

2019

Healing En Masse: Examining the Unique Contribution of the Spirit-Empowered Movement to the Practice of Mass Evangelism

Daniel King
daniel@kingministries.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/spiritus>



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christian Denominations and Sects Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), [Comparative Methodologies and Theories Commons](#), [Ethics in Religion Commons](#), [History of Christianity Commons](#), [History of Religions of Western Origin Commons](#), [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#), [Missions and World Christianity Commons](#), [New Religious Movements Commons](#), [Practical Theology Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

King, Daniel (2019) "Healing En Masse: Examining the Unique Contribution of the Spirit-Empowered Movement to the Practice of Mass Evangelism," *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology*. Vol. 4 : No. 2 , Article 10.

Available at: <https://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/spiritus/vol4/iss2/10>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Theology & Ministry at Digital Showcase. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* by an authorized editor of Digital Showcase. For more information, please contact digitalshowcase@oru.edu.

HEALING EN MASSE

EXAMINING THE UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION OF
THE SPIRIT-EMPOWERED MOVEMENT TO THE
PRACTICE OF MASS EVANGELISM

DANIEL C. KING

Spiritus 4.2 (2019) 297–316

<http://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/spiritus/>

© The Author(s) 2019

Reprints and Permissions: Spiritus@oru.edu

Keywords *healing, evangelism, T. L. Osborn, F. F. Bosworth, Brazil*

Abstract

This article explores the unique innovation of mass healing evangelism by Spirit-empowered evangelists as an effective methodology for reaching people for Christ. It will trace the development of the idea of healing “en masse” in the Pentecostal tradition. It showcases a case study from a crusade conducted by the author in the nation of Brazil in which healing and evangelism were wedded together as an effective ministry strategy.

Introduction

During the coursework for my Doctorate of Ministry degree, I took a class on evangelism at Multnomah University in Portland, Oregon. There were ten students in the class, two students were Pentecostals from Africa, and the rest were from traditional evangelical backgrounds in North America and Europe. During a discussion about the role that healing plays in the calling of the evangelist, one evangelical student expressed surprise that when he did a crusade in Africa, the local Pentecostal believers expected him to pray for the sick after giving an altar call for salvation. As a

Pentecostal myself, I responded, “I believe evangelists should pray for the sick. In Acts 8, Philip was an evangelist who performed miracles when he preached the gospel in Samaria.” Another evangelical student responded that he did not believe that the model of the evangelist in Acts was prescriptive for today’s paradigm for evangelism but was only descriptive of what happened in New Testament times. After our discussion, the two African Pentecostals in the class were glad that I defended Pentecostal practices. My classmate’s response, though not surprising in a setting like this one, did highlight for me that the practice of integrating healing with evangelism is mostly unique to the Spirit-empowered movement. Spirit-empowered evangelists have made a unique contribution to the practice of evangelism and their methods of linking miracles and evangelism have proven to be effective, especially in the developing world.

Where did the practice of integrating prayer for healing with evangelism originate? The development of the methodology of mass evangelism can be traced back to Charles Finney (1792–1875). Finney was the first one to develop the methodology of evangelism through mass organization. In contrast to Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), Finney believed that a revival does not require a divine move of God; instead, he believed it could be organized using the proper techniques. When Finney came to town, his team secured a location, organized churches, and invited local churches to supply a big choir.¹ Similarly, D. L. Moody (1837–1899) used his business background to add business-like principles to the process of preparing a meeting, including the use of extensive advertising.² This formula was used by later evangelists such as R. A. Torrey (1856–1928) and Billy Sunday (1862–1935). This paradigm is essentially the blueprint for the evangelical model of evangelism exemplified by Billy Graham.³

From this first paradigm, a second paradigm has developed in mass evangelism exemplified by Luis Palau. In the early years of his ministry, Palau followed Billy Graham’s model, but later, developed an attractional methodology that sought to draw people using extreme sports, a skate

park, food vendors, and children's activities like bouncy houses and face painting.⁴ To match his methodology for reaching people, he renamed his evangelistic events "festivals."⁵ In the context of an entertainment driven society seeped in scientific skepticism, the Palau method of using entertainment and music to attract the lost is useful. Palau's son Kevin further developed this idea with an initiative called "CityServe," a holistic approach to evangelism where the evangelist works to serve the local community.⁶ Because the goal of the evangelist is to preach the gospel to as many people as possible, evangelists use a variety of attractions in order to persuade people to attend their events. Both of these paradigms employed by evangelical evangelists in mass evangelism have been effective, both at home and abroad.

