

Healing Prayer Under the Guidance of the Holy Spirit

How can New Testament teachings and pastoral experience combine to help us follow the Holy Spirit's guidance when praying for individuals in need, whether one-on-one or in small groups? This seminar will also discuss questions about miraculous spiritual gifts today, how to affirm both subjective perceptions of guidance and the sufficiency of Scripture, praying for physical healing and other needs, and praying for non-Christians as well as for Christians. (This session will include a lecture, Q&A, and some time spent in prayer for one another. In addition, we will explore one model of how this practice can be encouraged in a local church).

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I. Introduction: Some ideas of possible ways to encourage people to be sensitive to the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit

A. “Personal ministry prayer”

1. What is "personal ministry prayer"?

- one person praying for another person about a specific need in his or her life
- done in the person's presence with expectation that God will minister to the person's needs as we pray
- includes praying for non-Christians as well as Christians (Luke 4:40)

2. What benefits come to a church where all regular attenders feel comfortable in praying for people this way?

- there are many needs (in church, in friendship circles)
- people will grow in habit of praying for each other
- God will often bless our efforts and answer prayer - and the church will be known as a place where people really meet with God
- even children can be taught to pray in this way (often much faith)

B. Expect that God will answer in some way when you pray for someone

1. The kingdom of God is breaking into this present evil age

Matt. 6:10

Matt. 11:2-5 (not a military/ political kingdom)

Matt. 12:15, 22, 28

2. The pattern of Jesus' life: tell the "good news" of the kingdom (word) and demonstrate its effect in people's lives (power)

Matt. 4:23
Matt. 9:35-36

3. He told the 12 disciples to do the same
Matt. 10:1-8
4. He told the 70 disciples to do the same
Luke 10:1-2, 8-9
5. He told his disciples to teach all Christians to do the same
Matt. 28:18-20

Note Rom. 15:18-19: Paul's pattern in all his evangelistic ministry was the preaching of the Word *along with* the demonstration of God's miraculous power in people's lives

C. What about laying on of hands?

Note that Jesus and his disciples often (not always) placed their hands on people they ministered to (not all verses say "hands" in NIV — check Greek text or NASB, RSV)

1. Jesus
Luke 4:40
Luke 5:13
Luke 13:13 (etc.)
Matt. 19:13-15 (children)

people thought this was the ordinary way Jesus healed people:

Mark 5:23
Mark 7:32

2. Disciples
Acts 14:3 ("signs and wonders ... done by their hands")
Acts 19:11 ("God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul")
Acts 28:8

note also: to equip, empower for some ministry or service

Acts. 6:6
Acts 13:3

or to impart some spiritual gift

1 Tim. 4:14
2 Tim. 1:6

3. The reason:
 - a. Luke 6:19: God's power is sometimes mediated through personal touch (see also Mark 5:27-30: woman who touched Jesus's garment)

- see also Mark 6:2 (literally, "by his hands")
 - b. Also: an increase in expectant faith
 - c. It gives a vivid picture of God ministering through us to others
4. An "elementary doctrine": Heb. 6:2
 5. A caution: this is not mechanical or "magic": God works in response to our heart attitude of faith: Gal. 3:5

D. Interactive prayer: pray specifically and then wait quietly for further direction from God

1. The Holy Spirit often guides us in our prayers (note verses on being led by the Spirit: Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:16, 18, 25; also Acts 15:28)

- brings Scripture to mind

- gives more insight into the situation

2. The Holy Spirit doesn't always conceal his work (as some believe), but often gives evidence of his work (this is his pattern throughout the Bible, and especially in NT age)

- Num. 11:25-26: 70 elders

- Jud. 14:6, 19; 15:14, etc: Samson (also other judges)

- 1 Sam. 10:6, 10: Saul

- John 1:32: Jesus's baptism

- Acts 2:2-3: Pentecost

- Acts 10:44-46: Cornelius's household

- John 7:39: like a river of living water

- Rom. 8:16: bears witness with our spirit

- 1 Cor. 12:7-11: each spiritual gift is a "manifestation of the Spirit" (v. 7)

- also Heb. 2:4

- miracles give evidence of God's presence and power:

