

PROFILES OF DIVINE HEALING:
THIRD WAVE THEOLOGY
COMPARED WITH CLASSICAL PENTECOSTAL THEOLOGY

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Introduction

The “Azusa Street” of the Third Wave (TW) seems to have been “MC510: Signs, Wonders and Church Growth” taught by John Wimber and C. Peter Wagner at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1982. Wagner appears to have been the first to describe a “third wave” of the Spirit.¹ He understood the third wave of the Spirit to be engaged in the opening of “straight-line Evangelicals and other Christians to the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit,” in such a way that they did not have to become Pentecostal or charismatic.² Since then some have included the Vineyard churches, originally started by John Wimber and other independent organizations.³

The literature about this new movement does not accurately reflect its importance. Yet, this lack of critical reflection is seemingly inexplicable. This is especially true for those who share similar theologies and worldviews. Classical Pentecostals are in a primary position to engage in dialogue with the Third Wave. There are several significant works that serve to clarify the theology of the TW as it compares to that of classical Pentecostalism.⁴ Yet, none focuses

¹ Wonsuk Ma, “A ‘First Waver’ Looks at the ‘Third Wave’: A Pentecostal Reflection on Charles Kraft’s Power Encounter Terminology,” *Pneuma* 19:2 (Fall 1997), pp. 189–206 (189) notes C. Peter Wagner, “A Third Wave?” *Pastoral Renewal* (July-August 1983), pp. 1–5 as an early instance.

² Wagner, “A Third Wave?,” p. 5.

³ Ma, “A ‘First Waver,’” p. 190.

⁴ See Opal Reddin, ed., *Power Encounter: A Pentecostal Perspective*, rev. ed. (Springfield, MO: Central Bible College Press, 1999), esp. Gerald Flokstra,

exclusively on the differences between TW theologians and the classical Pentecostals in their understanding of divine healing and its practice.

Despite this evident gap, divine healing is a significant aspect of both the TW and classical Pentecostalism. Many of the TW theologians were first drawn to the working of the Holy Spirit by divine healing. Wimber details the impact of his son's healing in the first few chapters of one of the books he co-authored with Kevin Springer, *Power Healing*. Healing has also been a crucial part of the life of classical Pentecostals. Donald Dayton goes so far as to say, "...even more characteristic of Pentecostalism than the doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit is its celebration of miracles of divine healing as part of God's salvation."⁵

This paper will engage the distinctives of the TW theology of healing through a comparative study of the literature of TW theologians and classical Pentecostals. The paper will examine expositions of the theology of healing from John Wimber, Jack Deere and C. Peter Wagner. The classical Pentecostal (CP) position will be compared from a variety of positions. Primary attention will be given to its presentation in *Systematic Theology* edited by Stanley Monroe Horton and presentations by Hugh Jeter, Gordon Fee and Donald Gee. It should be also noted that this author's theological framework is shaped by his affinity to membership in a CP denomination.

The over-arching goal of this paper is to answer questions about the differences in the theologies of divine healing. How does the TW understand the purpose of divine healing? How does the TW explain the authority for divine healing? What does the TW expect God to heal? How does the Third Wave's theology of healing inform the practice of divine healing? Finally, this paper will conclude by comparing and contrasting the answers from a CP perspective.

"Power Encounter in Divine Healing," pp. 287-301, although limited to divine healing's place in power encounters. See Thomas D. Pratt, "The Need to Dialogue: A Review of the Debate on the Controversy of Signs, Wonders, Miracles and Spiritual Warfare Raised in the Literature of the Third Wave Movement," *Pneuma* 13:1 (Spring 1991), pp. 7-32; Ma, "A 'First Waver,'" p. 193. Also Ronald A. N. Kydd, *Healing through the Centuries: Models for Understanding* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998) who constructs six models to clarify Christians' different understandings of divine healing.

⁵ Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987), p. 115.