However, evangelists in the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition have developed this third paradigm of evangelism: the healing crusade. In the context of developing nations where medical resources are limited the Spirit-empowered practice of emphasizing the healing power of God has proved to be an effective way to attract people to an evangelistic event.⁷ Advertising miracles is a different kind of "attractational" model that can be used to reach people, particularly in the global south. It is this model that has contributed significantly to Pentecostalism becoming the fastest growing segment of Christianity. As Candy Gunther Brown has pointed out, outside of North America, 80–90 percent of first-generation Christians attribute their conversions primarily to divine healing.⁸

This article will explore the unique innovation of mass healing evangelism by Spirit-empowered evangelists as an effective methodology for reaching people for Christ. It will trace the development of the idea of healing "en masse" in the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition. Finally, as a case study of the effectiveness of this unique approach, I will share research from a crusade conducted by the author in the nation of Brazil in which healing and evangelism were wedded together as an effective ministry strategy.

A History of Healing Evangelism in the Spirit-Empowered Movement

The roots of healing evangelism in the Pentecostal Movement can be traced back to the ministry of John Alexander Dowie (1847–1907).⁹ As a young man, Dowie was healed instantaneously of dyspepsia. Because of this miracle, he felt God was calling him into the ministry. In Newtown, Australia, over forty members of his congregation died in an epidemic. This tragedy caused him to hate disease for the rest of his life. He said, “My heart was sick and faint as I saw my people lay dying in this epidemic and did not know how to tell them to get healing, the healing I myself had received. I did not know how to preach divine healing as a doctrine or how to practice it as a ministry.”¹⁰ He began to study God’s word concerning divine healing and became convinced that God healed people today.

In 1888, Dowie came to America as a missionary and in 1890 established his headquarters in Chicago. In an effort to reach people, he built a tabernacle at the south entrance to the World’s Fair, across the street from Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show. Above the tabernacle was a twenty-foot sign advertising God’s healing power. Two key people were healed during this time, which catapulted his ministry into a national spotlight. One was the niece of Buffalo Bill Cody and the other was the cousin of Abraham Lincoln.¹¹ Eventually, he built the largest wooden arena of his time, which seated 8,000 people. Despite his flaws, he was a significant contributor to what would be known as the “healing movement” in America.¹²

As James Robinson has pointed out, Dowie’s emphasis on divine healing was the beginning of a unique approach not shared by earlier healing ministers like Charles Cullis and A. B. Simpson.¹³ For Dowie, healing was linked to his view of restorationism that God was restoring the gospel of healing and miracles in the last days. In this was the seeds of the idea that if salvation is for everyone, then healing is also for everyone as a part of the gospel. This was an important concept that would be

instrumental in the development of the Pentecostal theology of healing “en masse.”

After Dowie’s death, the gospel of healing became an essential part of the explosion of Pentecostalism following the Azusa Street Revival in 1906. Early Pentecostal healing evangelists such as Marie Woodworth-Etter (1844–1924), John G. Lake (1870–1935), F. F. Bosworth (1877–1958), Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944), and Smith Wigglesworth (1859–1947) implemented the practice of praying for the sick during evangelistic campaigns.¹⁴ They taught that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13:8). Pentecostals preached a “full-Gospel,” good news for the body, the soul, and for the spirit.¹⁵ Within the restorationist theology, they believed that the apostolic ministry included signs and wonders. This meant they were concerned with more than the saving of souls; they also believed in the healing of the body.

