

EMP 2267HS
CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL HEALING:
THEORY AND PRACTICE
EMMANUEL COLLEGE TORONTO SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY JULY 5-8, 12-15 9.00 AM TO 12.15 PM

ATTENTION STUDENTS: PLEASE COME TO THE
FIRST SESSION HAVING DONE THE REQUIRED
READING FOR THAT SESSION (SEE BELOW).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. In Seminar to consider Christian spiritual healing in relation to:
 - (i) Scientific theory and scientific evidence
 - (ii) Precedents in scripture and tradition; contemporary experience
 - (iii) Illness of body, emotions, spirit and soul; interconnections between these
 - (iv) Contrasting theological presuppositions concerning illness: always God's will or never God's will
 - (v) New Testament principles for Christian spiritual healing
 - (vi) Involvement by ordinary Christians and congregations

2. In Practicum to investigate experientially various forms of spiritual healing so as to discover which are personally most accessible. The Practicum will include self-healing and liturgical-service healing. Some students should be forewarned that the Practicum will include some forms which are universal or are drawn from non-Christian sources.

REGISTRATION (LIMITED TO 20 STUDENTS)

Student at Toronto School of Theology: use ROSI
Auditor (Cost \$200): Registrar, Emmanuel College 416-585-4539

COURSE TEXTS:

(Available at Bob Miller Bookroom, 180 Bloor West 416-922-3557)

1. Rochelle Graham, Flora Litt, and Wayne Irwin, *Healing from the Heart: A Guide to Christian Healing for Individuals and Groups* (Winfield, BC: Wood Lake Books, 1998. (Lowville Prayer Centre in the United Church of Canada initiated this book.)

2. Francis MacNutt, *Healing* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1999 revised edition). (A best-seller from a carefully pondered Roman Catholic charismatic perspective).

3. Ian Cowie, *Jesus' Healing Works and Ours* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2000). (The author has been director of a Presbyterian Healing Centre and he has links to the Iona Community.)

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: DON EVANS

Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, Victoria College, UofT

Retired Minister, United Church of Canada

Degrees: B.A. (Toronto), B.D. (McGill), B.Phil. (Oxford), D.Phil. (Oxford), D.D. (Huntington).

Author of six books, including *Spirituality and Human Nature* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1993)

Recent Toronto School of Theology Courses Offered: "Varieties of Christian Spirituality: Theory and Practice" (through Emmanuel College) and "Spirituality in Literature" (through Regis College).

Recent workshops on spiritual healing offered twice at TST Continuing education, at a hospice in Devon, England, at Huntington College Sudbury, for interested people in Stratford, Ontario, and for the patients of a cancer consultant. (He has also led hundreds of workshops on meditation in various secular and Christian contexts.)

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

(1) Discussion-Openers (250 words – 48 % of final mark)

Each discussion-opener is due at the session for which it had been assigned, and is handed in to the instructor at the end of the session. No later submissions are accepted. Each discussion-opener is a mini-essay response to a guide-question.

A total of SIX discussion-openers are required, each worth 8 % of the overall final mark for the course. If a student submits more than six the BEST six will be considered in calculating the final mark.

(2) Final Essay (1500 words – 15 % of the final mark)

(A) “Personal-reflection” essay, outlining and explaining any changes and/or confirmations in your own understanding of Christian Spirituality in response to the course.

OR

(B) “Topic-focused” essay, exploring a particular issue in the course more extensively than in your mini-essays. Be sure to “clear” your topic with the instructor before writing it. Additional reading is not required for (B), but is permitted.

This essay is due on Monday, July 26 at 5 p.m. You may submit it by email (I have an iMac with Microsoft Word; you may need to use Rich Text Format if you have Word Perfect). Or you can mail it by post. Or you can get it to Emmanuel College for me to pick up.

(3) Seminar Discussion (25 % of the final mark).

This will be evaluated less on the quantity than on the quality of a student’s contributions to discussion. The quality involves many elements: clarity, brevity, originality, insight into the text or the issues, pertinence in relation to other students’ remarks. etc.

(4) Practicum Participation (12 % of the final mark)

Because of the difficulty in assigning a mark to someone’s spirituality, students will receive an automatic mark of 1 % for each of the eight practicum sessions they attend. Also, if someone’s involvement is especially keen, this might increase their Practicum mark.

SOME TIPS CONCERNING DISCUSSION-OPENERS

- 1. Notes do not count as a discussion-opener mini-essay. Your whole answer should be legible and ready to hand in at the end of the class session. (If you speak from notes this can be one way of participating in class discussion, but it does not count as a written discussion-opener.)**
- 2. Focus on the assigned guide-question. If you want to raise a different issue, do so orally in class discussion.**
- 3. Assume that everyone has read the assigned text, so that you need only summarize or explain to the extent necessary in making your point. Try to provide a clear and stimulating initial basis for class discussion rather than a comprehensive survey. Answers do not have to “settle” an issue, they can be exploratory probes perhaps even ending with a question. Avoid long introductions; plunge right in instead.**

FORMAT OF CLASS SESSIONS

First Session:

(1) The instructor will explain the course and respond to questions concerning the course outline. Then he will respond to questions concerning perspectives and emphases in his own approach.

