

WHY SO FEW INSTANT HEALINGS?

By Alan P. Medinger

Why doesn't God heal all of us of our homosexuality instantly? He could. We are only asking to be set free from something He hates—to be set free from a powerful drive to behave in a way that He has declared sinful.

My answer—one that I have also heard from others many times—is that homosexuality is only a symptom, and God doesn't want to simply deal with the symptom. He wants to get at the deeper problems. The discomfort of the homosexual struggle is what is causing us to open ourselves up for Him to do a far deeper work than just deal with our homosexuality.

Although there is some truth here, I have come to believe that this is not an entirely satisfactory answer. Suppose the roots of a man's homosexuality were hatred of the man who had molested him as a child, a determination to always meet his own needs at any cost, or an abiding contempt for his father? Couldn't God cause him to forgive the molester, to break his vow of self-sufficiency, or to repent of his attitude towards his father—all instantly, and all from the heart? I think He could. He is God, and He can perform miracles in whatever way He chooses.

Seeing the weakness of my old answer, but believing an answer is important because the questions reflect genuine anguish in many strugglers, I have prayerfully sought other answers.

I believe God has shown me three, and I am excited about them. One speaks to the nature of God and reality, the second to our relationship with the Lord, and the third to how He would have us relate to one another. Let me share them with you.

The first answer is quite simple. Whether we are to be healed instantly today or we are to be healed gradually over the next 20 years hardly matters in the context of eternity. From an eternal perspective, our span of life on this earth fades into insignificance. It was this perspective that enabled Paul to say that he “counted everything as loss because of the surpassing knowledge of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord” (Phil. 3:8). I believe God wants us to have an eternal perspective, and our struggles in this world are what lead us to take the more realistic view—an eternal view—of life.

The second answer has to do with the way to relate to God. He has chosen to be in relationship with us, and because we live in time, His relationship with us must take place in time. The nature of miraculous healings is such that they occur outside of time. For God to operate with us outside of time is to have Him change the nature of His relationship with us. Acting upon us by means of a miraculous healing certainly does something for our relationship; it is but one way in which we can experience Him. In my Christian walk, it is my struggles and problems that usually bring me to my knees in a deeper and more open way. I know God in one way because I am one of those who had a miraculous healing of the sexual part of my homosexuality 17 years ago.

However, I know Him in many more ways, and I believe more intimately, because of the struggles and problems that have transpired since then. The many years of struggle with anger, judgmentalism and my tendency toward self-protection continue to peel away the layers around my heart that keep me from knowing God in the fullest and truest sense.

A third reason why I believe God rarely heals someone of their homosexuality instantly has to do with community—something we evangelicals don't think about often enough. God's usual way is for healing to take place within the community of believers. In most circumstances, He wants us—the Body of Christ here on earth—to be the agents of His healing. That applies whether healing comes quickly, in response to the laying on of hands and anointing with oil by the elders (James 5:14), or it occurs more gradually through the love, nurture and counsel of other believers. In some ways, more blessings abound when God heals more gradually through the Christian community.

Did you ever wonder why we had to start out life as little babies; helpless, squawking, needy little things that take so much care? God's plan was, and is, for every one of us to grow and develop and learn and experience love through others. Except for Adam and Even—and they didn't do too well—He chose not to make us fully developed, educated adults from the beginning. His plan was community—one caring for another.

In a Christian home, who usually receives the greater blessing in the child-rearing process, the child or the parent? Having been both, I declare emphatically that it is the parent. If I minister to you in your emotional or physical pain, who receives the greater blessing, you or I? I believe I do.

The healing of the homosexual, like most healing, will usually take place within the community of believers. Thus, not only is the struggler blessed, but the blessings abound to all those who were used by God in the healing. God is glorified in the eyes of the whole community and the community is blessed and built up.

God is doing more than creating a perfect relationship between Him and me; He is establishing His Kingdom. When Jesus reigns, that Kingdom will be fully realized. Meanwhile He is preparing the citizens of that Kingdom. One way He is doing that is by teaching us to minister to one another in community.

There is a message here for the larger church. The healing of the homosexual man and woman offers glorious opportunities for other Christians to be blessed and built up. Through ministries of healing, intercessory prayer, counseling, and simple friendship, Christians have the opportunity to be a part of God's glorious plan. You will be blessed; God will be built up, and He will be glorified as you participate in this process.

Instant healing offers an assuring sign of God's great power, a sign that we all need now and then. Gradual healing through the Body of Christ does even more. It makes the reality of Jesus' presence here among us every more evident.

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