body of Christ. “About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on a roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down . . .” As this vision unfolds, we understand that the images that Peter sees are symbolic and not literal. The Lord is present in the vision to explain its meaning to Peter. Peter is awake and has a dream-like vision. We often have people who experience symbolic images in our times of prayer with them. Other times the images in visions recorded in the Bible are quite literal, like the vision that Paul had of a man of Macedonia pleading with him to come and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” This vision in Acts 16 leads to the opening of Christian witness in Europe. I would put God’s engagement of the imagination in inner

healing in the same general category as dreams, visions, and trance-like daydreams because they share similar characteristics – meaningful visual images, both symbolic and literal pictures, a movie-like quality where the prayer recipient is attentive and watching but not guiding the story, and purposeful action where Jesus is the protagonist.

In a larger context, the Bible actually invites the use of the imagination in all kinds of individual and corporate prayer through the prayer book of Israel and the Church, the Psalms. For instance in Psalm 27, David says that he longs “to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord in the temple.” We read and pray the Psalms and share that same longing. What is this experience of gazing for which David yearns? “Is it *literal* gazing on the Lord or *spiritual*? If it is spiritual, then it involves the imagination. Or consider the familiar verses that I treasure from Psalm 103, which includes a series of visual images. “For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love for those who fear him.” (Look at the stars and the vast spaces between them and you can imagine the immensity of God’s love for you filling the heavens.) “As far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us.” (Imagine all your sins being balled up and thrown westward over the horizon to disappear and never return.) “As a Father shows compassion to his children so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.” (Imagine a good father doing kind deeds for his son and daughter, favoring and smiling upon his children, and say that is how the Lord is with me!) “Almost every prayer in the Psalms invites us to use our imagination about how the Lord relates to us. They invite us to form meaningful pictures of God’s love and care and protection. God’s engagement with our imagination in prayer is very biblical.

It would be a strange thing if God did not engage our mind and imagination in prayer. Visualization is involved in almost every human endeavor. An artist has a vision for a painting. A golfer visualizes his next golf shot before he steps up to the ball. We rehearse in our minds beforehand how an interview might go. In almost every human endeavor we picture something and then we act. We do it so much that we rarely think about it. Many of us primarily think in pictures. It would be surprising if God did not engage in prayer, including healing prayer, that ubiquitous quality of visualization in our imagination that he created in us. It is part of the gentle and gracious way he renews our minds and hearts. ➤

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