

THE BLIND HEALER

## **By the same author**

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*The Passion to Heal*

*Christian Healing: Everyday Questions and  
Straightforward Answers*

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# THE BLIND HEALER

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MONARCH  
BOOKS

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*To my best friend Ginnie,  
my wife, my support and my sounding-board.*



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# Introduction

*To be crucified means, first, the man on the cross is facing only one direction; second, he is not going back; and third, he has no further plans of his own.*

A. W. TOZER (in *On Being Crucified in Christ*)

I spent the first forty-eight years of my life doing almost exactly the opposite! Far from looking only one way, I searched every avenue for promotion and advancement in life. Even with dimming eyesight, I reached the dizzy heights of being the youngest manager in a huge manufacturing concern. I prided myself on my own strength and courage, which I, somewhat foolishly, imagined to be the sole source of my success.

As for “not going back”, I was finding my memories a constant source of joy. Encroaching blindness left me with only the pictures and sounds of bygone, youthful days when I was able to do things that a young man can and should do. As my vision failed, the need grew to spend more and more moments reflecting on those wonderful times. All the things I had seen and the places I had been

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to were logged away for safe keeping in the album of my memory. All were lovingly revisited as often as possible.

From God, I only wanted one thing – my physical healing. As my life in manufacturing industry grew more and more difficult to cope with, it seemed that a good, solid piece of eyesight-healing intervention from God might allow me to go back to a “successful” lifestyle.

As for “having no plans of his own”, I had lots of them! With the growing awareness that my deteriorating sight would not sustain me in industrial management for the rest of my working life, I tried all sorts of things.

I had a go at pottery, writing and gardening, even toying with the idea of photography and painting. I was offered the possibility of becoming a magistrate, and I put myself forward for training for ordination in the Anglican Church, as well. All was to no avail. None of these plans came to fruition; not one seemed to satisfy.

The black day dawned when I had completely run out of plans. I had very little eyesight left, no career prospects, and most of my lovely memories were fading with the approach of middle age.

The firm I worked for was cutting back heavily on staff, and my own personal productivity was going speedily downhill as each month passed. My sight began to go more rapidly. I was in trouble and had nowhere to go. My vision of a perfect, ideal life was fading. I ran very hard into the brick wall of reality.

However, it's often when the ideal meets the real that

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exploration truly begins. In sheer desperation, I asked Jesus Christ to take over. Having spent most of my life as a churchgoer brought up in the faith, I now became a Christian in the New Testament definition of the word. I became a disciple of the Son of God – a “student” of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There was so much to learn, and so much to un-learn. There followed a battle of gigantic proportions as I fought to understand how it was that, as the church had always taught me, God was good and yet, despite the loving prayers and ministry of many friends, my healing never came.

However, God had his own ideas. At the foot of the cross of his Son, he exchanged all my wounds and sore places for his abundant peace. That place has since become a haven for me – somewhere for a wounded soldier to lie down.

And lying there, I found the kingdom of God at work. It seems that everything flows from our learning the patience to stand under the cross of Jesus, because when we are there we see what he sees – the infinite glory and love of the Father. That is where the healing fountains start...



## CHAPTER 1

# Miracles in the Morning

She was limping badly.

I had asked if anyone in the meeting with a stiff joint was prepared to come and see my wife, Ginnie, and me for prayer. I had been teaching a healing, restoring kingdom of grace to 300 avid listeners for the past hour. The time had come for me to take the risk.

“We talk about the grace of Calvary. Now let us show you.”

Ginnie and I climbed down from the platform. We wanted to avoid any sense of spiritual showmanship. I stood to the left of the stage, still wearing a microphone and in full view of the expectant crowd. There was a silent pause. Suddenly, I was aware of the lady who had quietly limped up and was standing in front of us.

“I have a painful leg and back,” she told us, loudly enough for the whole auditorium to hear her through the microphone mounted on my left ear.

She told us about an accident in her home some twenty years earlier that had left her foot dangling from

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the end of her leg by only a thread of skin. The surgeons had stitched it back into place and reinforced the ankle by driving a steel rod up inside the leg bone and down through the ankle into the heel. It had grown strong enough to hold her weight again but the ankle was locked rigid by the steel insert. At least she was walking again!

One hot summer, fifteen years later, she was having a tree cut down in her garden and a large part of it fell heavily across that same leg. It snapped the bone halfway between knee and ankle and bent the steel rod in the process.

