

SERIES: 40 DAYS OF PRAYER

Spiritual Growth Campaign

Part 6: Praying for Healing and Restoration

Welcome back to your CVCHURCH family. We are a multicultural and intergenerational church. If you are our guest today please find a set of teaching notes for you to follow along with me this morning (afternoon). I think you would agree with me that we're living in very unusual days. The economy's going really well, but nothing else is. The stock market's at record levels, more people are at work right now than in decades. The economy's humming along, but I believe we are experiencing material prosperity and moral poverty, because every week there's another shooting or another scandal or conflict or bigotry or opioid addiction epidemic. The news isn't very good. I was reading an article the other day, and one of the columnists wrote, "America needs a national healing." I wholeheartedly agree with that statement. We need healing in our nation and around the world, and we all need healing in our schools, healing in our businesses, healing in our government, we need healing in our neighborhoods and in our communities, and we need healing in our families. We need healing in our lives, our minds, our hearts, and our bodies.

Pastor Scott felt that in week 6, this teaching on CVCHURCH learning to pray for healing and restoration is perfect for where we are as a local church. In this teaching I

am going to talk about Spiritual, Emotional, Relational, Financial, Vocational, Intellectual and Physical healing.

Over 3,000 years ago, after Solomon had dedicated the temple he had built for God, one night God appeared to Solomon in a dream. You can read the story in 2 Chronicles 7:11-22. But I want to look at one verse, verse 14, and unpack it with you today. Would you join me and let's read together 2 Chronicles 7:14, let's begin, "**Then if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.**" Would you please circles the words *I will hear, I will forgive, and I will restore (heal) your land.*

This is an incredibly powerful verse of Scripture. The Bible says, "If My people who are called by My name...." This Scripture is for those who have confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. This is how you become part of God's family. Yes, He has created you, but because of your sin you have been separated from Him. Jesus Christ came to take your place when He died for your sin so He could bridge the gap between you and God. When you confess your sin and surrender your life to Him you become one of His. You become part of what God calls **MY PEOPLE**. Why is this important? Because this verse gives the four conditions or the four premises to God's promise to hear us, forgive us and to heal and restore our land, which is our lives. Pastor Scott has said this to us many times. For every promise there is a premise or a condition. We will look in depth this morning

(afternoon) at the four premises or four conditions to praying for and receiving our healing and restoration in our own lives, our small groups, our families, our CVCHURCH family and in our nation and in our world. These four actions of humbling, praying, seeking, and turning are to be understood as the four aspects or facets or, you could say, the process of what the Bible means to repent. Let's look together at the first condition for receiving our healing and restoration for every one of our lives.

I. Admit I'm not in control

This is the first condition or premise to receiving healing and restoration. To admit I'm not in control is the word for humble. "If My people will humble themselves"... –

Humility is the first step to healing

There will be no healing or restoration without humbling ourselves. To humble yourself means **"to subdue one's pride and submit in self-denying loyalty to God and His will."** To humble ourselves means we come to God with respect, and we don't come flippantly or thinking we're entitled. We don't go, "Hey, man, how's it going? Hey, big man upstairs? Hey, big daddy? Jesus taught us to pray in "The Disciple's prayer:" Our Father. That is how we come. Have you ever noticed that the Bible never says you are to pray for God to humble you? No, the Bible says that is my responsibility. God simply says, "Barbara (Pastor Scott), humble yourself." The Bible says humble yourself. It is something I must do. It

says it over and over in both the O.T. and the N.T. In other words humility is a choice. To humble myself means I am admitting to God and to myself that I am not in control and that I surrender the control of my life to Him. You might be saying to yourself, “If humbling myself is the first condition and premise to receiving God’s healing and restoration in my life then I need to know what humility is. What does it look like, and how do I develop it? How do I practically, every day in my life, demonstrate my humility to God?” I want to give you 11 ways quickly how you can humble yourself. I will go fast you might not get it all down but you can go to our website and download this script to get all of these points.

- 1) Confess your sin to God the moment you realize you have sinned.** When you become aware you have said something wrong, you’re angry, prideful, jealous, or whatever it is simply say, “God please forgive me. I was wrong.” That is humility. You keep short accounts with God.
- 2) Humility means forgiving others quickly.** It is arrogance to demand your rights and to carry grudges. Humble people forgive quickly and set boundaries on themselves.
- 3) When you are treated unfairly, you keep quiet and patient and don’t retaliate.** That is real humility. That is when you’re like Jesus.
- 4) When you look for ways to serve others, instead of expecting to be served.** That is humility.
- 5) When you accept criticism and correction graciously, that shows God your humility.**
- 6) When you’re respectful to the authorities in your life, even the bad ones.**
- 7) When you pick up trash wherever you find it.**
- 8) Humility is when you leave a public restroom cleaner than when you found**

it. Humility is in the little things that no one else sees. **9) When you admit your weaknesses and your sins to a few safe people.** You don't tell everyone. If we confessed our temptations to each other more in small groups there would not be as much sin to confess. **10) When you always speak well of others and you never use put-downs.** **11) When you pray for your enemies.** Please write this in your notes. **Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it's thinking of yourself less.** The first condition to receive healing and restoration in my life is to admit I'm not in control.