1. The Third Wave Theology of Divine Healing

1.1 Purpose of Healing

The purpose of healing is to fulfill the purposes of the kingdom of God. Wimber relies on George Ladd and James Kallas for his understanding of the kingdom.⁶ He argues that God's purpose in healing is to further his kingdom. Wimber takes Jesus' ministry on earth as the model.⁷ "Jesus always combined healing with proclaiming the kingdom of God. Through healing the sick Jesus defeated Satan and demonstrated his rule."⁸ Sin, the origin of sickness, originates in evil and Satan's kingdom; therefore, sickness proceeds from Satan.⁹ Healing is a pronouncement of victory over the kingdom of Satan. Further, it is a foreshadowing of the fullness of the kingdom of God. In this sense, the focus of healing is eschatological.¹⁰

Wagner relies on Wimber for the significance of the kingdom of God in his theology of healing. However, unlike Wimber, Wagner bases his understanding of the purpose of healing on principles he extracts from the Lord's Prayer. Ministry is focused on making earth like heaven; ministry is a battle to restore the values of the kingdom to a fallen creation. Wagner emphasizes the importance of the cosmic battle in understanding the purpose of healing.

Different than Wimber and Wagner, Jack Deere has started with God's compassion and mercy. Jesus' compassion was aroused so that "he did not give them theological platitudes; he *healed* them."¹¹ Nevertheless, Deere does discuss how miracles manifest the kingdom. Demonstrable power over illness and demonic force are "essential" to the kingdom. Closely tied with the kingdom is the pouring out of the Holy Spirit as prophesied by Joel.¹² Deere's explanation of the place of miracles in the

⁶ C. Peter Wagner, *How to Have a Healing Ministry Without Making Your Church Sick!* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1988), pp. 92–99.

⁷ John Wimber, *Power Healing* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), pp. 40–41.

⁸ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 36.

⁹ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p.15.

¹⁰ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 37.

¹¹ Emphasis his; Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), p. 120.

¹² Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, p. 225.

kingdom does not emphasize, however, the cosmic battle as heavily as Wimber and Wagner. In his chapter entitled “Signs and Wonders,” twice he notes his complete agreement with Wimber’s explication of the kingdom.¹³

All three writers agree on the importance of healings in evangelism. Power Evangelism, as popularized by Wimber, is evangelization with the power of God as the tool. In discussing the appeal of Christianity to Romans, Wagner writes, “While Christianity was being presented to unbelievers in both word and deed, it was the deed that far exceeded the word in evangelistic effectiveness.”¹⁴ Wimber notes that Michael Flynn, an Episcopal priest, recommends the chronically ill be prayed for or testify about their healings in evangelical settings.¹⁵ Yet, not one attributes all healings to evangelistic purposes. Wimber, noting James 5:14–15, argues that healing is God’s mercy poured freely given to his people not simply a means of winning new converts.¹⁶

1.2 Authority for and Source of Healing

The authority for healing is based on participation in God’s kingdom. Questions about the authority for and source of healing are related to questions about the purpose of healing. As shown above, these theologians link the purposes of healing with the purposes of the kingdom. So, the authority for healing is available to those who are involved in the activities of God’s kingdom.

1.2.1 Participation in the Kingdom of God

Wagner, in his chapter “Living the Life-style of the kingdom,” tells how Christians can witness to the lost and pray for the sick. The authority of the kingdom validates the purposes of the kingdom. Christians minister according to the principles set forth by the kingdom. Healing is a principle of the kingdom because sickness is not. He asks, “Is sickness a kingdom value? Obviously not. As we have seen, it is as contrary to the life-style of the kingdom of God as is poverty or war.”¹⁷

¹³ Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, pp. 34, 36.

¹⁴ C. Peter Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit: Encountering the Power of Signs and Wonders* (Ann Arbor: Vine Books, 1988), p. 79.

¹⁵ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 160.

¹⁶ Wimber, *Power Healing*, pp. 160–61.

¹⁷ Wagner, *Healing Ministry*, p. 109.