F. F. Bosworth

While most Pentecostals preached divine healing, perhaps the most significant early Pentecostal healing evangelist was F. F. Bosworth. Healed of a lung problem as a young man, Bosworth’s family moved to Dowie’s city, Zion, Illinois, and he became the director of the Zion City concert band.¹⁶ He was filled with the Holy Spirit when Charles Parham came to Zion. He also visited the Azusa Street Revival and pastored the First Assembly of God church in Dallas, Texas, for eight years. In 1912, he invited Maria Woodworth-Etter to hold six months of meetings at his church. Bosworth turned his attention to itinerate evangelism and for the next three decades became one of the best-known prototypes for what became the healing evangelist in the 1950s.¹⁷ Bosworth is best known for writing *Christ the Healer* in 1924, a classic book on God’s healing power that has seen multiple reprints over the years.¹⁸ In it Bosworth argued that if salvation was for all, then healing would also be for all. Not only could God make people whole, but God *wanted* to make people whole.¹⁹ In Ottawa, Canada, in the 1930s, he conducted a campaign that filled an 11,000-seat

auditorium. So many miracles were reported at this campaign that people brought the sick in cars, ambulances, and even hearses.²⁰ Through his largescale crusades, Bosworth became the standard other evangelists looked up to, including the next generation of Pentecostal evangelists that reshaped healing evangelism in the 1950s.

Voices of Healing

Bosworth became an important link in the development of mass healing evangelism because of his mentorship of many of the Voice of Healing evangelists of the 1950s–1960s, including William Branham (1909–1965), Gordon Lindsey (1906–1973), A. A. Allen (1911–1970), Oral Roberts (1918–2009), and T. L. Osborn (1923–2013).²¹ Each of these noted healing evangelists began simply preaching salvation and healing in revivals. But each was also convinced that healing was an essential part of the “full gospel” and used the prospect of healing as a means by which evangelism can be more effective. Gordon Lindsey, the architect behind the healing movement wrote, “[h]ealing the sick is a Christ ordained method for evangelization around the world.”²²

At first, Voice of Healing evangelists followed the traditional Pentecostal methodology of laying hands on each individual who needed healing, either in a healing line or a healing tent. However, the increasing popularity and the growing crowds, which were filling ever-larger revival tents, created a new dilemma. How does a preacher lay hands on everyone when the crowds consist of thousands of people at a time? One approach used was to hand out cards to attendees to help them organize and select those who could enter the healing lines. In 1951, Gordon Lindsey explained this procedure: “It has been found that the only satisfactory way to deal with large crowds is to give out cards that are methodically numbered or alphabetized. This allows for people to receive prayer in an orderly manner.”²³ William Branham and Oral Roberts, perhaps the exemplars of mass healing evangelism, both used this method of giving out cards to the sick so they could be called forward for individual prayer. Roberts’ crowds

were so large he would often pray for hours individually for people.²⁴ This model, while effective for those who received prayer, was not sustainable for the evangelists.

Tommy Lee and Daisy Osborn

The challenge of praying for healing of large crowds led to a new innovation by Tommy Lee Osborn and Daisy Osborn (1924–1995). The Osborns were unique among Voice of Healing evangelists because they primarily conducted healing crusades internationally, particularly in Africa, rather than America. T. L. and Daisy went to India as missionaries at the ages of 20 and 21 in 1945. While they were in India, they were disappointed at the lack of converts. Osborn found it difficult to communicate the gospel to the Hindu and Muslim people of India and returned home disappointed after only ten months.²⁵ When they returned to the States, they began to fast and pray to discover the reason why their ministry was so ineffective. In their desperation Osborn discovered the key to effective evangelism is “people must have proof of the gospel and evidence that Jesus is alive.”²⁶ This realization would come through a series of circumstances.

To learn more about how to minister healing, T. L. Osborn tried to attend a meeting conducted by healing evangelist Charles Price, but Price died right before the camp meeting. Osborn cried out to God, “Lord, who will now pack the nation’s auditoriums and proclaim the gospel in power and miracle demonstrations, so that the people will believe God’s word?”²⁷ In response to his prayer, Osborn received four visions of Jesus that changed the way he saw evangelism. In July 1947, he heard Hattie Hammond preach a sermon titled “If You Ever See Jesus, You Can Never Be the Same Again.”²⁸ Osborn cried and prayed all night asking for an encounter with the living Savior and the next morning, he reported, “the Lord Jesus walked into my bedroom at 6:00 am.”²⁹ Osborn’s second vision of Jesus occurred at a William Branham (1909–1965) meeting in Portland, Oregon. At the meeting, Osborn witnessed hundreds of people being healed instantaneously. Osborn said, “I was captivated by the deliverance of a little

deaf girl over whom he prayed.”³⁰ For Osborn, this was a revelation that Jesus could work through a person. Osborn’s third vision of Jesus was in the pages of the New Testament. As T. L. and Daisy read through the New Testament they were impacted by Heb 13:8, that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever,” which meant that Jesus could do miracles just as he did in the New Testament.³¹ The final working out of this came when the Osborns held a healing revival at their church in Oregon and all the people they prayed for reported being healed.³² The Osborns became convinced that preaching about a miracle-working Jesus was the answer to world evangelism. Soon thereafter, they left the United States once again and went to Jamaica.³³

