

John Osteen



how to
MINISTER
HEALING
to the sick

How to Minister to the Sick

John Osteen

*"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you
fishers of men."*

... Matthew 4:19

All scripture quotations from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise stated.

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How to Minister to the Sick

This book is being written for people who already know the Lord. It is not necessarily a ministry to those of you who are sick. But to the Christians who desire to minister healing to sick people.

There are many sick people in the world. They need somebody to minister to them.

Let me direct your attention to a very familiar Scripture passage. The Bible says, "This book of the law (The Word of God) shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein . . ." (Joshua 1:8). No matter how well you know a Scripture it is good to look it up in your Bible, read it, and to meditate on it.

Mark 16:17-18, says, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My Name they shall cast out devils; They shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay

hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

I was reading the above Scripture one day, and I read it like this: "And these signs shall follow them that *believe in My Name...*" There is no punctuation in the Greek or Hebrew. So, you can put the punctuation where you wish to place it. I believe that this is a more correct way to read it.

Please notice: It says, "These signs shall follow them that believe in My Name..." (author's translation). And some of the signs that follow those who believe are:

1. They shall cast out demons.
2. They shall speak with new tongues.
3. They shall take up serpents.
4. If they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them.
5. They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.

IF THEY BELIEVE ...

Signs just naturally follow those who believe in Jesus' Name. Do you believe in His Name? Every saved person must first believe on that Name.

Notice, it does not say, "If you try to have faith." There is no place in the Bible that urges Christians to try to have faith. Paul tells us that every man is given the measure of faith (Romans 12:3). If you are a Christian, you are a believer.

EVERY BELIEVER SHOULD HAVE A MINISTRY TO A NEEDY WORLD

Every man, woman, and child who is a Christian should have a ministry to the sick, the demon possessed, and the oppressed. It is not only up to the preacher to do this. Every Christian has a responsibility to help and uplift needy humanity. It is important for them to know how to go about doing the job that God would have them do.

When I first received the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, I would pray for anything that did not move. I prayed for anything that was breathing!

I was very conscious of the fact that God had finally gotten me off of the pew, and had put me out there into the battlefield.

It is your divine responsibility, and not your option to choose or not to choose to bring healing to the sick.

Some people think of this responsibility in the

same way that they buy a car. They will ask themselves, "Do I want overdrive or not? Do I want power brakes or not?" Those things are optional.

This is not so with God. Ministering to the sick is not optional. It is your responsibility to bring healing to the sick.

Jesus told the disciples in John 14:12; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto my Father." Think of all the works that Jesus did by the power of the Father inside of Him. He healed the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the crippled, the lepers, and raised the dead. Think of all the multitudes that were healed.... THEN, Jesus is saying to all believers, "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall you do also because I am going to My Father."

That should settle it in your heart and mind that Jesus expects you to do these works. We are going to have to give an account to God concerning what we have done for the sick, the oppressed, and the demon possessed, and the needy of our generation.

MINISTERING TO THE SICK IS THE GREATEST SOUL-WINNING TOOL

Actually, ministering to the sick and needy is the greatest soul-winning tool in the world. The Lord Jesus teaches us that we can become fishers of men. We read in Matthew 4:17-19: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

You will find in the Bible Jesus never did call lazy people who were not doing anything. He did not say, "Well, I see you don't have anything to do today, so I'll just call you in My service." Matthew was sitting at the seat of customs doing what he was supposed to do. He was busy. Peter and Andrew were casting their nets out there into the sea. And Jesus was saying in verse 19: "Follow Me and I will teach you how to catch men."

I remember, as a Baptist, how we used to try our best to win souls. We had a visitation program every Thursday. And everybody in town left home

on Thursdays because they knew that the Baptists were coming. Baptists do have an interest in souls. We visited so regularly that it became a mechanical thing, a duty. But thank God, I would rather see them do it that way than not do it at all. One soul is worth it all.