Deere approaches authority from a slightly different starting point but ends at a very similar conclusion. For Deere, passion for Christ is the starting point of power ministry. Passionate love for God is the key to power ministry.¹⁸

1.2.2 *The Nature of Kingdom Authority*

The nature of kingdom authority resembles the nature of the kingdom itself, as “now and not yet.” Wimber quotes Ladd “Everything in the Gospels points to the idea that life in the kingdom of God in the age to come will be life on the earth—but life transformed by the kingly rule of God when his people enter into the full measure of the divine blessings (Matt 19:28).”¹⁹ So this age is “between the times...between the inauguration and the consummation of the kingdom of God.”²⁰ Satan is still active, yet God’s power has been made available to men.²¹ “The authority of God had come to claim what was rightfully his.”²² However, not everyone is healed when they are prayed for. The fullness of the kingdom of God has not yet come.²³ Sickness is clearly against the values of the kingdom. But, it is not eradicated because of this tension in God’s plan.

Wimber addresses the relationship between healing and the atonement. He argues that healing is “not in the atonement.” Instead, Wimber argues that healing is *through* the atonement. Christ’s atoning act defeated the power of death in our lives. At issue is whether healing is automatic or not. For Wimber, if healing is *in* the atonement then the certainty of healing should be the same as salvation.

¹⁸ Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, p. 202.

¹⁹ John Wimber, *Power Evangelism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 4. George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. Donald A. Hagner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), p. 48.

²⁰ Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, p. 6.

²¹ George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), p. 50.

²² Wimber, *Power Evangelism*, p. 5.

²³ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 157.

1.3 Scope of Healing

1.3.1 *The Whole Person*

TW writing about ministry is characterized by its concern for the whole person. Wimber asserts that prayer is offered for people not conditions. This idea is approached from an Old Testament understanding, beginning with the impact of the fall on humanity. Adam and Eve's sin impacted the "social, psychological, emotional, environmental and spiritual aspects of life."²⁴ This does not deny that body and soul are different "aspects" of a person, but asserts an "essential unity."²⁵ This essential unity can further be understood by examining the relationship between sin and sickness. In the story of the paralytic (Mark 2:1-12), since Jesus forgave the man first, Jesus is recognizing that the man's spiritual sickness was directly related to his paralysis. The man's spiritual state informs his physical condition. Another example involves the man healed at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-15). Jesus' instruction, "See you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you" (v. 14), is adduced to show that the man's primary problem was sin that had caused his physical condition.²⁶ The relationship between body and spirit is complex and integrated.

1.3.2 *Healing for the Whole Person*

God's healing power is available in all aspects of life. Wimber lists four categories of healings. Healing from spiritual sickness is better known as salvation. Healing from the effects of past hurts involves the restoration of inner peace. Healing from demonization frees the person from the control or influence of demons. Lastly, healing from physical illness is the restoration of physical wholeness.

A significant difference between TW and Pentecostals is found in discussions concerning demonic activity, especially the nature of demonic activity in the lives of believers. Healing from demonization is the process in which demonic power over a person is broken. "Demonized" is a transliteration of the Greek participle *daimonizomenoi* which means "to be influenced, afflicted, or tormented in some way by demonic power."²⁷ Support for this use is drawn from Matt 4:24, Mark

²⁴ Wimber, *Power Healing*, pp. 68–9.

²⁵ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 60.

²⁶ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 69.

²⁷ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 109.

1:32, Luke 8:36 and John 10:21. Demonization is a more biblical phrase than demon possession, or demon oppression. For Wimber, “demon possession” is too strong of a phrase. The demons neither own the person, nor are they in absolute control. Even at the height of demonic control the demonized person is still able to participate in their deliverance and salvation.²⁸ Demons attack by influencing a person’s personality or physical body.²⁹ Demonization can usually be categorized as mild demonization or severe demonization. Mild demonization has traditionally been known as demon oppression.

Wimber and Wagner affirm that Christians can be demonized. Wimber argues that while a Christian cannot be owned or relinquish total control to a demon, he or she can be demonized.³⁰ He lists four examples of the demonization of believers: Saul, a crippled woman, Judas and Peter.³¹ Wimber ends his discussion of demonization on a more positive note. He assures the Christian “that while Satan is strong, Christ is stronger. We have nothing to fear from Satan or demons as long as we live faithfully and righteously, never backing down when challenged by evil.”³² He explains the effectiveness of the Christian’s armor in this war (Eph 6:1–18).

Wagner cites the arguments of C. Fred Dickason in *Demon Possession and the Christian* as the strongest case for the demonization of Christians. Wagner relates that Dickason examines the biblical evidence and concludes that there is no biblical evidence either way.