The bone healed but now the foot was angled and the leg was significantly bowed. Her knee, hip and lower back were plagued with pain because of the appalling posture caused by the bent leg and the consequently twisted foot.

We had long ago learned that heaven responds to two main doors being opened in our souls, one labelled “expectancy” and one labelled “thanksgiving”. Jesus often referred to “faith” as a major ingredient to receiving healing, a word we were reinterpreting as “expectancy” to ensure a proper understanding of the sense of trust he was calling for. Psalm 50 had taught us that it is thankfulness that honours God and prepares the way for him to show us his salvation, to show us what had been won on the cross. So we always encouraged thankfulness for the work of Calvary. It is there on the cross, after all, that Jesus took all our pain and carried all our sickness. By his wounds we are healed.

The audience, who were hearing every word of



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explanation and ministry, held their collective breath in total silence as we prayed. As they watched her walking back to her seat, the entire auditorium erupted in worshipful cheering and clapping.

I had not been aware that while we were standing with her, giving glory to the Father for the work of the Son, her leg, steel rod and bone had wobbled and shaken and straightened up. She had felt nothing of this divine intervention, but when she began to walk back through the hall she found she could swivel her ankle as well. The following day the lady with the rod in her leg sought us out to thank us. We had done precious little but she wanted us to know how good this pain-free life had suddenly become for her.

There was, we discovered a while later, a full range of movement restored to her foot, although, as we could see from her X-rays, the now straightened rod was still in place! Here again was one of the most fascinating aspects of divine healing. Unusual things often happen that defy all scientific explanation. And yet everyone had seen it.

It put me in mind of someone else who had come for ministry, in a wheelchair and with a badly leaking heart-valve. She has since returned to full-time employment, plays tennis regularly and often goes cycling and jogging. She also takes part in fun-runs and half-marathons. She told me later that her surgeon was bewildered by all this activity, as all his tests were proving that the valve was still leaking!

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An hour before this deeply encouraging ministry time, the lights had burned on to the raised platform, the music had died away and the conversations around the hall had hushed. Ginnie and I had stood holding hands, a little way back from the edge of the platform, staring into the glare of the stage lighting. A row of brilliant suns arranged along a gantry the length of the stage and high above the heads of the front row cast a glaring yellow light, hot and dazzling, over us, blotting into darkness most of those who sat expectantly before us in the auditorium.

We stood there holding hands and smiling, grinning at the unseen audience in front of us and grinning at each other. We were thrilled just to be there! It had taken ten months for us to step up on to this particular platform, ten months since the original invitation came, ten months since I wrote the fastest acceptance I had ever written. This was a speaking job I really wanted, but then I want all of them.

The vicar who had been praying for us seconds before jumped down from the stage and took a seat in the front row. We were on our own. I could feel all 300 audience members watching us; I could feel their anticipation matching our own. We had arrived where we had wanted to stand for such a long time and felt very much at ease. We were about to do what we feel most comfortable doing.

We were about to teach them the great news of Christ's intent, since Calvary, for his church to be proclaimers of his saving, healing grace to this pained and broken world.

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They were eager to hear. We knew that the dynamics of the kingdom of God were present to heal – they always are – and we were ready to give glory to our God for it.

“Good morning!” I looked around, grinning at them.

“Good morning,” came the reply – quiet, hesitant, half-hearted and perhaps a little insecure. These dear people seemed unsure of what they had let themselves in for. A blind man with a healing ministry? These healing conferences are, as they say, “two-a-penny” in that neck of the woods. But they had come, nevertheless.

But their quiet hesitation might have been something else; in this part of the world public speakers on healing ministry often come direct from jazzy TV shows, with mixed, and sometimes fearful, reputations. Audiences like this one often have an unspoken fear that they may be pushed unceremoniously over on to their backs if they so much as approach the platform for help and come within arm’s length of the speaker!

Either that, or they suspect they may be called upon to reach for their wallets. So they hold their breath. They wait. They let the speaker prove what sort of a showman speaker he is before they begin to ease themselves into the proceedings. So right away it was time to put my cards on the table and break down the barriers.

“Now,” I told them, “it seems that we might have a problem here. You see, I need you to react to me as I speak to you. OK?”

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I could have cut the silence with a knife. What were they expecting? But I was smiling inside; this method of introducing myself has its practical advantages, for sure, but it's also a wonderfully effective ice-breaker.