Here are four promises God gives to you personally when you humble yourself:

1) If I humble myself God will lead (guide) me

Psalm 25:9 says, **“He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them His way.”**

2) If I humble myself God will bless me

Isaiah 66:2b says, **“I will bless those who have humble and contrite hearts.”** To be contrite means to express regret and sorrow for one's wrong thoughts, feelings and behaviors towards God and others.

3) If I humble myself God will give me the power to change

James 4:6 says, **“God opposes the proud but favors the humble.”** The ability to make life transforming changes is by God’s grace. You receive God’s grace when you humble yourself.

4) If I humble myself God will reduce my stress

Matthew 11:29 says, **“Take My yoke upon you. Let Me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”** When you become Jesus’ student, and you take a stance of submission to His Word and His character, He promises to restore a deep sense of rest in your soul and personality. So to receive the healing, restoration and breakthroughs that you’re looking for in 2018: **THE YEAR OF BREAKTHROUGH** begin humbling yourself daily before Jesus and admit you’re not in control, and let Him rule in the throne of your heart.

II. Ask God for help

To receive the healing and restoration that you want and need in your life, first you admit that you’re not in control, meaning you can’t do it on your own. Secondly, I ask God for help. 2 Chronicles 7:14c says, **“If My people... will pray.”** It is easy to not ask. Church, God wants you to start asking for all of your needs every day. The more dependent you are upon Him the more you will bring everything you need to Him. You do that because He truly cares for you. Praying for healing could be scary to many of you so I want to give you a few action steps you can take to receive your healing and

restoration of your mind, emotions and will. In John 16:23-24 Jesus says this, **“At that time you won’t need to ask Me for anything. I tell you the truth, you will ask the Father directly, and He will grant your request because you use My name. 24 You haven’t done this before. Ask, using My name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy.”** In this verse Jesus gives us some guidelines to follow when we pray for God to move on our behalf. You might want to write these down.

1) Remember, Jesus wants me to ask

In other words, whatever is going on in your life, Jesus is interested, so pray for it. The reason God wants you to pray for every area and thing you need in your life is that this is the way you learn to trust Him. This happens with kids and their parents all the time. The child expresses a need and the parent meets it. The same is true with your Heavenly Father. If you’re not asking God for anything in your life and relationships, you’re not learning to trust Him. If you’re not saying, “Lord, I need You. I need You to do this in me and for me,” you’re not trusting Him. Jesus wants you to ask your Heavenly Father to get involved in your life and relationships, your family, CVCHURCH family, your city, community and culture.

2) Present your request to Father God in Jesus’ name

What does it mean to ask in Jesus’ name? **It means you are praying to God on the basis of what Jesus paid for on the cross.** Jesus paid for everything you need on His cross. When you come to the Father in Jesus’ name you have instant

access to His presence, power and purpose. You do not need to second-guess or be afraid of what to say or be reticent or hesitant to pray for your healing for every area of your life and for the lives of others. When someone tells me they have a need I pray for them right then and there. I come boldly and with confidence because of what Jesus said.

3) Get other people to pray with you

It doesn't have to be the elders of the church. One of the best places to get your prayers answered is in your small group. If you're not in a small group yet, I encourage you to fill out your Friend's Card and write, "I want to be in a small group," and we will contact you this week. James 5:14-15 says, "**Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well.**" You can call for any of us leaders in the church, but you can also have anyone in your small group pray for you, and God will answer your prayers.

4) Believe and expect an answer

When you pray for healing for someone this is how you do it. You remember Jesus wants me to ask, I am to ask in Jesus' name. I am to get other people to pray with me, and I am to believe and expect answers. Vs. 15 of the James passage we just read says, "**15 Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well.**"

5) Keep on praying till God tells you to stop

Please read out loud with me Ephesians 6:18 in the NCV translation, let's begin, **“Pray in the Spirit at ALL times with ALL kinds of prayers, asking for ALL you need. To do this you must ALWAYS be ready and never give up! ALWAYS pray for ALL God's people.”** God is responsible for the answer and we're responsible to ask because He wants us to and He has told us to.

III. Seek God, not just a miracle

2 Chronicles 7:14d says, **“If My people... will seek My face.”** The word seek in the Hebrew here is often used in desperate situations in which God is the only possible hope for deliverance. Dear CVCHURCH family, it is time for all of us to get desperate for God to give us the breakthroughs that we need, not only for ourselves, but for our family, CV family and for our community, state and nation. God wants us to seek His face, which means His person, not just the miracle or the breakthrough. He wants you to desire Him. Seek His character, His nature, His purpose, will, rule, and reign. Sometimes we're so obsessed with the gift we want from Him we stop seeking Him and just want what we can get from Him. What does it mean, “If My people will seek My face?” It means this, family: “Whether I get the answer I want or not, I want to know You, Father. Whether I get the healing I want or not, whether I get the restoration I want or not, whether I get the answer I want or not, I am seeking You. As I come to You, if I don't get what I think is best for me, I'm going to be satisfied with what You think is best for me. Whatever comes out of this whole ordeal, whether it's