In Jamaica in 1948, Osborn tried to lay hands on each individual who needed healing, but he was quickly overwhelmed because of the number of people who wanted prayer.³⁴ Then, he tried to give out numbered cards like Branham, but he soon had to stop because he found that the policemen who were assigned to give out the healing cards were selling them to the people instead of giving them away. Because of the large crowd, Osborn was disappointed because many people had to leave without receiving prayer.

The challenge of praying for large crowds came to a head. Osborn describes his questions in his book *Healing En Masse*, published in 1958:

Is it necessary to lay hands on the sick as a point of contact for setting a time to believe? Was it God’s plan that sick people form long lines to be healed? What is the solution to the problem of ministering healing to large audiences of suffering people without the system of numbered prayer cards and prayer lines?³⁵

Two critical ideas were identified that helped Osborn solve this dilemma. First was a conversation he had with F. F. Bosworth about the need for a methodology that would meet the needs of the masses.³⁶ Bosworth asked Osborn, “If I give an altar call and fifty people respond and I lead them in a prayer of salvation, how many of them are saved?” Osborn replied, “All of them.” Bosworth continued, “So, if I give a call for healing

and fifty people respond and I lead them in a prayer for healing, how many of them can God heal?" Osborn asked, "Why not all of them?" Because of this conversation, the idea to pray a single mass prayer for healing was born.³⁷

The second moment came at a meeting in Flint, Michigan, in June 1949, where the meeting was supposed to be William Branham's crusade, but Branham was exhausted from laying hands on thousands of individuals and invited Osborn to come finish the meeting.³⁸ Osborn recalled what happened that night when he suddenly realized he could pray for large numbers of people to be healed at the same time. He wrote, "God seemed to say to me, 'Why do you limit my power? I can heal ten thousand as easily as one.'"³⁹ Osborn explained his reasoning,

If one sufferer stands before me in a prayer line, I lay my hands on that one and pray to God. I believe He hears my prayer [and] the sufferer is made whole. That is proof that God has heard my prayer . . . Since I can pray and God hears and answers my prayer, why do I not ask God to perform a thousand miracles at the same time? If He is God, His power is unlimited! If He can do one miracle, He can do a thousand miracles at the same time!⁴⁰

Osborn wrote,

I knew that if a thousand people wanted to accept Christ and be saved, I would not pray for each one individually; I would teach them all to call on the Lord and to believe at one time. All who believed would be saved. I knew the same method should be followed in ministering to the sick.⁴¹

At that meeting in Flint, Michigan, Osborn decided to test his idea.⁴² He asked everyone who was deaf to come forward and fifty-four people responded. In one prayer, Osborn commanded the deaf spirits to leave. He reported, "All of those present received their hearing immediately, except three. By the next day, they too had recovered."⁴³ Osborn concluded,

I knew that Mass Evangelism was the only way to reach the world for Jesus. I knew we must demonstrate the power of Christ on a mass scale if the millions of Heathen souls are to witness Christ's power. I knew that no person could pray for the masses individually. HEALING EN MASSE is the only answer.⁴⁴

After the meeting in Flint, Osborn continued to experiment with the best way to pray for the sick. In 1951, at a crusade in Colon, Panama, a Foursquare pastor reported on one of Osborn's meetings. He said,

The first night that Brother Osborn prayed for the sick, many pushed forward to the platform, and the only way to restore order was to dismiss the service. The next night, instead of forming a prayer line, he prayed for all the sick at once, mentioning in prayer many of the infirmities of the people.⁴⁵

Many healings were recorded at the crusade in Panama, and thereafter praying a mass prayer for the sick became a defining ingredient in Osborn's preaching. Osborn believed "that the most fundamental lesson possible to learn about missions and evangelism is that without miracles, Christianity is little more than another dead religion."⁴⁶

