

EDITORIAL: THE HEALING ISSUE

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This issue is dedicated to exploring the subject of healing within the global Spirit-empowered tradition. As a practice of Christianity, healing weaves in and out of the narrative of historic Christianity from the early church to modern days. Yet, healing truly came to prominence in the Christian tradition during the mid-nineteenth century with the emphasis on divine healing in the various streams of evangelicalism in the United States and Great Britain. The four-fold pillars of evangelical theology—salvation, sanctification, healing, second coming—eventually became the basis for Pentecostal theology, which was expanded to include the baptism in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues.¹ Yet, the doctrine that was held in common by both the proto-Pentecostal and emerging Pentecostal tradition was the belief in the power of God to heal. This was demonstrated in the way early Pentecostals drew from the healing theologies of A. B. Simpson, A. J. Gordon, William Boardman, Charles Cullis, and Carrie Judd Montgomery, all who rooted their healing theology within their pneumatology. In fact, as Donald Dayton pointed out, it could be that healing, rather than tongues, has proved to be the universally accepted distinctive across all Spirit-filled pneumatology over the past nearly two centuries.² Even today, as some Pentecostal denominations are relaxing their views on tongues, healing has overtaken the baptism in the Holy Spirit as the most notable characteristic of Spirit-empowered spirituality.³

It is noteworthy that a renewal of emphasis on the Holy Spirit in the church came on the heels of healing revivals both in the case of the mid-nineteenth-century evangelicalism and the mid-twentieth-century Charismatic Renewal. The Healing Movement of the 1950s set the stage for the Charismatic Renewal. This was no more apparent than in the healing ministry of Oral Roberts on prime-time television in the 1950s, which

opened up the once hidden secrets of Pentecostal spirituality to mainline Protestant Christianity. The hope of healing demonstrated in Roberts' ministry created a hunger in these other traditions for the power of God. As David Harrell comments, "No individual more acutely discerned that hunger, or more effectively fed it, than Oral Roberts."⁴ While the Holy Spirit was certainly center in the ethos of the Charismatic Renewal, it was often ministered in the contexts of healing masses and services that were central to the renewal in Catholic and Protestant circles.⁵

Oral Roberts University (ORU) was birthed out of Oral Roberts' commission to take God's healing to "every person's world." ORU was designed to be more than a Bible training institution for pastors and evangelists. Roberts believed that the primary mission was to raise up well-educated students who could become an avenue for healing humanity through every profession. As this concept matured, it blossomed into the establishment of graduate schools not only in theology, but in law, medicine, and business. The idea of "cross pollination" meant that Roberts' theology of healing could be lived out within various professional disciplines. No effort exemplified this more than the ORU School of Medicine and the City of Faith Medical and Research Complex. Here Roberts cast a vision of bringing together two streams of divine healing: prayer and medicine. This idea is exemplified in the giant "Healing Hands" included on the cover of this issue that once sat in front of the City of Faith. The idea was that healing brings together the one hand of prayer with the other hand of medicine. While the experiment of the City of Faith ultimately ended in controversy, the idea of healing through various other professions has persevered and has been implemented in various sectors of Christian higher education and ministry. That statue now sits at the entrance of ORU, showcasing that healing can extend to every person's world through Spirit-empowered higher education.

This volume was birthed with a desire to draw attention to this legacy. Included in this volume is a mixed collection of narrative-based contributions with their own unique and theological values, which the editorial team considered of special significance to the issue of healing in the

Spirit-empowered movement. In this way, they serve to highlight how healing transcends simply physical healing into other disciplines. Although this issue is not intended to focus specifically on Oral Roberts, it seeks to reflect the ethos of his multi-disciplinary vision to take healing into “every person’s world.” It begins with two reflections from individuals who experienced first-hand the vision of healing through medicine in the ORU Medical School. Dr. John Crouch begins the issue by sharing about the origins of the idea of merging healing and medicine and his role in the beginnings of the School of Medicine. As a founding faculty member, he charts the untold story of not only Roberts’ vision, but the passion of a group of doctors who themselves had been seeking a place to live out this vision. To add to that, Dr. Clay Powell offers another layer to the story as he offers his experience as a graduate of the School of Medicine just a few years before it closed in 1989. Powell shares about how he as a student embraced this vision and has practiced the principles of healing and medicine in his own medical practice. This portion was designed to create a space that honors that legacy and welcomes those who helped pioneer and shape that vision. Although the ORU School of Medicine no longer exists, the faculty and graduates are still part of our legacy and should be remembered.