“So,” I went on, “I need you to shout out how you feel about what I have to say to you. Any time you feel like it! Shouts like ‘Alleluia!’ would be just fine. ‘Amen!’ is good and ‘Preach it to them, brother!’ is even better. Even the odd shout of ‘Heresy!’ will help things along here.”

Some of them sounded as if they were chuckling at that, a sure sign that they might be beginning to relax, so I thought it best to tell them why I needed them to respond to me in this way.

“I need you to respond” – I was trying now to speak in smiling mock authority – “so that I know you are still here! You see, I can't see. If you just sit there in complete silence for the next hour or so, how am I to know that you haven't just all crept silently away and I'm not standing here addressing an empty auditorium?”

This last statement was greeted with gales of laughter. Everyone in the room was relaxing now as they realized there would be no pretence on this platform, no acting, no pretending to be anything I am not. The barriers had all come tumbling down.

I had come to talk to them about the dynamics of the living and growing kingdom of God – and that, I constantly remind myself, is no place to play around with audiences. Kingdom business is serious business.

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I had already lost far too many nights of sleep, trying to hunt down an understanding of why it might be that our beloved Christian church has allowed such a decline in her healing ministry.

“It used to work marvellously,” I told them, “but now it doesn’t work nearly so well. What a shame! Everywhere I walk in life – home, the office, the street, holidays, work times – everywhere I walk is among the sick, the ill, the diseased and the dying. It’ll be the same for you if you look around you!

“Worryingly, we seem sometimes to know almost nothing of kingdom dynamics after two thousand years. If we did, then we would all be workers of miracles like our spiritual forefathers. Allowing our healing ministry to go on drifting further and further away from the purity and dynamic, effective nature of its original form is killing off our involvement in producing the fruit of the kingdom.”

Ever since, our response has been to try to pour more and more additional skills from the worlds of medicine, psychology and social work – and even figments of our own imaginations! – into the healing ministry.

“For some reason we, as a church, seem determined that the cross needs to be added to, but in fact,” I emphasized excitedly, “it doesn’t need us to add anything at all to it. If only we could take the risk and rely on the cross’s work, it works wonderfully as it is!

“Think about it. Would it not be marvellous if the local non-believers could say to each other, ‘Let’s go up to

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that church where people get healed!?”

It was crossing my mind to suggest, on that blindingly bright platform, that unbelievers probably care very little about what we believe in. Like a lot of the people listening to me, I have been “nice” at church outreach events but it doesn’t help that much. Nor does being a good example of wholesome standards in life stand out much. There are plenty of folk out there already, living decent lives, who are not Christians.

My experience of unbelievers tells me that practical power, not more religious theories, is the thing that they are looking for today. They are not, in the main, listening to our attempts at preaching. They have plenty of problems and not enough solutions. They are sick. They are hooked on alcohol and drugs. Their relationships are tearing them apart. It’s a mess out there.

I gently challenged the audience to consider how many people they knew over the age of forty who were not on any sort of medication. My request, and the obvious, in-built suggestion that went alongside it, was greeted with knowing smiles and shrugging shoulders. Well, most people, when I ask that question, smile knowingly and shrug their shoulders. Most seem to write off this depressing thought while accepting it as the price of our living longer, but I was suggesting to them that never before has the field been so ready for harvest, so ripe for the display of God’s kingdom grace.

The modern world has turned the lives of so many

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unbelievers upside down, to such an extent that many have no idea where to go, or what to do, to get their lives put back together again.

“I don’t think that they really care very much at all if we Christians pray in tongues or dance up and down in the aisles or stand in attention with stiff military precision and sing out of a hymnal. But if only you and me, the people of God, had a ministry that could get their bodies healed and their lives straightened out, I feel pretty sure they would come to wherever we are. Not only that, but they would start to listen to what we have to say.”

There were some encouraging murmurings of “Amen” from around the room.

“I have been convinced for a while in the depths of my soul,” I explained to my audience, who were by now somewhat taken aback by this forthright introduction, “that God wants his church to have the same reputation today that Jesus had during his earthly ministry. Come to think of it, perhaps he has always wanted that. I reckon he wants people to say the same sort of things about us that they must have said to each other about those first-generation disciples. They would have noticed that the power of God was at work in believers!”

I was pressing the point, now, into the quiet and dark abyss in front of me.