- Heb. 2:4

- 1 Cor. 2:4

- Rom. 15:18-19

examples of the Holy Spirit's evidence of his work today (that may at times be noticed in the person you are praying for)

- weeping, warmth, "tingling," changed expression, peace

- OK to pray with your eyes open — to see if the Holy Spirit is beginning to answer even as you pray

E. Spiritual sensitivity: You can sometimes sense things in your spirit

- Luke 1:47-47: Mary: "my spirit rejoices in God my Savior"

- John 13:21: Jesus "troubled in spirit"

- Mark 2:8: Jesus "perceiving in his spirit"

Luke 8:46: Jesus perceiving that power had gone forth from him
 Mark 12:30: "love the Lord your God w/ all your ... soul"
 Luke 24:32: hearts burned within them
 Acts 14:9: seeing that he had faith (!)
 Acts 17:16: Paul's spirit was provoked within him
 Rom. 8:16: Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit
 1 Cor. 7:34: "how to be holy in body and spirit"
 2 Cor. 2:13: "my spirit (pneuma) could not rest ..."
 2 Cor. 7:1: "let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit"
 2 Cor. 7:13: "his spirit (pneuma) has been set at rest by you all"

 Gal. 6:18: "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be w/ your spirit"
 [compare John 4:23-24; Phil. 3:3, on worshiping God in spirit]

F. The more you pray for people in this way, the more practical pastoral wisdom you will have in knowing what to pray (experience and Christian maturity help a lot!)
 - no need to try to distinguish "natural" from "supernatural" source of information

G. What is the best way to learn how to play tennis?

II. The role of spiritual gifts in God's plan at this point in history

A. Spiritual gifts in the church age: Spiritual gifts are wonderful tools for ministry given to the church until Christ returns — they are *characteristic of the church age*

1. The beginning at Pentecost: Pentecost (Acts 2) inaugurated the church age.
 The *New Covenant empowering of the Holy Spirit* was not just for the apostles or the people with them but *for all Christians throughout the church age*.

For all believers: Acts 2:16-18: `And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will *pour out my Spirit upon all flesh*, and your *sons and your daughters* shall prophesy, and your *young men* shall see visions, and your *old men* shall dream dreams; 18 yea, and on my *menservants and my maidservants* in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

[Though I agree there was a unique measure of empowering first in Jesus and secondarily in the apostles.]

This power includes miraculous power in ministry: Acts 1:8 "you shall receive power (*dynamis*, used very commonly in Luke-Acts to refer to miracle-working power) when the HS comes upon you"

2. The NT expects these spiritual gifts to last until Christ returns:

1 Cor. 1:7 "you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ"

1 Cor. 13:10 "when the perfect comes the imperfect will pass away"

In context, "when the perfect comes" refers to the time of Christ's return, and "the imperfect" refers to the spiritual gifts given during this church age. Therefore we could paraphrase, "When Christ returns these present spiritual gifts will pass away."

This is by far the dominant view in the history of the church — cessationism is uncommon. (See Gary Shogren 1996 ETS paper on first 5 centuries, and see below on the gift of prophecy in church history).

3. We are not talking about the apostles but about gifts used by *ordinary Christians* in all the congregations of the first century church

___ Gal. 3:5 Does he who supplies (present active participle) the Spirit to you and works (present active participle) miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith— but no apostles were present in these Galatian churches when Paul was writing to them

Eph. 4:12 spiritual gifts are given "to equip the saints for the work of ministry" --

B. Throughout the church age, all Christians have spiritual gifts — for the common good

1 Cor. 12:7 "to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good"

1 Cor. 12:11 the Holy Spirit "distributes to each one as he wills"

1 Pet. 4:10-11: each has a gift

C. The New Testament doesn't distinguish between "natural" and "supernatural" gifts (or "miraculous" and "non-miraculous — the lists mix them together)

Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10; 12:28; Eph. 4:11

All given by the same Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11)

Even seemingly "natural" gifts (related to natural abilities) will often have heightened effectiveness when empowered by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 1:5-7: "you were enriched by him in all speech and all knowledge...so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift")

examples: teaching, administration, helps, mercy, giving

However, the office of apostle has ceased: The office of "apostle of Jesus Christ" was an office (like elder or deacon, but greater), not a specific gift. Apostles had many gifts that

equipped them for this office. The office was limited to people who had seen the risen Lord Jesus Christ after his resurrection and who were specially commissioned by him as “apostles.” (Acts 1:22; 1 Cor 9:1; 15:7-9; Matt. 10:1-7; Acts 1:24-26). There are not apostles in this sense today. (able to write Scripture, etc.)