²⁸ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 109.

²⁹ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 108.

³⁰ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 114.

³¹ Saul, who was a believer (1 Sam 10:1, 9-13), was demonized as a result of his seeking other spirits (sin likened to witchcraft by Samuel in 1 Sam 15:23); he was tormented by an evil spirit (1 Sam 16:14) which influenced his “anger, murder, fear, witchcraft, and suicide.” In Luke 13, a crippled woman, “a daughter of Abraham,” was bound for eighteen years by Satan when Jesus released her. Wimber argues that Jesus understood children of Abraham to be saved (Luke 19:9). Although Judas was one of the twelve “he ended his life as a severely demonized man (Luke 22:3).” Peter was demonized at the time of his denial of Christ. The demon gained access through his pride. Jesus warned that Peter would be sifted as wheat (Luke 22:31–32). Further, Peter shows his awareness of the demonization of believers in 1 Pet. 5:8, “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 117.

³² Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 103.

Dickason argues that the theological arguments are not conclusive either. So, Dickason turns to clinical evidence to determine the question. He concludes that the clinical evidence determines that Christians can be demonized. Further, Wagner observes that his research shows that "Those who deny it [that Christians can be demonized], by and large, have had little or no direct contact with the demonic."³³ He lists Paul Yonggi Cho, Michael Green, Kurt Kick, Francis MacNutt, Jack Hayford, John Wimber, David du Plessis, Charles Kraft and Derek Prince as Christian leaders that believe in the demonization of Christians. Like Wimber, he uses 1 Peter 5:8-9 as further proof.³⁴ He concludes that the Bible is speaking of demons and warning the Christian that they can harm him or her. Deere also believes in the demonization of Christians. In his contribution to *Power Encounters: Among Christians in the Western World*, he describes how the "Holy Spirit revealed the presence of demonic activity within the individuals in our fellowship."³⁵

Another dramatic emphasis of the TW concerns resurrection. The power of the kingdom extends past the grave. Wimber explains healings of the dead as "dramatic and infrequent," but still possible for today.³⁶ Similarly, Deere has, although unsuccessfully, prayed for three dead people to be raised from the dead. However he still expects that God will use him to raise someone from the dead.³⁷ Wagner not only believes it is possible; he retells several stories of resuscitations that were related to him. He agrees with Wimber that it is not normative for any local body of believers. But he asserts that it is normative within the larger context of the body of Christ. He estimates that it happens several times a year.³⁸

³³ Wagner, *Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*, p. 71.

³⁴ Wagner, *Healing Ministry*, p. 195; Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 117.

³⁵ Jack Deere, "Being Right Isn't Enough," in *Power Encounters: Among Western Christians*, ed. Kevin Springer (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), pp. 101-15 (112-13).

³⁶ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 166.

³⁷ Jack Deere, "Obstacles to the Healing Ministry" (cassette tape; Kansas City: Metro Christian Fellowship of Kansas City, 1998), tape number IA16A.

³⁸ Wagner, *Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*, p. 112.

1.4 Practice of Healing

1.4.1 Relation of Practice to Belief

Deere links the theory of healing to the practice of healing by asserting that “to the degree that any individual or church align themselves with these purposes when they pray for the sick, they will see healing take place in their ministry.”³⁹ Wimber argues that the key to experiencing God’s healing mercy is belief in the Healer and a life-style of healing. The goal of ministry is “to leave him or her feeling more loved by God than before we prayed.”⁴⁰

Wimber has also developed what he terms the “healing procedure” which includes five steps and is also used by Wagner.⁴¹ Wimber derived his steps from Jesus’ method of praying for the sick. Yet, he cautions that Jesus’ elements are not found in a systematic presentation in the Gospels. The procedure consists of an interview, diagnostic decision, prayer selection, prayer engagement and post-prayer directions.⁴² The interview step should clarify where the person’s need is. The interviewer should listen on both the natural and supernatural level. The answer should be evaluated by the interviewer’s biblical knowledge, by any knowledge the interviewer has of the person and the interviewer’s past experiences.⁴³ The second step, the diagnostic decision, seeks to answer why this person has this condition? Listening to God as the person is describing their problem is the key to clarify if a spiritual problem is the root cause.