“All this means to the general public out there is that the gospel without power does not sound particularly like good news to them. You and I, the already-converted ones,

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know full well that it is, because it brings salvation, but it doesn't look like that to outsiders.

“Given the seemingly random effects of the fall, they have great needs in their minds and their bodies. When they get hurt it all seems so unfair to them. If the only thing we Christians have to give folk is a nice new set of rules to live by and a new set of standards to live up to, teaching them a mode of life without really changing their lives, what good have we done for them?” I demanded.

I was thinking that if we are not careful, we merely bind them up with another set of “shoulds” and “should nots”, another set of rules.

“And there is always a real danger,” I added, feeling now that I had really caught their attention, “that we Christians might look like a little huddle of pious people, shutting our doors against the world, connoisseurs of liturgy, lost in prayer and praise, congratulating each other on the excellence of our Christian experience.

“But if only we were willing to take a risk and deal with the sick in the way that Jesus taught and practised, then we would be doing again an important part of what God sent us to do. As people watch what we do, they would listen to what we have to say. Then it is possible they might begin to care about what we believe in.”

But, I badly needed them to understand, all this would mean that we must be a living example of God's power at work. Our ministry has to do what it says on the tin.



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“People today are not so excited by religious theories as we might have been a thousand years ago, or even a hundred years ago! Today’s worldly general public are not overawed and drawn in by high ritual or by any practices at all that don’t come up with significant and measurable results. We need to see a ministry with tangible consequences, with the earthly ministry of Jesus and the apostles as our model.”

Someone gave a lively shout of “Alleluia!” and someone else shouted, “Amen!” – and we were on the way. Things were livening up. The conference had begun.

There’s an old apple tree behind our house, I told them, which gives a small crop every year, right at the end of long, waving branches and way out of reach. It hasn’t been pruned even once in all the years we have lived there!

The church’s ministry to the sick had grown like that apple tree – unpruned, unchecked, for centuries. New methods have added to the cross in its simplicity, all creating longer and longer branches and less and less fruit. Things look very different, I was explaining, in a commercial apple orchard. Here the trees are pruned, kept short, kept accessible, loaded down with fruit begging to be picked. The pruning back to the basics that Jesus taught, the simple kingdom truths he taught the disciples, would give the whole church a really effective ministry again – a divinely designed one!

When I eventually stumbled upon this original

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ministry of Jesus, I had decided I would call it “kingdom healing” to distinguish it from other methods. It would probably be unrecognizably different, centred as it would be on what Christ came to do – to proclaim the kingdom and secure an open door for its work when he died on the cross.

For the previous eight years or so, I had been seeking to understand Christ-taught kingdom healing and how to apply it in real and effective and reliable kingdom restoration. I was just beginning to understand what to say to a crowd like this about kingdom dynamics.

Here in front of me were 300 questioning souls, every single one of them with a different understanding of and hugely complicated questions about healing and restoration. Jesus had been able to simply teach these principles to fishermen and tax collectors. What was once simple has become frighteningly varied and complicated as we have sought to “improve” it.

The ordinary people at that conference just wanted to put their hope in and persevere with something simple that works.

I stood in front of them, thrilled to be with them, thrilled at the knowledge of what I was going to say to them, thrilled at the prospect of seeing the kingdom at work yet again, and thrilled at the thought of their being able to “do it” out there in the world for themselves.

I launched myself onwards into my talk. I don’t have any notes to work from when I am speaking, since

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I can't see them, but I hold five or six subject headings in my head and simply work from one heading to the next, relying on previous experiences and past "trial and error" to carry me through an hour's talking. Like a car driver who can concentrate on navigation and steering, observation, braking and accelerating, but still talk to their passenger or listen to the radio, I keep talking even as my mind prompts me about my next point.

I talked to them about kingdom dynamics for today, framed by the purpose of God's heart to restore all the damage of the fall and his longing to restore the world to the blueprint conditions of Eden. One day it will all be restored in the new city of Jerusalem coming from heaven.

And at the same time, like a car driver conversing with his passengers, I was asking myself the same old questions in my mind as I stood in front of these folk who had come to hear my version of the message of the cross.

But why were we, the church, letting them down so badly? When Jesus had told us not to fear, because it is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom, why then did we insist on putting blocks in people's way? Why were we sowing tares with the wheat? Why were we telling them that God doesn't want to heal everybody, and that their sins were stopping God from healing them, when Jesus had died for the sins of the whole world?