D. Therefore, our expectation should be that all NT spiritual gifts will continue until the day Christ returns. (Miracles are characteristic of the church age as it is portrayed in the NT.)

E. The clarity (perspicuity) of Scripture also argues for this: Ordinary Christians around the world will ask, what are Acts and the epistles *for*?

[response to O. Palmer Robertson, *The Final Word* – and note on Genesis-Revelation perspective]

F. The essential question: does God’s supernatural power manifest itself in our natural lives Will we encourage or discourage God’s supernatural working when God’s power gives evident manifestations in our daily lives? (regardless of terminology — see below).

III. The Gift of Prophecy

1. A blessing and a challenge today

2. Definition:

reporting something that God spontaneously brings to mind

3. Based on a "revelation" from God

1 Cor. 14:30 a revelation is made to another sitting by

1 Cor. 14:25 secrets of visitor's heart are disclosed

Acts 11:28 Agabus

Acts 21:10-11

a. Any Christian can receive these

Acts 2:17-18

1 Cor. 14:1

-- does God give you these from time to time? (you may not call it prophecy)

4. Prophecy today can never equal the Bible in authority

Acts 21:4 a prophecy that Paul disobeyed

1 Thes. 5:20-21 test everything; hold fast what is good

1 Cor. 14:29 need to "weigh what is said"

1 Cor. 14:36 word of God did not come forth from Corinthians

Applications:

--don't make decisions about guidance based on prophecy alone

--don't begin prophecies with "Thus says the Lord..."

--always test, evaluate (may be partially true)

--prophets don't govern the church in the NT — elders (pastors) do

5. The unique nature of the Bible (in contrast to prophecy today)

a. Different in its content: the central acts of redemptive history (Heb. 1:1-2)

b. Different in its preservation: words written in the "book of the covenant"

Ex. 24:7; 2 Kgs. 23:2; Ps. 119:89; Matt. 24:35

c. Different in its authority: all the words of Scripture are the very words of God, and absolutely truthful

2 Tim. 3:16; Ps. 12:6; Prov. 30:5-6; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18

--to disbelieve or disobey these words is to disbelieve or disobey God himself

Deut. 18:18-19

--wrong for us to doubt any statement, think it is "perhaps untrue"

--contrast prophecy today: wrong for us not to think it is "perhaps untrue"

1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thes. 5:20-21

d. Different in its necessity: for awakening and maintaining spiritual life

Rom. 10:14-17; Matt. 4:4; Deut. 32:47

e. Different in its sufficiency: it contains everything God requires us to believe and obey

Ps. 119:1; 2 Tim. 3:15

f. Different in its clarity: it is not obscure, but able to be read and understood by God's people Ps. 19:7; Matt. 11:25; 2 Cor. 1:13

6. Evidence from church history: many leaders, even in the Reformed tradition, held that the gift of prophecy (in a sense not equal to Scripture) continued

Samuel Rutherford, "Scots Worthies," Richard Baxter and Puritans (and J. I. Packer note), Charles Spurgeon, etc.

Westminster Confession of Faith, 1:10: "The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

(See Byron Curtis, "'Private Spirits' in The Westminster Confession of Faith §1.10 and in Catholic-Protestant Debate (1588-1652)," Westminster Theological Journal 58 (1996), 257-266: "private spirits" in English at the time of the WCF (1643-1646) meant "private revelations from the Holy Spirit" — thus, the WCF allows for these and simply makes them subject to Scripture.)