THERE IS A BETTER WAY

There is a way to be fishers of men. Jesus said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men," and they physically followed Him.

We need to study the lives of the disciples as they followed Jesus. We need to see what they did when Jesus told them to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men. "And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him" (v. 20). And verse 22 says, "And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him."

The disciples followed Jesus, and then Jesus did something. "And Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that

were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them" (vv. 23-24).

JESUS HAD THE DISCIPLES GET OUT INTO THE ARENA OF HUMAN SUFFERING.

How did Jesus teach them to be fishers of men?

He got them into the arena of human suffering; where men and women were losing their minds; where they were filled with fear; and where they were filled with sickness and disease.

He taught them to drive the demon out, drive the devil away, and bring healing to the people. Then it was easy to win the people to the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is the man or woman who will get out among the people, and bring healing, and deliverance to them, who will get the attention of the world. People want to belong to a Jesus that can help them.

YOU MUST KNOW HOW TO MINISTER TO THE SICK

Some people retreat at the opportunity to pray for the sick. They shrink from it. Others may lay hands on a thousand people, and cast out, and scream and cry "demons," and nothing seems to happen. Nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine will not get anything. Then they will come back and say, "Well, it doesn't work for me."

They have no idea why they are failing. If I were failing, I would want to find out why, and what to do about it.

HAVE YOU BEEN FAILING?

If you have been failing, let's examine the Word of God to see what you are doing wrong. If Jesus wants you to minister to the sick, then He has provided a way for you to do just that. The first thing that you need to do is to get rid of any erroneous ideas about how and when Jesus healed the people.

Many people have the idea that Jesus just went around and healed every person that touched Him or got near Him. They think that Jesus just decided to touch somebody with His hand, or just went by and touched them with His finger and they were automatically healed. They will say, "You know,

there was just healing virtue in Jesus. And everybody was automatically healed everywhere He went"

That is not true.

Jesus did not heal everybody.

In some meetings everybody was healed. And in some of His crusades, in a particular service everybody got healed. But thousands of people who were there with Jesus did not get healed.

There was the man who was laid daily at the gate called "Beautiful." Jesus went by there many times. That man was not healed until Peter and John ministered to him (Acts 3).

You may ask, "Why?"

I don't know why. But I do know that multitudes of lepers were outside of the city of Jerusalem. They stayed out there, and died—without getting healed. Yet Jesus healed ten lepers at one time, and one at another time. Of all of the rest of them, there is no record of them receiving their healing.

You may say, "But surely if anybody touched Jesus, they were healed."

No! A whole multitude was touching Him at

one time. A little woman made up her mind to have faith in Him. She came up and touched Jesus and drew power out of Him, and she was healed. (See Mark 5.)

The people were pushing against Jesus just like people do today at a football game or to get close to a celebrity. Yet Jesus asked, "Who touched me?"

The disciples said, "Why Master, the multitude is thronging you. And you say, 'Who touched me?' That is foolish. Everybody is touching you." (See Luke 8:43-48.)

JESUS WORKED BY LAW AND ORDER

Everybody who touched Jesus did not get healed. Jesus worked by a process that we can clearly see in the Bible. He worked by law and order. He did not just go around healing. I want you to read verse 23 of the fourth chapter of Matthew again: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."

AS JESUS WENT ABOUT ALL OF

GALILEE HE DID THREE THINGS:

1. He taught in their synagogues.
2. He preached the Gospel of the kingdom.
3. He healed all manner of sickness.

Most Christians want to go out and heal all manner of sickness, and then maybe teach them a few scriptures. Possibly they want to get them to go hear somebody else preach.

That is not how Jesus had a ministry of healing.

He wanted to get the people healed, so He went about teaching them. He went about preaching the Gospel of the kingdom to them. Then He went about healing all manner of diseases.

Teaching, preaching, and healing—in that order.