The second part of this volume explores ways in which this vision was implemented in other areas. Hayoung A. Lim offers a study of the way in which music has become a vehicle to bring healing to individuals with physical, emotional, and social needs. As a health care profession, music therapy has become a whole-person approach to healing for people with psychological and behavioral issues. From a historical perspective, the guest editor follows this by a study of the way in which Oral Roberts’ vision of healing was lived out through his efforts of racial inclusion and integration, particularly at ORU. During the height of conversations in America about race and equality, Oral Roberts made bold steps not only to include people of color at ORU, but also became an advocate for racial justice. From a biblical perspective, Lian Mung offers a study of the significance of healing in the well known and loved promise from 2 Chron 7:13–16 that God will “heal their land.” Mung’s study seeks to go beyond the somewhat shallow

and popular understandings of this verse to explore the intertextual nature of God's holistic promise of healing that extends to the physical land, bodily health, spiritual restoration, and true wholeness of right relationship with God for Israel.

The final section includes two studies about the integration of healing and missional engagement. The first comes from missiologist Julie Ma, who demonstrates the way in which healing has been particularly important in the growth and expansion of Christianity in Asia. Through documented stories of healing, she surveys the landscape of how healing has expanded the effect of evangelism in Asia. Secondly, Evangelist Daniel King offers a history of the uniquely Pentecostal evangelistic paradigm of "healing *en masse*." King identifies pivotal turning points in the story of how this uniquely Spirit-filled methodology developed and offers a case study that demonstrates how healing can be an effective tool in reaching the lost, particularly in the global South.

This volume is dedicated to the centrality of healing as a unifying theological concept that orients the Spirit-empowered movement and gives breadth to its theological, missiological, and ecclesiological expressions. We pray that it will draw attention to the legacy of healing inspired by Oral Roberts and will be a catalyst for more conversations within the movement about how Spirit-empowered people can live out a theology of healing in "every person's world."

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Notes

¹ Bernie A. Van De Walle, *The Heart of the Gospel: A. B. Simpson, the Fourfold Gospel, and Late Nineteenth Century Evangelical Theology* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publishing, 2009), 221–22.

² Donald W. Dayton, *The Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 115.

³ John C. Green, “Appendix Two: Pentecostal Growth and Impact on Latin America, Africa, and Asia,” in *Spirit and Power: The Growth and Global Impact of Pentecostalism*, eds. Donald E. Miller, Kimon H. Sargeant, and Richard Flory (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 335–37. The Pew Forum survey revealed that more Spirit-empowered communities around the globe experienced healing personally than speaking in tongues.

⁴ David E. Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 292.

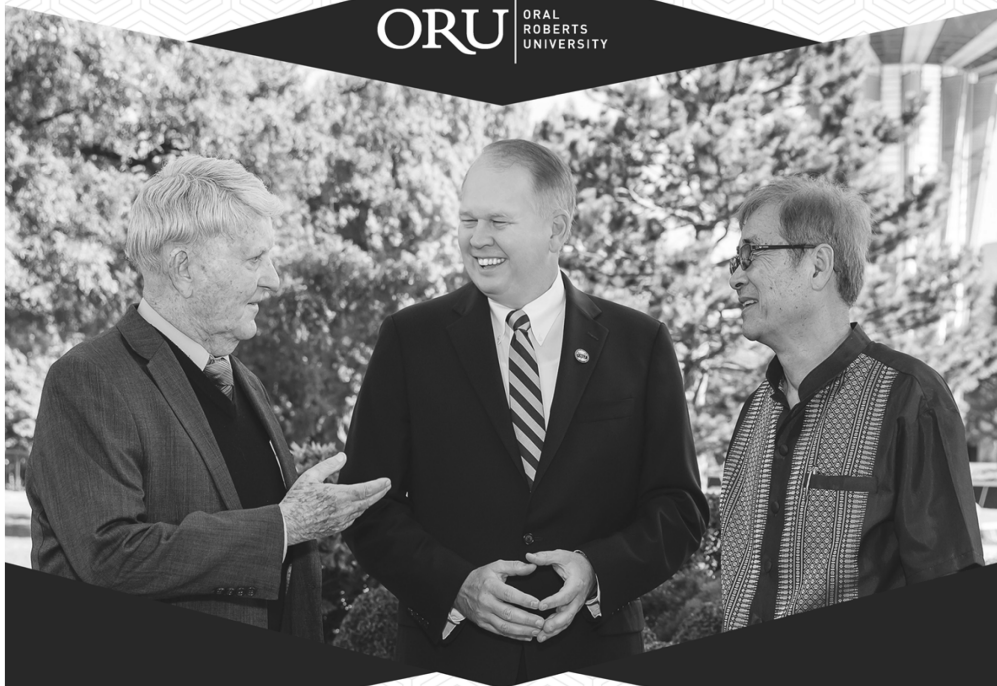
⁵ Susan A. Maurer, *The Spirit of Enthusiasm: A History of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2010), 67–69. See also Alan Schreck, *A Mighty Current of Grace: The Story of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Fredrick, MD: The Word Among Us Press, 2017).

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