7. How can we guard against abuses?

a. People with prophetic gifts: stay in the Word, and stay close to God!

b. Whole church: don't despise prophecy, but keep testing (1 Thes. 5:19-21)

c. Some other practical guidelines:

- (1) Predictions of the future should be thought of more like invitations and warnings, not guarantees.
- (2) In planning for the future, do not place too much emphasis on prophecies, because they may be wrong.
- (3) If you think God is revealing sin in another person's life, (a) don't identify the person publicly (!), since it will do harm if you are wrong; (b) ask God whether you should say it privately or not at all (maybe God just wants you to pray about it); (c) ask God when you should say it, if at all.
- (4) The ruling officers of the church, not the prophets, should govern the church (1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17).
- (5) The larger the assembly of Christians, the more controls there should be on the public use of prophecies (1 Cor. 14:40).
- (6) Throughout church history, overestimating the authority of prophecy has always driven prophecy out of the church: It has killed this gift in some movements and led many other movements astray.
- (7) The words of Scripture are the sure words of God. Scripture has vastly superior value to any gift as the place where Christians can go to hear the voice of the living God. We should focus our expectation of hearing from God toward the Bible, through which he will speak to all of us every day of our lives (Matt. 4:4; 2 Tim. 3:16).

d. Advice to people with prophetic gifts:

There are three things to consider:

- (1) What the Lord revealed to you
 - (2) What it means
 - (3) When you should say it (even if you should)
- you can be right on one or two, wrong on the other one or two
--pray for God's wisdom on all three, also seek help from others who have wisdom in this area
-- people can be right on a large part of a prophecy, but wrong on the date it will happen
For more material on this gift, see: Wayne Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, revised edition (Wheaton: Crossway, and Eastbourne, England: Kingsway, 2000).

IV. Prayer for healing

1. Proper motives: compassion for sick and desire for God's glory
Matt. 14:14; 20:34; 1 Cor. 10:31
not: desire to glorify self, be famous, powerful: Acts 8:18-21
2. Healing involves ministry to the whole person
 - a. Prayer for physical needs
 - b. Prayer for emotional or spiritual healing
 - c. Dealing with any influence from sin

- d. Speaking against any influence from demons
3. Sickness and health in the history of redemption
 - a. Sickness came as result of sin (Gen. 2:17) -- it is not "normal" for human beings made in God's image
 - b. Jesus paid our penalty and purchased perfect resurrection bodies for us (Matt. 8:16-17)
 - (1) but we won't receive these perfect bodies until Jesus returns to earth (1 Cor. 15:23, 52-53)
 - (2) yet often God grants a foretaste of these perfect bodies through physical healing (Matt. 8:16-17; 12:28) -- this "demonstrates" the character of the kingdom of God
 - (3) similar to other blessings that are ours in the Christian life (holiness, knowledge, wisdom, fellowship, joy, etc.)
 4. The purposes for healing
 - a. Bears witness to the gospel message (Acts 14:3, 8-18; Heb. 2:4)
 - b. Brings comfort and health to people
 - (1) Restores people to service
 - (2) Demonstrates God's mercy
 - (3) Shows that the kingdom of God has come
 - (4) Gives opportunity for God to be glorified
 5. What about the use of medicine?
 - a. Use if available (Gen. 1:28; Ps. 24:1; 1 Tim. 5:23)
 - b. Not to use it if needed and available is to "force a test on the Lord our God" (see Luke 4:12)

(if not really needed, we may choose not to use it because of cost, time, side-effects, or just to give opportunity to exercise faith)
 - c. But don't rely on medicine instead of the Lord (2 Chr. 16:12-13)
 - d. God will often heal where medicine cannot (Luke 8:43-44; 4:40)
 6. Common methods used in healing in NT
 - a. Laying on of hands (Luke 4:40; and see discussion below)
 - b. Anointing with oil at times (Mark 6:13; James 5:14-15)
 - c. The role of faith often emphasized
 - (1) Faith of sick person (Luke 8:48; 17:19)
 - (2) Faith of others (James 5:15; Mark 2:5; Matt. 15:28; note the disciples' "little faith" in Matt. 17:20)
 - d. Important that our prayers for healing be done "out of faith" (see Gal. 3:5; Rom. 9:30-32; 14:23; Jas. 5:15, etc.)
 - (1) Don't "try hard" to make something happen (squeeze eyes shut, use loud voice, etc.)
 - (2) Wait quietly to see what Holy Spirit is doing
 - (a.) If signs of his work, bless what he is doing and continue to pray