coming out of my pain from the divorce, coming out of my pain from the loss of a child, coming out of a miscarriage, or the pain that comes from not being able to have children, or the pain that comes from being laid off, or whatever the pain is, I am seeking You. Not the blessing, not the gift, not the miracle, but I am seeking hard after You because I want to know You better.” Proverbs 8:17 says, **“I love all who love Me. Those who search will surely find Me.”** Notice the word search. This is not some lackadaisical meandering. This is sometimes a gut wrenching crying and pleading out to God to say, “I need to know Your will on this issue, Father God. I won’t stop till You answer me. Reveal Yourself, Your will and your plan in this area of my life or for those I’m praying for.” Hebrews 11:6 says, **“Anyone who wants to come to Him must believe that God exists and that He rewards those who sincerely seek Him.”** Please circle the words **sincerely seek**. It means to strive after God, and you’re not willing to stop pursuing Him until you have what you’re asking for. Matthew 6:33 says, **“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need.”** There’s just about nothing God won’t do for the woman and for the man that are genuinely seeking God first.

IV. Turn my attention from the world to the Word

“If My people turn from their wicked ways...” This is where I turn my attention to God’s Word and purposes for my life and away from the world. I want to define two key words here. What does the word wicked mean, and what does

it means to turn? The word wicked in this context and throughout the Bible is consistently translated either unrighteousness or iniquity. It is connected to the idea of evil, dishonesty, wrongdoing. This word is used more than 70% of the time in the wisdom and poetic books of Job, Psalms and Proverbs. It describes both wicked character and practice. The wicked are those who don't seek God, and they don't have room for Him in their thinking. Psalm 10:4, **“The wicked are too proud to seek God. They seem to think that God is dead.”** Psalm 36:1 says, “Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts. They have no fear of God at all.” God's anger is demonstrated toward those who substitute God with a lie. Romans 1:18-32 describe how the wicked think and act. Vv. 19-22 describe the foundation of what is wicked. **“They know the truth about God because He has made it obvious to them. 20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities—His eternal power, and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. 21 Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship Him as God or even give Him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. 22 Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools.”** Summed up, wickedness is denying that God exists and forgetting Him and treating Him as He if doesn't exist. Anytime I forget God, that is wicked because I was made to be in relationships with Him, and I am treating Him as if He doesn't exist. Isaiah 17:10 says, **“Because you have turned from the God who can save**

you. You have forgotten the rock who can hide you.” God wants you to remember Him every second of every day because He loves you, and He is the only one who can save you and answer your prayers for breakthrough. The word turn is the word for repentance. It means that you have a complete change of direction away from sin and you move toward God. The picture is an “About Face” in military. To repent means I turn away from those thoughts, attitudes and behaviors that take me away from God, and I engage in those thoughts, feelings and behaviors that move me towards God and His presence and purpose. Most people see repentance as a negative word, but it is the most positive word that we have. When I repent I turn from guilt to forgiveness. When I repent, I turn from darkness to light. I turned from no purpose to purpose. I turned from hopeless despair to hope for eternity. I turned from bitterness to love. Repentance is the most positive change in my life. Proverbs 8:23 says, **“People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.”** One of the things that we have learned from the political arena is that a cover up is worse than the original sin. It just makes it worse. James 5:16a says, **“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”** Friends, it all starts with confession. Will you write on your notes, **“I need others to help me change.”** This is why we have Celebrate Recovery, support groups, step studies and small groups. God promises if we repent and turn from our wicked ways

1) I will hear from heaven. 2 Chronicles 7:14f

2) I will forgive their sins. 2 Chronicles 7:14g

3) I will heal (restore) their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14h

Let's pray. "Father, Your Word says that if Your people will humble themselves You will hear our prayers, You will forgive our sins and You will heal our land. Father I admit I'm not in control. I've acted like it, but I'm not. I've tried to run my life and call the shots, and it isn't working well at all. The harder I try to control things, the more out of control everything gets. So I humble myself, and I'm asking You to guide and bless me and give the power to change and relieve my stress and all of those things that come if I walk humbly before. I ask for Your help today. You said I can ask the Father in Jesus' name for Your healing and restoring power, so I do so now. Teach me to pray all the time, and to pray all kinds of prayer and to always pray for all people. You have told me to seek Your face not just Your blessing. You have said if I seek You I will find You. I confess I want to find You in this year of breakthrough. I want to be closer to You than ever before. Help me to turn my attention away from the world to Your Word and to Your Kingdom purposes. I ask You to hear my prayers from heaven. I ask You to forgive my sins. And I ask You to heal me, my heart, my body, my mind, my relationships, my fears. My bad habits, attitudes and my bitterness. Heal my anger and my impatience. I want to be just like You, Jesus. You're humble, and I humbly ask You because You already paid for my sins, and I pray to You, Father, in Jesus' name."