Over the next few years, Osborn developed his very simple methodology for healing en masse. Osborn found that through testimonies of people who were healed and a simple message about the power of Jesus, sick people would be healed. When people were healed, he invited them to the platform to share their testimonies. These testimonies became the catalyst for attendees to return to their neighborhoods and invite their friends and family to come to the crusade. Over his seven decades of ministry, Osborn's method of praying a mass prayer for the sick at evangelistic campaigns was adopted by many other healing evangelists, including Aril Edvardsen (1938–2008) from Norway, Benson Idahosa (1938–1998) from Nigeria, Robert Kayanja (1962–present) from Uganda, D. G. S. Dhinakaran (1935–2008) from India, and Peter Youngren (1954–

present) from Canada. But no one has more successfully utilized Osborn's "healing en masse" concept than Reinhard Bonnke (1940–present).

Reinhard Bonnke

Reinhard Bonnke and his wife Anni accepted the call to be missionaries in Africa in 1967. Over the next seven years they served as missionaries in the country of Lesotho, reaching out to people in the traditional way, but Bonnke became frustrated at the low number of salvations. A critical moment came when Bonnke saw videos of Osborn's healing crusades and read Osborn's books. He began to realize that Osborn's method of healing en masse was the key to reaching Africa with the Gospel. God also showed him a vision of a "blood-washed Africa," an Africa washed in the blood of Jesus. Bonnke began to proclaim, "All of Africa shall be saved, from Cape Town to Cairo."⁴⁷

In 1974, his evangelistic organization Christ for All Nations held its first crusade in the national stadium in the country of Botswana. Out of the many churches in the city, only one small fellowship decided to help with the crusade. Bonnke was disappointed when only one hundred people came the first night. Yet, as he prayed for the sick, a man jumped up and shouted, "I've just been healed!" Other healings began to happen, and news spread across the city that God was doing miracles. By the last night of that crusade, the entire stadium was packed.⁴⁸ Thousands were saved and healed, and twelve years later, when Bonnke returned to do another crusade in the city, the leader of a large denomination announced that 80 percent of his pastors had been saved in that first crusade.⁴⁹

Bonnke's healing crusades have continued to draw enormous crowds across Africa. On November 12, 2000, 1.6 million people came to a single crusade meeting that Bonnke held in Lagos, Nigeria.⁵⁰ In this six-day crusade, over 6 million people heard the gospel message. Blind eyes were opened, breast tumors disappeared, the lame walked, mutes began to speak, and many other miracles were reported. Six million booklets were passed out and over 2,000 churches participated in following up on all the converts

who were saved. The effectiveness of merging healing and evangelism as a tool for bringing people to Christ in Africa can be seen in the over 78 million documented decisions for Christ in the ministry of Bonnke.⁵¹ As some of the leading African scholars attest, there is great potential for evangelistic success when evangelism is coupled with healing in the Global South.⁵²

A Spirit-Empowered Model of Evangelism

This brief history of the development of healing evangelism demonstrates a unique contribution to the practice of evangelism that has been proven to be effective, especially in the developing world. In contrast to the other evangelical models, by merging prayers for healing with evangelism, this model provides us with the following advantages.

First, healing was used by Spirit-empowered evangelists as an evangelistic tool to instill faith in people that the God they preached about is real. The testimonies of God's healing power solidified the believer's faith and attracted others to faith in God. In an age of scientific skepticism and religious pluralism, the appeal to a God who heals provided powerful evidence that God is real. This special, tangible reality demonstrated through a Jesus who can heal the sick gives Christianity a powerful advantage in the marketplace of religious ideas.

Second, healing was an effective strategy to reach people in the developing world. While healing evangelism originated in America, more rational evangelical models were also effective in a Western society dominated by the influence of the anti-supernatural philosophy of David Hume. But in much of the Majority World, the supernatural and natural are perceived to be much closer together and many believe that what happens in the spiritual realm impacts the physical realm on a daily basis. This makes the integration of healing and evangelism much more effective than other models. Healing of the body, exorcism of evil spirits, the presence of invisible angels, and spiritual blessings are very real concepts because of the spiritual characteristics that already exist in these cultures.⁵³

Third, healing was an effective way for the evangelist to minister to the felt needs of people. Evangelical evangelists focused on meeting spiritual needs, like the need for peace with God or forgiveness of sin, but by praying for healing, Spirit-empowered evangelists appeal to the physical and emotional needs of their audiences. They preached a gospel that not only dealt with sin issues, but also provided people with hope that physical healing was part of the totality of God's salvation. Like Jesus in the story of the paralyzed man who was let down through the roof (Matt 9:2–8; Mark 2:1–12), the Spirit-empowered evangelist offered hearers both forgiveness of sin and physical healing.