The third step involves the prayer selection. This step seeks to answer what kind of prayer is needed to help this person. Wimber categorizes prayers into two groups. The first and most common is a petition to God, or intercession. The other prayer is words received from God and spoken to the condition. A word of command is one such prayer characterized by very short sentences and an accompanying burst of faith.⁴⁴ A word of pronouncement, “The Lord has healed you,” should follow feelings that God has intervened with an accompanying feeling of supernatural peace. Sometimes this prayer is used with prophetic insight.

³⁹ Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, p. 131.

⁴⁰ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 173.

⁴¹ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 199 and Wagner, *Healing Ministry*, p. 50.

⁴² Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 199.

⁴³ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 199.

⁴⁴ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 208.

The condition will be healed at a later date. Wimber prays that God will fulfill his word.⁴⁵ A prayer of rebuke is usually used when the root cause is demonic. Wimber prays that the demons be cast out and/or the power broke.⁴⁶ Wimber often prays in tongues during this step because it increases his spiritual receptivity.⁴⁷ Wimber admits that the scriptures do not link effective prayer for the sick and speaking in tongues. But, his experience shows that those effective in healing speak in tongues.⁴⁸

The prayer engagement consists of the prayer determined from diagnostic decision and prayer selection.⁴⁹ This fourth step seeks to understand the effectiveness of the prayer. Usually, demons will manifest their control. The final step is post-prayer instructions. The instructions should help the person understand what to do next either to maintain their healing or how they should pursue their healing.⁵⁰

1.4.2 Democratization of Ministry

One significant value of writers of the TW is in a sense an extension of the Reformation. TW theologians consistently emphasize the importance of ministry by the individual within the community. The validity of the ministry is assured because “every Christian person who is committed to Jesus and truly a member of His body has at least one gift, or possibly more.”⁵¹ This assertion applies to all Christians without exception. The emphasis centers around participation in what God is doing through the body of Christ, rather than what God is doing through the leader. Instead, leaders are chosen for different tasks according to their “gift-mix.”⁵² Wimber sounds very similar. The gifts of the Spirit are given to the church corporately, to the whole body (1 Cor 11:17-14:40).⁵³

⁴⁵ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 209.

⁴⁶ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 208.

⁴⁷ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 207.

⁴⁸ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 207.

⁴⁹ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 211.

⁵⁰ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 235.

⁵¹ C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1979), p. 39.

⁵² Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts*, p. 40.

⁵³ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 190.

1.4.3 *The Skills of Healing and the Gifts of Healing*

A significant distinctive of the TW is found in the manner that healing is taught. The TW emphasizes that teaching can be foundational to the success of healing prayers. Wimber's goal in writing *Power Healing* was to provide a model for healing "from which large numbers of Christians may be trained to heal the sick." He explains that Jesus taught the disciples through the "show, tell, deploy, supervise method of training."⁵⁴ Wimber emphasizes that a logical, step-by-step procedure is the most effective way of training people to pray for the sick.⁵⁵ Before his death, he held conferences in which he would teach the healing procedure. While he was teaching, people he had previously trained would pray for someone who wanted prayer. He would describe and comment on what was taking place.⁵⁶ Likewise, Deere believes that a gift from the Spirit must be cultivated. They are not magical or mechanical. Deere asserts, "We can grow in every spiritual exercise and every spiritual gift."⁵⁷

2. The Classical Pentecostal Theology of Divine Healing

2.1 Purpose of Healing

Classical Pentecostals are by no means agreed on the primary purpose of healing. Vernon Purdy wrote the chapter on divine healing in Stanley Horton's *Systematic Theology*. He links God's nature to his desire to heal, exhibited in his name, "the LORD your Physician."⁵⁸ Reminiscent of kingdom language, Purdy notes that healing is a "subjugation of the powers of death."⁵⁹

Similar to Wagner and Wimber, Hugh Jeter, a missionary, emphasizes that healing shows Christ victorious and destroys the works

⁵⁴ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 169.

⁵⁵ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 197.

⁵⁶ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 177.

⁵⁷ Deere, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, p. 165

⁵⁸ Vernon Purdy, "Divine Healing," in *Systematic Theology*, ed. Stanley M. Horton (Springfield, MO: Logion, 1994), pp. 489–523 (497, 99).

