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## Book Reviews and Subscription Form

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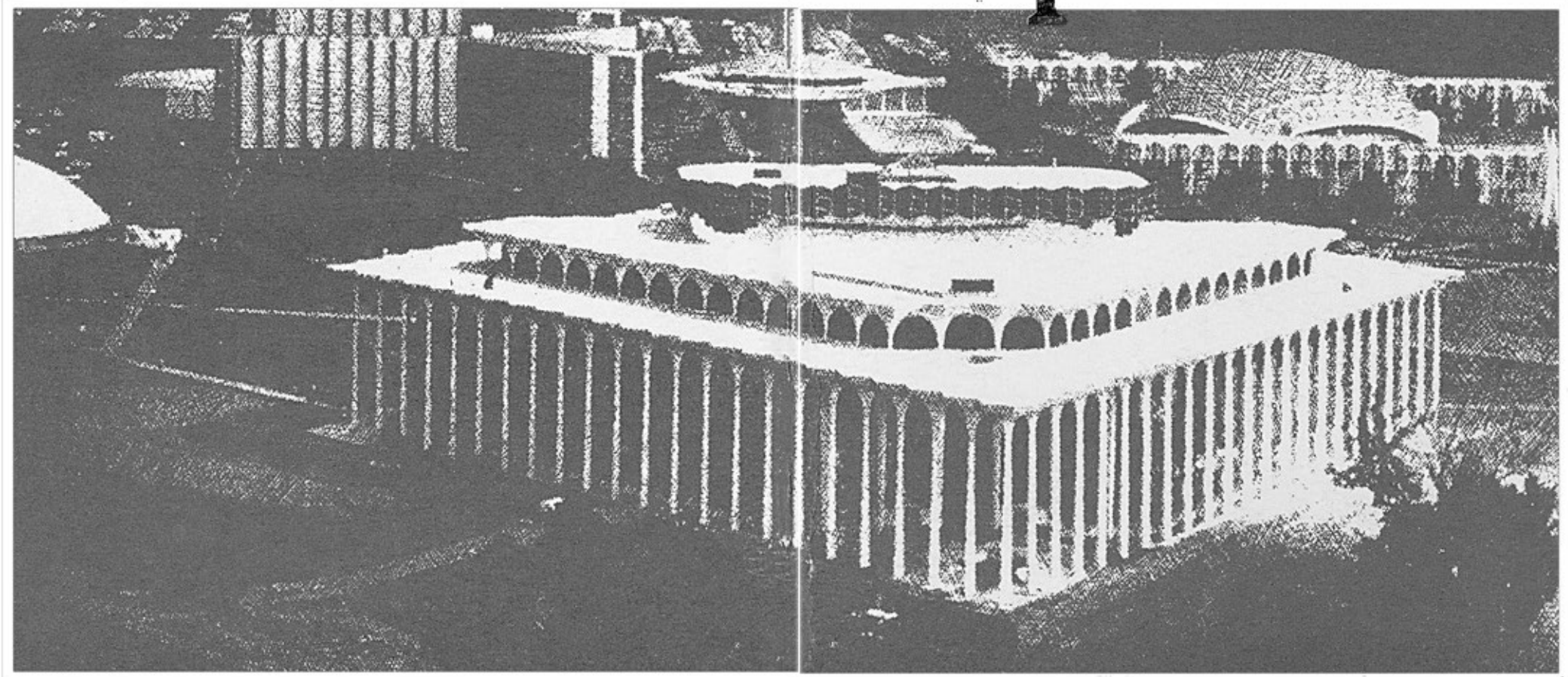
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# Spiritus



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## Book Reviews

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(All inquiries and correspondence pertaining to the review of books should be addressed to J. Steven O'Malley, Oral Roberts University School of Theology, 7777 South Lewis, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74171.)

*Healing and Christianity* by Morton T. Kelsey. Harper & Row, Inc., 1974.

This well-known classic has proven itself through more than 10 years of circulation. The book is practical and down-to-earth with regard to healing. Kelsey is not afraid of the negative aspects of the abuses but leaves one with a feeling that a healing ministry is of God. The book makes sense. It makes sense medically. It makes sense psychologically. It makes sense philosophically. It makes sense theologically.

Admittedly, owing to the range and length of the book, some sections are somewhat thin (especially the section on ancient healing). Nonetheless, Kelsey makes a good attempt at inclusiveness. The book is clearly outlined and easily understood. Its practical suggestions abound. One finishes reading the book feeling that there are things that one can actually do to improve one's health.

Kelsey goes to great lengths to correct certain misconceptions and error. Disease, for example, is not from God. He also challenges the modern world to break out of its five-dimensional box and to prepare itself for experiencing the things of God. Kelsey speaks of the Holy Spirit in such a way that one is convinced that he himself has experienced the work of the Spirit. He reminds us that healing was the focus of the ministry of Christ. The early church was a healing community. In fact, at no time has the Church been without some healing manifestation within her several parts. Some of these manifestations were healthy, some not so healthy. Nonetheless, healing is for the Church. Healing is for today. Healing is for

you. Drawing on sources from Descartes to Jung to Agnes Sanford, Kelsey's overall presentation makes it possible to believe that God is still at work.

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*Divine Healing Today* by Richard Mayhue. Moody Press, 1983.

Richard Mayhue, a former professor of Greek, New Testament, and pastoral ministries at Grace Theological Seminary and now associate pastor of Grace Community Church of the Valley, Panorama City, Calif., set out to fulfill a need that R. A. Torrey had said existed: "to discover exactly what God teaches on this very important subject [divine healing], and all He teaches" (pp. 11ff.). Though an admirable intent, Dr. Mayhue hardly succeeds. His effort is soon enough derailed by a tenacious and pernicious dispensationalism that insists on explaining away or denying the validity of anything suggesting divine healing through humans after the Apostolic Era. "Our examination of the Scriptures has demonstrated that there is no biblical basis for a ministry of miraculous healing directly *through a human healer today*" (pp. 84ff.).

The above italicized words are the key to Mayhue's argument. He devotes much of Part I to establishing that "Healing is noticeable in the Old Testament, overwhelming in the gospels, frequent in Acts, and negligible in the epistles. The apostolic age ended and miraculous healing by direct human intervention ceased" (p. 42). Such is the case because healing miracles were God's authentication of Jesus' messiahship (p. 32) and of the apostles' ministry (p. 41). Many Christians would concur that miracles admirably did fulfill that purpose. However, Jesus' messiahship and the apostles' ministry continue to need that same authentication. The reality in the life of many Christians that they have experienced the Master's touch for their own healing subsequent to the prayer of some saint or saints of the faith hardly supports Mayhue's theory. Most important, the Scriptures do NOT teach that the miracles were simply means for authentication of Jesus' messiahship or the apostles' ministry. Romans 15:18ff. state quite explicitly that the reason for the miraculous in Paul's ministry was to evoke obedience from the Gentiles. Hebrews 2:3ff. remind one that God bore witness to the gospel, not the messenger, by the miraculous. Nothing about such purposes is peculiar to the needs of first-generation apostles.

Part II, "A Christian's Response to Sickness," offers some positive encouragements to bear one's illness with Christian grace and patience, trusting in God for healing from "the terminal disease," sin (p. 137).

Whereas the volume has sound insights on selected scriptures, e.g., Isaiah 53, Matthew 8, and I Peter 2, it repeatedly betrays the author's underlying commitment to a theological position that denies expression to the whole

of the Bible's message regarding what God would and could and might do in and for and through His people.

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