(2) The students will introduce themselves briefly in relation to their hopes and apprehensions concerning the course.

(3) The instructor will give a brief introductory lecture concerning four kinds of spirituality. (This will be the first and last lecture in the course!)

**(4) After a break, an hour-long class discussion will begin with one or more students reading a discussion-opener and others responding with agreement, disagreement or requests for clarification. .
IT IS IMPORTANT THAT SOME STUDENTS PREPARE A
DISCUSSION-OPENER FOR THIS CLASS!**

(5) After another break, the instructor will introduce some concentrative forms of meditation which can help when preparing to participate in spiritual healing. These will probably include focusing on the breath and repeating a Christian “mantra”.

All Subsequent Sessions:

Usually there will be over two hours of Seminar Discussion plus about 45 minutes of Practicum and either two short breaks or one long break.

In over 44 years of university teaching I have found that Seminar Discussion can be an ideal context for learning if students come prepared to discuss a focused question on an assigned common reading, and then engage in respectful, honest dialogue (in contrast with scoring points in a debate).

Especially in matters of spirituality, there is no substitute for personal experiential learning, so the inclusion of Practicum is essential in this course on Christian spiritual healing. Also, since no one form of preparatory meditation and no one form of healing is appropriate for every person in every context, it is important the participants be exposed to a variety of forms. Hence the Practicum involves variety.

REQUIRED READINGS AND GUIDE-QUESTIONS

First Session: Science and Spiritual Healing

Required Reading: *Healing from the Heart*, chapters 4,7,10 13 by Wayne Irwin. (Possible but not required reading is MacNutt: chapter 18).

Guide-question: How important or unimportant is support for spiritual healing from scientific theory and scientific evidence in relation to your own attitude towards spiritual healing? Explain why in relation to Irwin's presentations

Second Session: The Case for Involvement by Ordinary Christians in Spiritual Healing

Required Reading: MacNutt, Preface, chapters 2 and 17 and also pages 130 131. (Possible supplementary reading in *Healing from the Heart*: chapters 1,2,3,Appendices D&G.)

Guide-question: Is spiritual healing part of the Christian calling for all Christians? Discuss this in relation to MacNutt's arguments.

Third Session: Three Kinds of Spiritual Healing:

Required Reading: MacNutt, chapters 11-15 and Cowie, pp.181-185 (re inner, emotional healing) and pp.89-111 (re exorcism) (Possible supplementary reading in *Healing from the Heart*: chapters 8, 9, Appendix C) and in

Guide-question: Discuss any ONE of the following questions:

- (1) Is praying to be forgiven by God for one's refusal to forgive people and God the central focus in healing of spirit or soul?
- (2) What is the connection between spiritual healing and psychotherapy in healing of the emotions or "inner healing"?
- (3) Does some healing of spirit, emotions and/or body require deliverance from invasive presences? Explain why you think "Yes" or "No" in relation to Macnutt and Cowie.

Fourth Session: God's Will Concerning Human Suffering:

Required Reading: MacNutt, chapters 3-7.

Guide-Question: In general, how should we view suffering (spiritual, emotional, physical) in ourselves: Are these opportunities sent by God through which we can grow? OR should we view them as not being willed by God but rather as ills which, in general, God wills our co-operation in reducing or eliminating?

Fifth Session: Confidence or Caution in Praying for Physical Healing:

Required Reading: MacNutt, chapters 3-10, 14 and also *Healing from the Heart*, chapter 1.

Guide-question: When praying for physical healing, should always include an implicit or explicit "if it be Thy will"?

Sixth Session: Cowie on Jesus' Healing Works:

Required Reading: the following in Cowie: pages 7-23, 165-67, 236-43; then the seven "summaries" on pages 38, 55, 69, 84, 126, 142, 155 and at least four of the sections summarized. Also read Evans' notes on Cowie.

Guide-question:

(1) Concerning two of the summarized sections, present your own personal reflections.

OR

(2) What is for you the significance of the "Word of Authority" in Christian spiritual healing?

Seventh Session: Christian Use of non-Christian modalities

Required Reading *Healing from the Heart*: chapters 5,6,12, Appendices A, B. Also MacNutt, pp.251-3 and Cowie, pp.84-88, 218-20

Guide-Question: Much of the counsel offered in these parts of *Healing from the Heart* is not distinctively Christian in its origin or its application. Are there limits on Christian use of non-Christian modes of healing?

Eighth Session: Involving the Christian Community

Required Reading: Cowie pp.188-95; *Healing from the Heart* chapter 11; MacNutt, chapter 19.

Guide-Question: How should spiritual healing be introduced or continued within contemporary Christian congregations?