⁵⁹ Purdy, "Divine Healing," p. 499.

of the devil.⁶⁰ He believes that Jesus' compassion is a very important purpose for divine healing. Healing also "causes" people to believe on Jesus. Hugh Jeter argues that mass evangelism is essential "to preach the gospel to every creature." Plans that do not include mass evangelism as an essential part are not realistic.⁶¹ His discussion of healing and evangelism in the gospels emphasizes the attracting nature of Jesus' miracles. Divine healing will attract and convince the crowds "of the divine origin of Christ."⁶²

A step further, Donald Gee links healing and other miracles exclusively to evangelism. Divine healing is not focused on the needs of individuals. Instead, healing should be sought only in the context and purpose of evangelism. In fact, Gee cautions "The Church makes a profound mistake when she tries to use such spiritual gifts for herself rather than for others."⁶³ He dogmatically holds that the focus of healing is outward, to touch unbelievers.

In *Jesus the Healer*, Keith Warrington writes, "His [Jesus'] healing powers are to be recognized as signposts to him and not to a more successful healing ministry."⁶⁴ Warrington would deny Wimber's use of Christ's healing ministry as a model for his own ministry. Warrington also disagrees with Deere's starting point of God's compassion. He writes, "Compassion, though important...is not the prime motivation in the healings of Jesus.... If it could be shown that compassion was the major motive...it would be appropriate to ask why Jesus did not heal all the sick in the region."⁶⁵ Instead, Warrington notes that the purpose of Jesus' ministry of healing "was intended to establish truth about himself rather than act as a healing model."⁶⁶

⁶⁰ Hugh Jeter, *By His Stripes: A Biblical Study on Divine Healing* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1977), p. 85.

⁶¹ David Womack, *Breaking the Stained Glass Barrier* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 65; Jeter, *By His Stripes*, pp. 116–17.

⁶² Womack, *Breaking the Stained Glass Barrier*, p. 117.

⁶³ Donald Gee, *Trophimus, I Left Sick: Our Problems of Divine Healing* (London: Elim Publishing, 1952), p. 9.

⁶⁴ Keith Warrington, *Jesus the Healer: Paradigm or Unique Phenomenon*, (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000), p. 29.

⁶⁵ Warrington, *Jesus the Healer*, p. 5.

⁶⁶ Warrington, *Jesus the Healer*, p. 1.

2.2 Authority for and Source of Healing

Classical Pentecostals have traditionally argued that healing is in the atonement. Gee, Jeter and Purdy are of this persuasion. Jeter offers a very traditional presentation of the doctrine. More recently, Purdy's presentation interacts with contemporaries who do not agree with this understanding. Gee is focused on investigating the doctrine as to how equal are the claims of healing and salvation within the atonement. He, along with Jeter and Purdy, acknowledge that the doctrine does not insure automatic, instant healing, a belief that is nonetheless held by some Pentecostals. This is the issue that Wimber takes up when discussing the relationship of the atonement to divine healing; he notes that some believe that lack of healing is evidence of "flawed faith."⁶⁷ Purdy writes, "Jesus dismissed this wrong-headed assumption, which was apparently current among the rabbis of his day (see John 9:1-3)."⁶⁸ Gee pleads with his readers to recognize the truth that some are not healed.⁶⁹ Gee argues that interpreting this doctrine within the whole of Scripture guards against the extremes of presuming on God's sovereignty and assuming that all divine healing happens outside of a doctor's office. Robert Menzies discusses the relationship of healing and the atonement in the book *Spirit and Power*. He argues that the interpretation of Matt 8:14-17 should rest on its context and ultimately not on the context in Isaiah. The context "centers on physical healing."⁷⁰ He also points out that Matthew uses his own translation to insure reference to physical illness instead of the LXX which translates as "sins."⁷¹

Gordon Fee is a Pentecostal who argues that healing is not in the atonement. Fee does not find any text that explicitly links the healing and atonement, in the same manner salvation is linked to the atonement. Fee denies that Matthew has the cross in mind when he cites Isaiah 53 (Matt 8:16-17). The citation is a notice that Jesus' ministry fulfilled the earlier prophecy.⁷² Further, Fee does not believe that the citation of Isaiah 53:5

⁶⁷ Wimber, *Power Healing*, p. 154.