IF

Jesus was always successful in getting people healed **IF** they would listen to His teaching and preaching. But, if they didn't listen to His teaching and preaching, He could not get them healed—unless there was a divine manifestation of God's

mighty power. (See the Gifts of the Holy Spirit I Corinthians 12.)

We read in the sixth chapter of Mark "And He went out from thence, and came into His own country; and His disciples followed Him. And when the sabbath day was come, He began to teach in the synagogue. . . ." (vv. 1, 2a).

You may say, "Well, they have to come to the church to be taught."

No. People can be taught anywhere. You are always teaching somebody. You teach by example, by your voice, and by your testimony. Jesus makes it clear that we can function in the same area that He functioned IF we follow His example of teaching and preaching first "... And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands?" (Mark 6:2b).

How would they say that such mighty works were wrought by His hands?

Because Jesus told them about the mighty works. He was always telling them of the mighty works that were wrought by His hands. Jesus

testified of what had happened at Capernaum and other places.

They said, "Where did this man acquire all of that wisdom? And what mighty works are wrought by His hands?" (author's paraphrase). But they did not receive His teaching.

You say, "Well, Jesus is the Son of God. He can do what He wants to do. He could have just forced healing on them. All He has to do is hold out His finger, and "electric fire" will run out, and over to them. He could have healed them anyway."

Actually, they were offended at His teaching. Verse 3 says, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and of Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at Him." Since they were offended at Jesus, they did not receive His teaching.

"But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid his hands on a few sick folk, and healed them. And He marvelled because of their unbelief. And He went round about the villages, teaching" (vv. 4-6).

What did Jesus do in order to take care of their unbelief?

He went about the villages teaching.

You can see that teaching and preaching preceded His healing.

When people did not receive His teaching, and preaching, they did not receive His healing.

GOD DOES NOT HAVE STARS OR SUPER-STARS

You can change from a pew-sitting, do-nothing-in-the-church person to somebody that can bring blessings to humanity.

God does not have special stars or superstars. He has a band of believers known as the family of God. Every one of them can be used by the Holy Ghost.

Businessmen can raise the dead.

Housewives can drive out cancers from the people.

My little boy had warts all over him. But my wife drove those warts from him. She looked at those warts and said to them, "Warts, I command you in the Name of Jesus Christ to leave my son."

Some people would have thought that she was crazy if they had heard her talking to warts. And you may even ask, "Do you think those warts heard her?"

Yes. They heard her. I believe that the fig tree heard Jesus when He said in Matthew 21:19, "... Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever...."

People plant flowers and sing and talk to them, and they just grow. And other people get around flowers and just gripe and complain, and they will not grow. You can play terrible music around some flowers, and they will die.

WE ARE TO TAKE THE POSITION OF AUTHORITY.

The Lord shows us many times in the book of Acts that we are to actually minister and do something for those who are sick. Sometimes we must do more than just pray for them.

Peter and John did not pray for the lame man. They said, "Such as we have we give you. Arise in Jesus' Name and walk."

I am not saying that it is wrong to pray for the sick. Actually, we should lay hands on them and say, "Sickness, you get out of this body in Jesus'

Name."

God has already done all that He is going to do about demon power. He has done all that He is going to do about sickness. Jesus took care of that when He went to the cross, died, and arose. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24).

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

It is up to us to get off the pew, and get out into the highways and byways and begin to minister to sick people with authority. We should act like God told us the truth. The Word says, "Jesus went about teaching, preaching, and healing." He wants us to bring healing to our

community, to the people all around us.

Sick people may not be interested in a church that preaches and teaches the Word. But they are interested in getting well. If they are in pain, they do not care about going to church. They want to get rid of the pain. If they have cancer, they want to get rid of the cancer. The Lord wants us to rise up, and go out as men and women bold in God, to bring healing to our generation.

We are not going to bring healing to them by just running around, and laying hands on everybody, saying, "Bless the Lord! Be healed! Bless the Lord! Be healed!" That is not ministering like Jesus. And the people will not know what we are doing.