Finally, healing was modeled after Jesus' method of evangelism. Jesus proclaimed the good news with signs and wonders following. This pattern of evangelism continued with the early Apostles. Their message of salvation was confirmed by healing as a sign that the kingdom of God had come.⁵⁴ In a skeptical world, Spirit-empowered evangelists model this reality to bring about God's reign in the lives of unsaved people around the world.

A Healing Crusade in Brazil

In this final section, I want to offer a case study of one of my own crusades to demonstrate how the Spirit-empowered practice of praying for healing enhances an evangelistic event. As an evangelist, I have traveled to over seventy nations and done over one hundred healing crusades. I want to focus on a recent meeting I conducted in Caicò, Brazil, in 2018 that emphasized the Spirit-empowered practice of praying a mass prayer for the sick.⁵⁵

Caicó is a city located in Northeast Brazil in the state of Rio Grande do Norte. There are 67,554 people who live in the city.⁵⁶ The city has the highest rate of suicide in the state and the third-highest rate of suicide in the country of Brazil. Local pastors identified idolatry and depression as major issues in the region.⁵⁷ All nine of the evangelical churches in the city were invited and participated in the crusade. The total membership of these nine churches equals 1,357, which is about 2 percent of the population of the

city of Caicó. A three-day training event for local believers was held in order to train them in how to pray for the sick. To advertise the crusade, we emphasized in our promotions that attendees could “Come and Receive a Miracle.”

On Saturday night, an estimated 4,300 people attended the crusade, of which 48.7 percent of those surveyed before the crusade reported that they arrived with some sort of pain or ailment in their bodies. Like the Spirit-empowered evangelists presented in this study, I preached the gospel message that God can forgive sins and heal the physical body. I prayed a mass prayer for healing for the whole crowd. A total of 641 people filled out decision cards at the crusade indicating they had decided to follow Jesus. According to the post-crusade survey, 78.5 percent of those who came with pain in their bodies felt better after the healing prayer. In a post-crusade survey of 182 people who answered they came with a need for physical healing, 176 (96.7 percent) “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had received a miracle.⁵⁸ While it does not account for the experience of the whole crowd, the remarkably high number of those surveyed who felt they experienced healing confirms that healing was a felt need for a large number of attendees.

Advertising the possibility of healing through the power of God played an enormous role in convincing people to come to the crusade. On the question, “Why did you come to this meeting?”, fifty-five out of 169 (32.54 percent) respondents on Friday night and 116 out of 460 (25.22 percent) on Saturday night said they came because they needed a miracle. Another forty-six out of 169 (27.22 percent) on Friday and 106 out of 460 (23 percent) on Saturday said they came because they wanted to witness miracles.⁵⁹ The fact that healing was a major factor for over half of the attendees to the crusade demonstrates that advertising healing is an effective attractional element or “bait” in the evangelist’s efforts of “fishing for men.”

Healing also played a significant role in the responsiveness of the people to the call for salvation. A total of 641 (14.9 percent) people at the crusade filled out decision cards indicating they had decided to follow Jesus.

On the open-ended question, “Why did you pray the salvation prayer?”, the need for healing was primary for 98 percent of respondents. Examples of what they wrote include: “Because I needed a miracle,” “I needed to be healed,” “Because my daughter needed to be healed.”⁶⁰ This suggests that healing provides a space for people to believe and respond to the call for salvation.

Conclusion

This study set out to explore the development of the methodology of mass healing evangelism and how this method continues to be effective to reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The case study of the Brazil crusade confirms that the merging of healing and evangelism in the Spirit-empowered movement over the past century continues to be vital to its success. First, healing evangelism is effective because it is attractional. The major reason people came to the Caicó crusade was because they either needed a miracle or they wanted to see a miracle with their own eyes. Other evangelical methods, such as Graham’s organizational expertise or Palau’s attractional events have worked well for people in the United States, but for those in other countries, Spirit-empowered evangelists emphasize a holistic approach that appeals to more basic needs. Second, healing was not only effective for drawing people, it was a real benefit to those who came. Many of the people who came to the crusade came in search of a miracle and reported that they were healed by God. Not only does healing give people hope in a God who loves them, it also inspires them to put their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. Third, the testimonies of healing were effective in convincing others that they should also come to the meeting. This sense of knowing that God is real helps local believers stay committed to sharing their faith with others and can lead to both spiritual and numerical church

growth. In the years to come, I believe healing will continue to play a role in the growth of the Spirit-empowered movement around the world.