- (b) Examples: tears, unusual warmth, feeling of peace, etc. (this will vary, or there may be no indications)
 - (c) If painful or seemingly "bad" signs: may be demonic influence (or if pain moves)
 - (3) If nothing is happening, stop: note John 5:19-20 (Jesus' example)
 - (4) What is the worst thing that can happen?
7. How then should we pray?
- a. It is right to ask God for healing (Matt. 6:13; 3 John 2; Jas. 4:2)
 - (1) Jesus didn't tell anyone to stay sick for a while longer! (and he is the perfect revelation of God's character)
 - (2) When we take medicine or see a doctor, we admit that we think it is God's will that we seek to be well
 - (3) In general, then, our first assumption should be that God would be pleased to heal the person we are praying for (this is generally his "revealed will" in Scripture, though not always his secret will)
 - b. Sometimes God will show us that we should no longer pray for physical healing (2 Cor. 12:9; Acts 7:59)
8. What if God does not heal?
- a. Even in the presence of the apostles not all were healed
 - 2 Cor. 12:9 Paul
 - 2 Cor. 4:16 outer nature wasting away
 - Phil. 2:27 Epaphroditus
 - 1 Tim. 5:23 Timothy
 - 2 Tim. 4:20 Trophimus
 - note 1 Pet. 1:6-7; Jas 1:2-4 on suffering in general
 - b. "Give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thes. 5:18)
 - c. Trust God to bring good out of the illness (Rom. 8:28)
 - d. Grow in trust in God and in obedience to his will
 - Ps. 119:67, 71
 - e. Continue to worship (Job 1:20-21)
9. What about "gifts of healings" (literal translation) (1 Cor. 12:9, 28)?
(we may be surprised whom God will gift in this area)
10. Practical guidelines for ministry prayer in groups of people
- a. First person there is in charge
 - b. Ask permission to join
 - c. Don't crowd (2 or 3 people praying is usually enough)
 - d. Holy Spirit will work within normal guidelines (1 Cor. 14:33)

V. Dealing with Satan and demons: spiritual warfare

- 1. Not all evil and sin is from Satan or demons
 - a. NT emphasis: our own sin, and sins of unbelievers

b. But opposition from evil spirits is sometimes a factor (perhaps more often than we realize), even if it isn't the only factor or the major factor (see 1 Jn. 5:19)

2. Jesus gives Christians (us) authority to rebuke demons, cause them to flee

Luke 10:17

Acts 16:18

2 Cor. 10:3-4

James 4:7

1 Pet. 5:9

Source: Jesus' triumph over demonic forces:

Matt. 12:28-29; Col. 2:15

Question: why speak directly to an evil spirit, rather than (or in addition to) just praying and asking God to drive it away?

3. Don't be afraid of evil spirits: the Holy Spirit is stronger!

1 John 4:4

Eph. 6:13

1 John 3:8

2 Tim. 1:7

Phil. 1:28

Quote Scripture: Eph. 6:17 (sword); Matt. 4:4

Give up all known sin! Eph. 4:26; 6:14

4. Don't scare people -- the Holy Spirit is gentle, is the Comforter

1 Cor. 14:33

- Ask permission ("Do you think this might be a factor?")

- I would not use the term "demon possession" -- it is nowhere literally found in Scripture (Greek text), though some English translations use it

- Keep asking the person for feedback

- Demons aren't hard of hearing (you don't have to shout!)

- Don't focus on demon but on the person and the truth of the Bible

Eph. 6:14: truth, righteousness

- The person has to want the demon to leave, and often himself (herself) can command it to leave

5. Effectiveness in hard cases may depend on our own spiritual condition (and perhaps experience in this area to some degree as well)

Matt. 17:19-20

Mark 9:29

6. Don't be overly curious or give excessive attention to this area

1 Cor. 14:20

VI. Speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues

1. Definition: "prayer or praise in syllables not understood by the speaker"

Not understood by speaker

1 Cor. 14:2

1 Cor. 14:13-19

Acts 2:4-8

2. What happens? Our spirit prays, but our mind does not understand

1 Cor. 14:14-15 — this is still genuine prayer, and God hears it

3. Not "ecstatic," but self-controlled

1 Cor. 14:27-28

4. Without interpretation:

only in private: 1 Cor. 14:27-28

edifies the speaker: 1 Cor. 14:4

5. With interpretation:

edifies the church: 1 Cor. 14:5

[note: this verse does not say that interpreted tongues = prophecy, but has same value]

“interpretation of tongues” = a gift by which the general meaning of something spoken in tongues is reported to the church

6. "Not all speak in tongues" (1 Cor. 12:30: the verse is a general statement, not restricted to certain kinds of gifts of tongues, etc. It simply says that not all Christians will have this gift -- the same as all other gifts.) (I differ here w/ traditional Pentecostal teaching on tongues as a necessary initial “sign” of baptism in the Holy Spirit.)