If we are going to minister to the people, let's do it like Jesus did: Teach, preach the Gospel, then heal.

LET'S GET A LITTLE TRUTH INTO PEOPLE FIRST.

For example: If you were in my realm of influence, and you had some kind of need in your physical body, then my first responsibility is to bring you some teaching and preaching. The Bible says, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it

giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psalm 119:130). "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). "He sent His Word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions" (Psalm 107:20).

So—when you think of ministering to sick people, first of all, think: "My first responsibility is to teach them something or to preach to them something."

"IT IS IN THE BIBLE"

When I was just starting out as a Baptist, full of the Holy Ghost, I did not tell the people that I spoke in tongues. I just told them I was going to pray for the sick. I knew that if I had told them that I spoke in tongues most of them would have dropped dead. (I had not figured out how to raise them from the dead.) I carried a little bottle of oil, and I would just pray for anything. I was so glad that I could anoint people with oil.

Right down the road lived a lady who was going out of town because of a death in her family. I was still pastor of the church, and I went down there that rainy Saturday night to pray with her before she left the next day.

We talked a little while, and she started to get up. "Oh, oh, oh!" she said as she grabbed herself.

I asked, "Are you sick?"

"Oh, Brother Osteen," she said, "I've got arthritis all over my body. This rainy weather seems to aggravate it more. I have had it for years. And I am in pain now. Just look at my hand." Between her thumb and forefinger was an area as hard as a rock. She said, "That old hand has been gnarled like that—just like cement, for years."

She sat down and I anointed her with oil, and prayed for her. In those days I didn't know what to do after I anointed somebody with oil and prayed for them. So, I just put the bottle of oil back in my pocket and started to leave. Then she said, "Let's have some cake and coffee before you go."

We drank the coffee and ate the cake, and talked a little while. Then she started to get up, and she grabbed her knee again. I said, "Oh, you still hurt, don't you?"

(Now Baptists really love their pastors, and they would never offend them purposely.) "Well, I guess I do," she said, "But that's not your fault, Brother Osteen. You did everything that you were supposed to do."

I had not done everything that I was supposed to do. I had not taught that woman anything. Nevertheless she tried to make me feel better about it. She was kind to me, like she would be a son. As I started to leave she said, "Now Brother Osteen, don't you be discouraged in this praying for the sick...." Then she "let the cat out of the bag." She said, "You know, the Lord expects us to bear part of our pains and sicknesses."

"That's it! That's it!" I exclaimed, "Do you know what I found in the Bible?" I was so amazed when I found Matthew 8:16-17 in the Bible. I said, "Look here, did you know that Jesus not only bore your sins, but He bore your sicknesses, too?"

"No, I didn't know that," she said.

"Well, I didn't either. But I found it in the Bible."

She said, "If it is in the Bible, show it to me."

I turned to Matthew 8:16-17, and began to read, "When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils: and He cast out the spirits with His Word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

She took my Bible and said, "Let me see that" She looked at that a little while. Then she let out a whoop and a holler that really scared me. I had never heard a Baptist shout! I didn't know what had come over her. I backed off as I said, "What's the matter with you?"

She said, "When I read that scripture, all of the pain instantly went away." Then suddenly, she shouted again with great joy.

"What's the matter now?" I asked.

She exclaimed, "Look at my hand. It's perfectly normal." In one moment's time her hand had indeed become perfectly normal.

The point of what I am saying is this: Just a tiny bit of teaching produces healing.

No teaching, no healing.

No truth, no light.

No Word to bring faith, no faith.

When that woman saw just a little truth she received her healing.

Do you want to be like Jesus and bring healing to the people? If so, you must first begin by, teaching and preaching. Then healing will come.

I wish to point out to you that you cannot do everything the same every time. Every case is different. But the Holy Ghost taught me how to minister to that particular woman.