Daniel King (daniel@kingministries.com) is a missionary evangelist and a graduate of the Doctor of Ministry program at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA.

Notes

¹ Finney developed a variety of “New Measures” that were both effective and controversial. Finney wrote that a revival “is not a miracle, or dependent on a miracle in any sense. It is a purely philosophical result of the right use of the constituted means.” Charles G. Finney, *Lectures on Revivals* (New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1835), 12.

² Bruce J. Evensen, *God’s Man for the Gilded Age: D. L. Moody and the Rise of Modern Mass Evangelism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 47; and Lyle W. Dorsett, *A Passion for Souls: The Life of D. L. Moody* (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 236–37, 264–67.

³ Timothy P. Johnson, *Examining Billy Graham’s Theology of Evangelism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 3–4, notes that Graham himself identified himself in the line of Edwards, Moody, and Sunday as his pattern for modern evangelical evangelism.

⁴ Hongnak Koo, “The Impact of Luis Palau on Global Evangelism: An Evaluation of His Evangelistic Theology and Strategy,” (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008), 173–74.

⁵ See Luis Palau and David Sanford, *Calling America and the Nations to Christ* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1994), 74.

⁶ Kevin Palau, *Unlikely: Setting Aside Our Differences to Live out the Gospel* (New York: Howard, 2015), 7.

- ⁷ For information on the rise of healing evangelism see David Edwin Harrell, Jr., *All Things Are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana Univ. Press, 1975).
- ⁸ Candy Gunther Brown, ed., *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- ⁹ James Robinson, *Divine Healing: The Holiness-Pentecostal Transition Years, 1890–1906* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013).
- ¹⁰ John Alexander Dowie, *The Gospel of Divine Healing and How I Came to Preach It* (Chicago: Zion Publishing, 1874), 9–14.
- ¹¹ James William Opp, *The Lord for the Body: Religion, Medicine, & Protestant Faith Healing in Canada, 1880–1930* (Montreal: McGill—Queen’s University Press, 2005), 93.
- ¹² Paul G. Chappell, “The Divine Healing Movement in America,” (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1983), 284–330.
- ¹³ Robinson, *Divine Healing*, 72.
- ¹⁴ The unique contribution of Pentecostalism to mass evangelism was the practice of praying for the sick during evangelistic campaigns.
- ¹⁵ Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel*, Systematic Pentecostal and Charismatic Theology Series (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 37.
- ¹⁶ “F. F. Bosworth Obituary,” *The Blue Island Illinois Newspaper*, February 20, 1958, <https://healingandrevival.com/BosworthBI2201958.jpg> (23 September 2019).
- ¹⁷ Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 294.
- ¹⁸ F. F. Bosworth, *Christ the Healer* (Forest River, IL: F. F. Bosworth, 1924).
- ¹⁹ Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 300–5.
- ²⁰ “A Faithful Pioneer Passes,” *Worldwide Revival Magazine*, 10 April 1958, 10.
- ²¹ Roscoe Barnes, *F. F. Bosworth: The Man Behind “Christ the Healer”* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 5; Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit*, 294.

²² Gordon Lindsay, *Worldwide Evangelism through Healing and Miracles* (Dallas, TX: Christ for the Nations, 2015), 7; Dennis Gordon Lindsey, “The History and Global Impact of Christ for the Nations Institute,” (D.Min. proj., Oral Roberts University, 2014), 12.

²³ Lindsay, *Worldwide Evangelism through Healing and Miracles*, 169.

²⁴ Oral Roberts laid hands on more than 1 million people during his healing ministry. He believed that his hand was a “point of contact” that connected people with God’s healing power. He also erected healing tents for the sick to receive additional prayer and he used cards to organize the people who stood in his healing line. See Vinson Synan, “The Pentecostal Roots of Oral Robert’s Healing Ministry,” *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* 3:2 (2018), 296.