⁶⁸ Purdy, "Divine Healing," p. 504.

⁶⁹ Gee, *Trophimus, I Left Sick*, p. 22.

⁷⁰ William Menzies and Robert Menzies, *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), p. 166.

⁷¹ Menzies & Menzies, *Spirit and Power*, p. 166.

⁷² Gordon Fee, *The Disease of the Health and Wealth Gospels* (Costa Mesa, CA: Word for Today, 1979), p. 15.

in 1 Peter 2:24 refers to physical healing. The usage is clearly metaphorical. So, for Fee healing is not in the atonement.

2.3 Scope of Healing

There is a general agreement on the holistic nature of man. Purdy's presentation is representative. He describes man as a unit that exists in duality, physical and spiritual aspects. Biblical holism is not monism. Instead it recognizes the human person as a whole person, each part working for the benefit of the whole.⁷³ However, Pentecostal discussions of healing focus on physical healing and demon possession, but almost exclusively on physical healing. Yet, Harold Carpenter links the healing ministry of Christ with the expulsion of a demon.⁷⁴ Warrington also links the healings and exorcisms of Christ by including discussions of both in his book.⁷⁵

Classical Pentecostals have traditionally argued against the possibility of demon possession of Christians. The usual usage understands demon oppression to be found within the lives of believer and unbeliever alike. Symptoms of oppression include trials, difficulties, opposition and physical illness. In oppression the demon attempts to discourage the Christian or unbeliever.⁷⁶ Demon possession is described as demons taking up residence in a person by dominating and controlling them. Demon possessed persons are characterized by complete insanity, extraordinary power and inhuman knowledge. In this condition, persons can be docile and nonviolent or aggressive and violent, even dangerous.⁷⁷ Jeter's argument is based on the incompatibility of darkness and light. He asserts that the Spirit-filled Christian cannot be possessed by demons. He does not address whether this includes all Christians or only a subset of Christians. But, Jeter argues that darkness and light have "no fellowship." Jeter quotes 1 John 4:4 as the clinching verse, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).⁷⁸ Steven Carter argues against the use of the term "demonization" because it carries the

⁷³ Purdy, "Divine Healing," p. 502.

⁷⁴ Harold Carpenter, "Terminology of Power Encounter," in *Power Encounter*, ed. Opal Reddin (Springfield, MO: Central Bible College, 1999), pp. 63-84 (67).

⁷⁵ Warrington, *Jesus the Healer*, pp. 30-140.

⁷⁶ Jeter, *By His Stripes*, p. 111.

⁷⁷ Jeter, *By His Stripes*, pp. 111-12.

⁷⁸ Jeter, *By His Stripes*, p. 114.

“extra-biblical meaning” of levels of demonization.⁷⁹ Carpenter also argues against the validity of levels of demonization.⁸⁰ Carter also attacks the Dickason’s method, which is followed by Wagner. Dickason determines that since the biblical evidence is inconclusive ‘clinical experiences’ are conclusive. In response, Carter writes “clinical evidence is not enough on which to base any theological teaching.”⁸¹

2.4 Practice of Healing

TW theologians and classical Pentecostals are agreed that the gift of miracles, the gifts of healings and the gift of faith are important in divine healing. However, there is some difference as to their operation. TW theologians believe they are given the gifts, meaning that they “specialize” in a certain area. Wagner and Wimber affirm that they have been given the gift of healing. The plurals, “gifts of healings,” are taken to mean that there are many various kinds of healings needed. It is possible to even specialize within healing; Wagner has noticed that he is often used in the healing of skeletal problems, especially when one leg is shorter than the other. They would agree with Pentecostals in asserting that God is sovereign in the exercise of the gifts. Wagner would like to go empty the nearest hospital, but he would only go if he felt that’s what God wanted him to do.⁸² Jeter argues that the gifts are not the exclusive property of the receiver of the gifts. The operation of the gifts is not at the whim of the person exercising the gifts of healing.⁸³ Jeter does not directly address the issue of permanence. However, in discussing 1 Cor 12:4-11, Fee, representing many Pentecostals, notes that the plural, *charismata*, does not suggest a permanence of the gift, but each exercise of healing is a gift on its own.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Steven Carter, “Demon Possession and the Christian,” *Asian Journal Pentecostal Studies* 3:1 (Jan 2000), pp. 19-31 (23).

