



Helping Others Receive the Lord's Healing

By Merrilee Browne Boyack

One Sunday I read the scripture, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; *for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do*” (3 Nephi 27:21; emphasis added).

I thought to myself, “What were Christ’s works upon the earth?” I thought primarily of two things: service and healing. Service I could do, but healing? Certainly I wasn’t capable of healing others—or was I?

I was recently in the process of recovering from a surgery that had been followed by a severe allergic reaction. I immediately thought of those who had helped me in my healing process, and the list was long. If they could help me heal, couldn't I do the same for others?

Each of us can learn the healer's art.¹ We are surrounded by those suffering from physical, mental, and spiritual sicknesses who would be blessed by our help.

Visiting the Sick

Mosiah 4:26 states, "I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants."

Being sick—whether physically, mentally, or spiritually—can be very isolating. People spend many lonely hours in bedrooms or hospital rooms trying to recuperate, and it is easy for their spirits to become depressed. As the darkness accumulates, the visit of a caring friend or family member can bring light into their lives.

How we visit the sick can also be important. Several women responded to my query asking how others have helped them through the healing process. Judi of Arizona, USA, commented, "Listening . . . [is] such a great help in troubled times. Listening and *not* judging." Listening patiently, sincerely, and lovingly is a valuable support to those who are trying to heal.

We practice the healer's art when we help bring the Lord's healing blessings to those suffering from physical, mental, and spiritual sicknesses.

Linda of California, USA, shared how a friend's visits helped her: "I remember those special people in my life—especially those who really listened and conveyed the Spirit's sweet counsel. After being widowed at 30 years old with five young children, I felt my Heavenly Father's

and Savior's love more deeply because of my good friend Karen. She was always in tune and had her 'listening ears' on. I never felt alone as she consistently reminded me of the beautiful bond I have as a daughter of God."

Ministering brothers and sisters especially can perform this healer's art. It is important to tune in to the needs of those who are suffering. Sometimes a short visit is in order because they are very tired. Sometimes they are lonely and bored and a longer visit will meet their needs. It's also important to tune in to their personalities. Some want privacy and quiet while others want lots of interaction and support. We should first determine their needs and then reach out accordingly.

Bearing One Another's Burdens

Alma described most eloquently our commitment to follow the Savior's example when he asked the believers in the Book of Mormon if they were willing "to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and [be] willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light" (Mosiah 18:8).

We each carry burdens of many kinds. These are most difficult to handle when we are sick or struggling with mental



WE ARE THE LORD'S HANDS

“Christ knows how to minister to others perfectly. When the Savior stretches

out His hands, those He touches are uplifted and become greater, stronger, and better people as a result.

“If we are His hands, should we not do the same?”

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “You Are My Hands,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 70.

illness or spiritual difficulties. One of the healer’s arts is to help bear the burdens of others when they are suffering.

Shannon from Utah, USA, shared how her neighbors helped her: “The day we buried our young son, we returned from the cemetery to find our neighborhood had come together in those hours while we were at his funeral to completely re-landscape our yard. They had planted beautiful shrubs, trees, and flowers, and even new sod. In the midst of our unimaginable sadness, their thoughtful demonstration of love and support began the healing process for us. We were reminded that love and life are eternal every year when our beautiful yard came back to life again. [It was] truly a sacred and symbolic experience that we will never forget.”

When I was diagnosed with breast cancer, I was serving as Relief Society president and running for reelection to our city council. My husband had lost his job, and we were hit with many other serious trials during this time. My counselors took to heart “bearing one another’s burdens” and helped spread the load I was carrying. My bishop took on some of my responsibilities.

My husband took over many duties of cooking and homemaking. It was truly humbling to see that my burdens were not taken away but instead were shared by many, many people who exercised the healer’s art.

Comforting

Alma also taught that Christ’s followers “are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:9).

Giving comfort encompasses empathy, kindness, thoughtfulness, caring, love, and charity. It is wrapping those who are sick or afflicted in loving arms to help them face their suffering.

Luann (name has been changed) faced a spiritual and moral struggle and reflected on her experience with others who comforted her: “They looked past my present person and saw my promising potential, the potential to become someone greater, wiser, kinder. I look back on my former self and sometimes cringe with a bit of embarrassment for my ignorance—a bit of shame for my transgressions and sinful ways. But the sting of embarrassment and shame is always followed by the healing

balm that is grace, mercy, forgiveness, and love. When I see there were people around me, showering me with those things, the sting goes away. And I see they were helping me heal. Maybe it’s more accurate to say they were creating a safe environment around

“They were creating a safe environment around me where the Savior, the Master Healer, could work on me.”

me—a cocoon of grace, maybe—where, within, the Savior, the Master Healer, could work on me. Changing me. Changing my heart.”

An important part of comforting the sick is turning them toward the Master Healer. Sabrina from Utah, USA, said, “There is no better healing than that of anyone who helps you search out or go back to God. It may be just a reminder of what you already know—that you’re trying to be tougher



than need be, taking it all on your own, and not truly relying on God.”

Comforting the sick and helping them be positive takes sensitivity to the Spirit. At one point in my life, I had not slept well in many months, usually averaging about two to three hours per night of disrupted sleep. I was suffering greatly from anxiety and exhaustion; I had been to many doctors to no avail. Finally, a friend referred me to a Latter-day Saint doctor who immediately gave me a proper diagnosis. But what he said next was a surprise: “Merrilee, the most important thing you need to do is to turn your anxiety over to God.” He then encouraged me to meditate each day for a short time on “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles.”

I had tried this meditation a few times without success, but I was desperate for healing. The next day, I quietly meditated on the powerful words, “We offer our testimony of the reality of His matchless life and the infinite virtue of His great atoning sacrifice.”² A thrill ran through me as I began to ponder the testimony of our great Healer and knew that I had found comfort and peace in my soul.

Paying Attention

As we study the scriptures in order to emulate Jesus in His works of healing, we read of Jesus doing one thing over and over: He paid attention to those around Him.

Christ noticed people. He spoke with the Samaritan woman despite cultural taboos. He took time to bless the children. He ate with publicans and sinners and ministered to lepers and outcasts. He gave His attention to each.

As followers of Christ seeking to learn His healer’s art, we can begin to look upon people with the eyes of Christ. We can take the time to say hello, to smile, to ask about their day. We may never know the healing balm that our efforts may be to those around us who are lonely, depressed, sick, weak, or suffering. Even simple gestures of love can have a powerful influence.

As we do the works of Christ and participate in the healing of others, great blessings will flow. As Christ stated, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40). To Him who healed each of us, to Him who has wrapped us in His loving arms more times than we even know, to Him who has offered us the healing balm of His Atonement, we can offer our small efforts to help heal our brothers and sisters. This is truly the healer’s art. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. See “Lord, I Would Follow Thee,” *Hymns*, no. 220.
2. “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, inside front cover.