7. Question: what about a danger of demonic counterfeit?

a. Not Paul's concern: 1 Cor. 14:5

b. Will not happen if the Holy Spirit is genuinely working in the speaker's life: 1 Cor. 14:2-3

c. Again a question of God's sovereignty and power: whom do we trust most? (Do we have more confidence in Satan's power to deceive us than in God's power to protect us and enable us to use his good gifts?)

d. What about reports of people being deceived by "tongues spirits"? (Fred Dickason book)

-- these are all based on alleged reports from demons: why should we trust them??

-- isn't the fear induced by such reports a case of putting experience above the Bible? (1 Cor. 14:5, 39-40)

8. Application: what should we do?

1 Cor. 14:12: seek primarily what edifies the church

1 Cor. 14:39-40

VII. Approaching sincerely-held differences

A. It is wise for both sides to focus on the most responsible representatives of different positions, not on the mistakes of untrained lay persons or the excesses of some fringe groups

The following list contains some positions held by no responsible leader known to me in cessationist, “open but cautious,” third wave, or charismatic/ Pentecostal camps today: (the following is quoted from *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today? Four Views*, edited by Wayne Grudem (Zondervan and IVP-UK, 1996), pp. 18-19):

Circulating within the evangelical world, especially at the popular level, are several views which find no representation in this book. For example, no one in the book argues for any of the following positions:

- (1) If a person has not spoken in tongues, he or she is not truly a Christian.
- (2) If a person has not spoken in tongues, he or she does not have the Holy Spirit within.
- (3) People who speak in tongues are more spiritual than those who don't.
- (4) If someone who is prayed for is not healed, it is probably the fault of the sick person for not having enough faith.
- (5) God wants all Christians to be wealthy today.
- (6) It is always God's will to heal a Christian who is sick.
- (7) If we simply speak a “word of faith,” God will grant what we claim with this faith.
- (8) There are apostles today in the same sense that Peter and Paul were apostles.
- (9) If we are truly guided by the Holy Spirit we do not need to follow the directions of Scripture.
- (10) We should follow anointed leaders with fruitful ministries even if they deny the inerrancy of Scripture.
- (11) Speaking in tongues is usually demonic in origin.
- (12) The Holy Spirit never guides us through intuitions, promptings, and feelings.
- (13) God should not be expected to heal today in answer to prayer.
- (14) God never works miracles today, because those ceased when the apostles died.
- (15) Charismatics and Pentecostals are not evangelical Christians.
- (16) The charismatic movement is part of the New Age religion.
- (17) The Third Wave movement (or the Vineyard Movement) is non-evangelical (or is a cult).
- (18) Charismatics generally are anti-intellectual.
- (19) Cessationists in general are rationalistic and their faith is mostly dry intellectualism.
- (20) It is legitimate to criticize another position by telling anecdotes of mistakes made by untrained lay persons.

I believe it is fair to say that all four authors would unite in their rejection of these teachings. These positions, as far as we know, are defended by no academic leaders in

any branch of the evangelical world. In some cases they are misrepresentations of the teaching of Scripture, and in some cases they are caricatures of other positions, but in every case they are teachings that we think are hindering and disturbing the body of Christ, not building it up or strengthening it in truth and in faithfulness to God's Word.

B. Some practical advice for pastors and other church leaders

1. Fellowship:
Eph. 4:3

2. In teaching:
2 Cor. 4:2

3. Consult:
Prov. 11:14

4. Memorize:

5. Don't try to:
1 Cor. 12:12-26
1 Cor. 12:11

6. Don't let:
2 Tim. 3:16-17

7. Be patient with:
Gal. 5:22

8. In addition to sound preaching of the Word, do you know what people really want?