⁸⁰ Carpenter, “Terminology of Power Encounter,” p. 80.

⁸¹ Carter, “Demon Possession and the Christian,” p. 30.

⁸² Wagner, *Healing Ministry*, p. 129.

⁸³ Jeter, *By His Stripes*, pp. 67-68.

⁸⁴ Gordon Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), pp. 168-69.

Conclusions

The TW and classical Pentecostalism have much in common. There are great similarities in worldview. Both movements acknowledge the importance of the spiritual world to the activities in the physical world. They recognize that there are two opposing forces. Although Christ has conquered Satan, the fullness of the kingdom has not yet come.

The theologians of the TW seem to agree on the basics of healing. The rule of the kingdom provides the purpose of healing and for the authority of healing. More sure is their agreement on the scope of healing. Man is a whole being and God heals the whole being: salvation, inner healing, healing from demonization and bodily healing. Similarly, they all seem to agree on three fundamental aspects of the practice of healing. The theory of healing should inform the practice of healing. The "healing procedure" is significant. The five steps include an interview, a diagnostic decision, a prayer selection, the prayer engagement and post-prayer directions. These five steps show how important it is for the TW to make the ministry of healing accessible to the majority of Christians. Finally, while the TW believe that some are given a gift of healing, they also believe that at some level healing is a skill and that effectiveness can be increased by instruction.

The classical Pentecostals are less unified than the Third Wave. Further, CP literature concerning healing is not available to the extent the TW literature is. However, several works focusing on the biblical theology of healing are welcome additions and hopefully precursors of a change.⁸⁵ For Pentecostals, God heals to glorify himself, evangelize and to promote the kingdom of God. However, the importance of the kingdom of God to explaining the purposes of God's healing should be more fully investigated. Indeed, the more recent treatments reference the kingdom of God as important in a theology of healing. Our theology of healing should be enriched by our understanding of the kingdom. Further, the importance and nature of the relationship between evangelism and healing should be more fully pursued by both groups. Classical Pentecostals are more unified, seeing the atonement as the authority and source of healing. Fee argues against "healing in the atonement" presumably because of its misuse in faith healing movements.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ M. L. Brown, *Israel's Divine Healer* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995) and Keith Warrington, *Jesus the Healer*.

⁸⁶ Fee, *The Disease*, p. 16.

Discussion of the nature of demonic activity in the lives of believers will be around for some time. Both the TW and Pentecostals present unified opposing sets of beliefs about this issue. There are some who believe differently than the group they belong to. However, contra Wagner, this hardly proves the truth of either belief. Pentecostals are not likely to start using the term “demonization,” while Third Wavers are not close to using the terms “oppression” or “demon possession.” Although illustrative, the issues are deeper than mere use of terms. Finally, Pentecostals, for the most, believe that the gifts of healing are not “given,” as to reside within a person. Instead, they expect a gift of healing to be given for a specific healing, or even to the person being healed. As well, most Pentecostals would be uncomfortable with the idea of teaching steps to increase the effectiveness of healing.

Dialogue between these groups should continue. The TW is still a relatively young movement. It is too soon to predict the changes that will occur as it ages. However, as the TW moves through the various evangelical traditions, the underlying theologies are expected to shift to fit within those traditions, as in the Charismatic movement. It is clear that more work must be done concerning CP’s theology of divine healing. There is no complete presentation of a theology of healing. However, this paper has served to illustrate some of the issues that would be addressed by such a work.

Healing has always been a central practice in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches throughout the world. The chapter focuses on a modernized practice of traditional Pentecostal faith healing implemented by the Healing Rooms, a globally expanded predominantly Charismatic Christian intercessory prayer service. The underlying purpose of this activity is undoubtedly evangelization. However, this mission is carried out exclusively by praying for clients individually according to their personal requests at local prayer clinics.