²⁵ Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 332.

²⁶ T. L. Osborn, *Soul Winning* (Tulsa, OK: OSFO, 1963), 403.

²⁷ Tommy Lee Osborn and Daisy Osborn, “My Life Story,” *Faith Library in 23 Volumes* (Tulsa: OSFO International, 1997), 1:87.

²⁸ Osborn and Osborn, “My Life Story,” 1:87.

²⁹ Osborn and Osborn, “My Life Story,” 1:166.

³⁰ Osborn and Osborn, “My Life Story,” 1:166.

³¹ Tommy Lee Osborn, “The Message that Works,” *Faith Library in 23 Volumes*, 23:661.

³² Tommy Lee Osborn, “Heart Beat,” *Faith Library in 23 Volumes*, 23:1037.

³³ See Edith Dhana Prakash, “A Critical Investigation of Tommy Lee Osborn’s Work in India: Its Impact and Implications,” (Ph.D. diss., Regent University, 2013), 58–61.

³⁴ Tommy Lee Osborn, *Healing en Masse* (Tulsa, OK: T.L. Osborn Evangelistic Association, 1963), 11.

³⁵ Osborn, *Healing en Masse*, 11.

³⁶ Barnes, *F. F. Bosworth*, 65, points out that although Osborn was the first to implement healing en masse, it was Bosworth who first talked about the need in 1949.

³⁷ This story was related to the author in an interview conducted April 23, 2010.

- ³⁸ Osborn, *Healing en Masse*, 11.
- ³⁹ Osborn, *Healing en Masse*, 11.
- ⁴⁰ Osborn, *Healing en Masse*, 12.
- ⁴¹ Osborn, *Healing en Masse*, 13.
- ⁴² Tommy Lee Osborn, “North Michigan Rocked by Mighty Revival,” *Faith Library in 23 Volumes*, 1:147–48.
- ⁴³ Osborn, *Healing en Masse*, 15.
- ⁴⁴ Osborn, *Healing en Masse*, 13.
- ⁴⁵ Leland Edwards, “The Report of the Panama Meeting of T. L. Osborn,” *The Voice of Healing Magazine*, September 1951, 9.
- ⁴⁶ Osborn and Osborn, “My Life Story,” 1:84.
- ⁴⁷ Reinhard Bonnke, *Living a Life of Fire* (Orlando: E-R Productions, 2011), 259.
- ⁴⁸ Bonnke, *Living a Life of Fire*, 257.
- ⁴⁹ Christ for All Nations, “Christ Is For All Nations: CFAN History,” n.d., n.p., <https://cfan.org/history> (21 August 2019).
- ⁵⁰ Bonnke, *Living a Life of Fire*, 568.
- ⁵¹ John W. Kennedy, “The Crusader,” *Christianity Today* 57:9 (2013), 50–54. Bonnke keeps a running total of “decisions for Christ” on his website, now totaling over 78 million. See Christ for All Nations, “Reinhard Bonnke: Biography,” n.d., n.p., <https://cfan.org/reinhard-bonnke> (29 July 2019).
- ⁵² For more on how Pentecostal healing evangelism has developed in Africa, see Sylvia Owusu-Ansah and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Mass Evangelistic Crusades and the Gospel: A Comparative Study of American and African Healing Evangelists,” *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology* 18:3 (2013), 55–73.
- ⁵³ Brown, *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*, 18.
- ⁵⁴ Howard M. Ervin, *Healing: A Sign of the Kingdom* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002).
- ⁵⁵ The crusade took place on the evenings of 1–2 June 2018.
- ⁵⁶ “Data of the Municipality,” n.d., n.p., <https://caico.rn.gov.br/omunicipio.php> (16 July 2019).
- ⁵⁷ Interview with local pastors, by author, 28 May 2018.

⁵⁸ Daniel King, “Appraising the Impact of an Evangelistic Campaign in Caicó, Brazil,” (D.Min. proj., Oral Roberts University, 2019), 153–55.

⁵⁹ King, “Appraising the Impact of an Evangelistic Campaign in Caicó, Brazil,” 158–60.

⁶⁰ King, “Appraising the Impact of an Evangelistic Campaign in Caicó, Brazil,” 152–54.