What is the point of this little book—*How to Minister to the Sick*?

First of all, you need to do what Jesus said.

The Word says that Jesus Christ entered, and healed the sick. "Whatsoever city He entered, He healed the sick."

It does not matter if you are a lay-person, man, woman, or a child. It doesn't matter what position you hold, how ignorant or smart you are. Jesus expects you to minister to sick people, demon possessed and oppressed people.

**YOU HAVE THE PRESCRIPTION THAT
PEOPLE NEED—GOD'S WORD. DON'T BE
IN A HURRY**

If you are going to do like Jesus, you have to teach them the Word, preach the Gospel of the kingdom, and then bring healing.

Get the Word into them first.

Don't get in a hurry.

Who says that if they aren't healed on the first visit it is a failure?

Let's suppose I am trying to get a man to receive his healing. I would do like a doctor. I would hand him my book, *You Can Change Your Destiny*, and I would say, "You read this three times a day for the next week."

The man may say, "Three times a day?"

I would say, "Yes. You take pills three times a day. You can read this little book in forty minutes. My prescription to you is to read this little book three times a day."

I may ask him to read the eighth chapter of Matthew, the fifth chapter of Mark, and Hebrews 13:8. Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." I would tell him that that Scripture verse tells us that Jesus is the same today as He was in the eighth chapter of Matthew, and in the fifth chapter of Mark.

After I have given him something to do, I will say, "Now, I will come back and see you...."

If he says, "Well, I am not going to read all of that I just don't have time," then you will see why he is not healed.

If, when you come back, he has his eyes glued to the TV set, and you ask, "Did you read the Scripture passages every day that I asked you to read?"

He may say, "No. I did once ... and I remembered yesterday to read a little..." You can tell that he is not nearly as interested in getting healed as you thought.

If he isn't interested, leave him alone.

If you run in, without doing any teaching or preaching, and say, "Be healed in Jesus' Name . . . Be healed in Jesus' Name . . ." you will fail.

Again—You must teach.

You must preach. Then healing will come.

Dear Reader:

If God is moving upon your heart to help needy people, you will want to dedicate yourself wholly to God.

If you have a compassion to minister to the sick, the demon possessed, and oppressed, you will be willing to do some teaching, and some preaching to bring healing to them.

Wherever you are—in your room, in your office, in your car, or on a plane, have a dedication of your hands, your words, and your ability to teach and preach.

If you are willing to go into your community to minister healing to the sick, then say this:

Dear Lord, I lift up my voice to tell you that I am going to minister to the sick; by teaching, preaching, and then healing. I will not get in a hurry. I will take time to minister Your Word to a lost and dying world. Thank you Father, that you will enable me to be an effective minister of Your mercy and compassion to suffering humanity. Amen.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Osteen has served as pastor, evangelist, author, and teacher for over forty years. Ordained as a Southern Baptist, he received the Baptism in the Holy Ghost in 1958, an experience which changed the vision of his calling to a worldwide outreach for Jesus Christ. He has traveled extensively throughout the world, bringing the message of God's love, healing, and power to people of all nations. For him, The Great Commission has become not only a reality, but a way of life.

Today John Osteen pastors Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas. Lakewood Church is known as "*An Oasis of Love in a Troubled World*" by many, and people from all over the globe lovingly call it "*home*".

John Osteen has a weekly television program that reaches millions of people across the nation. He also founded World Satellite Network as a means to unite believers everywhere, to provide balanced teaching of the Word of God, and to share the outstanding five-fold ministries of our day.

John Osteen holds a Bachelor's Degree from John Brown University, a Master's Degree from Northern Baptist Seminary, a Doctor of Letters from Indiana Christian University, and a Doctor of Divinity from Oral Roberts University. He is the author of many books, and his cassette tapes are widely distributed throughout the body of Christ. His mailing address is John Osteen Ministries, Box 23117, Houston, Texas, 77228.