So, by the end of this first conference session, I had enjoyed myself enormously and was desperately hoping,

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without being able to see their faces and their body language, that the audience were climbing on board.

Ginnie had been jumping up from time to time to join me, reading out the scriptures that showed the apostles, the deacons and everyday, ordinary Christians like us, going about their daily business and healing the sick, witnessing to crowds and seeing thousands coming into the church when they saw the miraculous kingdom life.

She read about Jesus always granting every request for healing and then telling us that he only did the Father's will. She read about power pouring out of Jesus, that there is great power for those of us who believe, and that God doesn't change. She left me to conclude that power is still pouring out of him today for all who come to him with a mustard seed of expectant trust.

By the time the session was over, I knew it was time to make straight a path for Jesus to show them his glory. That's what I did and that's what he did.

The lady with the bent rod in her painful leg was swiftly followed by two other late-middle-aged ladies, friends who were both progressively losing their sight. We prayed for them, and they were both restored by Almighty God through his grace within minutes, according to their on-the-spot testimony. The audience gasped!

By now the church's prayer ministry team were working hard and were all quite shocked and shaken to see so many gifts of grace being poured so freely into the wounded, of whom there are always many. We were, of

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course, not surprised at all, as we had come to understand, just as the early church did, that as we proclaim the good news of the character of Jesus and the outworking of the cross, then the Holy Spirit will come and confirm what we say with signs and wonders.

It's the way the divine system was originally designed to work, after all.

Soon Ginnie and I were called to help pray with a gentleman in a wheelchair suffering from an aggressive tumour in his brain. His wife had gently wheeled him up and told us he was undergoing, by the sound of it, the maximum dose of every known treatment. That was only in the hope of preventing the evil thing from growing ever larger. His doctors were desperately working to prevent any further growth.

Again, there were no requests to heaven. Kingdom healing, the exciting and effective ministry that Jesus himself exercised and taught, was built another way altogether. The early church had a working relationship with God that led them to realize their role was that of proclamation of the kingdom. Then, when they had done this fully, God would do the healing as confirmation of what they were proclaiming. Jesus never prayed any "please" prayers for the sick and we don't either. Just worship, thanksgiving and praise together with honest, heartfelt, trusting proclamation of the message of the cross.

We heard nothing about the gentleman again for three days, until a phone call came in after his next

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treatment appointment at the hospital. He was able to report that the tumour had reduced in size by 75 per cent! Two weeks later I heard from his wife that hospital tests couldn't find the tumour any more.

Having prayed with him, Ginnie and I sat down on the edge of the platform to catch our breath and then climbed back on to the stage to close the meeting.

Ginnie lifted up my right hand with a smooth and well-practised movement, placed it lightly on the edge of the lectern, and left the platform. Touching the podium rim was not a superstition – like a footballer only able to play when wearing a pair of lucky boots. It has become a natural, subconscious and discreet movement, developed with unrehearsed practice at many speaking engagements.

It may look very romantic, this couple holding hands on stage, but the reasons are very practical. She places my hand on the lectern edge, which then acts as the needle on a blind man's directional compass. That side edge points me directly down the middle of the auditorium, and that is vital.

We had found ourselves before in churches with no movable lectern and no platform edge and no way to hold the centre line. Without the ability to focus on the crowd, my naturally animated style of teaching can soon cause me to turn slightly sideways, bit by bit, without noticing the movement, and finishing up devoting all my attentions to someone sitting on the far right of the first pew!

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Not being able to see, I can so easily lose track of the centre line, as it were, and turn too far one way or the other. It is then that I can hear Ginnie's whispers pushing through my enthusiasm for the work at hand: "Left a bit!"

One church recently had even supplied us with a brass music-stand for this purpose, but it was a light and collapsible model with a revolving top, and the inevitable results were nothing short of hilarious.

But this time we had made sure. The organizers had installed a solid lectern right in the middle, pointing right down the centre aisle, and we were ready to go again.

Then it came. The one question I always dread because, try as I might, there seems to be no answer that will satisfy.

Even after all the evidence from Scripture and the breathtaking works that had unfolded abundantly, through grace, right in front of them all, someone from the depths of the darkened audience still asked the old question, threw the old spear. Here it was again.

"If what you say is true, then why hasn't God healed you?"

I took a deep breath, climbed back on to the stage, and reached into my pocket to switch the microphone back on.