

## Now Concerning Things Spiritual an historical account of one man's walk with God

6031 Steamboat Drive  
Dallas, Texas 75230-1851

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Jim Ash letter No. 18

(972) 458-2260 Fax (972) 458-0288  
e-mail: jimash.min@worldnet.att.net

### SUMMON THE PHYSICIAN PART II

The subject of my February letter was physical health and healing available to Christians today, from my point of view. It has been made clear to me that my writing should be about what the Lord has taught me and what I have experienced personally. For this reason there are other things on the same subject that I would like to share with you in this letter.

I believe the reasons many churches do not teach and practice what the bible says on this subject is (1) because those responsible do not believe the part of the Bible that teaches on this subject, including what Jesus taught, is applicable for today, (2) because certain church leaders do not know Jesus personally and (3) because the leaders do not believe that baptism of the Holy Spirit includes the impartation of spiritual gifts<sup>1</sup> and praying for physical healing as taught in the Bible. I understand full well all of these reasons. I've walked a lot of miles in the shoes of those who so believe. I probably would have continued that way for the rest of my life if I had not prayed for the baptism of the Holy Spirit about 9:00 P.M. on Saturday, November 27, 1965.<sup>2</sup> I wish those who believe that the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit do not occur today,<sup>3</sup> could have seen and heard what I saw

and heard two days later at about 7:45 A.M., on Monday, November 29, 1965. What I saw was a vision in bright white light<sup>4</sup> and what I heard was the still small voice<sup>5</sup> of the Holy Spirit who gave me specific instructions on something I was to do that blessed the lives of several people. *That* will make a believer out of you!<sup>6</sup> After that experience, my doubts were gone. I was in a brand-new ball game and *that was only the beginning*. I know there are many born

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your fondest dreams. It may not happen overnight, but it will happen. You will become acquainted with Jesus personally in a way previously thought to be impossible and the scriptures, like you, will become alive and begin to feed your spiritual hunger as never before. When Jesus died on the cross He purchased that right and rite *for you!* It is yours for the taking. Claim it now.

<sup>4</sup>See Joel 2:28 - 32 and Acts 2:16 - 21

<sup>5</sup>For the still small voice reference see 1 Kings 19:12. For the contest between one prophet of God and four hundred fifty prophets of Baal (Satan), read 1 Kings 18:20 - 1 Kings 19:18.

<sup>6</sup>Around the year 40 A.D., similar (but more dramatic) circumstances, also made a believer out of someone else in the early church. As recorded in the ninth chapter of the Book of Acts, Saul of Tarsus got knocked to the ground when a *bright light* from heaven shone around him and he *heard a voice* saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" (Verse 4). Prior to this experience, Saul, who later became Paul, the Apostle, was apparently prepared for life in a way most young Jewish men in his day would have desired. He was a Roman citizen by birth, a Pharisee who studied under Gamelial and a zealous intellectual supportive of the strict Jewish customs of the day. But even with his excellent education and intellectual abilities, he was running totally counter to God's will. Intellectuals in the first century were no different from intellectuals in the twentieth (or soon to be the twenty-first) century. God is not appropriated, understood or apprehended through intellectual study or achievements. Christianity is not an intellectual institution; it is a spiritual kingdom, the entry into which is obtained solely by a spiritual rebirth, according to its King (see John 3:1 - 8). It is so simple that both the uneducated and the intellectual have equal access to its blessings: eternal life and a journey that at times can be interesting, exciting and fulfilling. Citizens of His kingdom who have committed their total life and possessions to Him have the most fun. Joy is not unknown to them. And peace within comes with the territory. I know because I'm in that kingdom. I wish everyone could believe these words because they are true. And one very interesting thing about it all is, nobody is paying me to do "PR" for God. I just happen to know His Son personally.

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<sup>1</sup>See 1 Corinthians 12:7 - 11.

<sup>2</sup>At my request, two Rice University students, with whom I was acquainted, prayed for me to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, with the laying on of hands, in an east Dallas Baptist Church prayer chapel, which was open twenty-four hours a day for prayer.

<sup>3</sup>There are many Christians today who believe the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit, of which I speak, about which I write and which I have experienced, were only temporary until the canon of scripture was completed. One's salvation is not dependent on believing these manifestations of the Holy Spirit are accessible today. But when you as a believer accept what the bible says on this subject and by faith act on such scriptures, God will respond! His word says that He will since His word will not return to Him void (Isaiah 55:11), is settled forever in heaven (Psalm 119:89) and Jesus (the living word) is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). When you trust by faith on these scriptures and act on that faith, there will be birthed in you a way of life beyond

again Christians who have been taught that “God doesn’t do those things any more.” Consequently they do not believe that the same Holy Spirit, Who raised Jesus from the dead and is in all born again believers,<sup>7</sup> upon request, will empower one *by faith* to receive His blessings, including His miraculous manifestations. It is not complicated. It is simple. It is all by faith and *faith comes by hearing*.

I’m reminded of the twelve spies Moses sent to spy out the land of Canaan. God had prepared the land to be conquered by the Israelites. After forty days the spies brought back pomegranates, figs and a cluster of grapes so large it was put on a pole and carried between two men on their shoulders. But walled cities and giants were too much for ten of the spies. The two other spies, Hoshea, called Joshua by Moses,<sup>8</sup> and Caleb, said the Lord is with us and “the people of the land are bread for us, their defense has parted from them and Lord is with us: fear them not.”<sup>9</sup> This report infuriated all the Israelites<sup>10</sup> (about 2,000,000 people) who immediately wanted to *kill Joshua and Caleb to silence God’s voice in two men!* Listen up, church. There’s a lesson to be learned here! Of course, the Israelites believed the ten spies who were in the majority.<sup>11</sup> The congregation of Israelites wanted to elect a captain to lead them back to Egyptian slavery<sup>12</sup> because of fear, doubt and unbelief. God then decreed

that the murmuring congregation would remain in the wilderness for forty years<sup>13</sup> until those twenty years of age and older would die there. And this was *all because of unbelief in the word of God* as given to Moses, God’s prophet.<sup>14</sup> After the death of Moses God commissioned Joshua to lead the Israelites across the Jordan river into Canaan.

The *same unbelief* that kept the Israelites in the wilderness until they died will keep one from receiving the full blessings of the Holy Spirit today. Receiving the fullness of the Holy Spirit is not based on a popularity contest or a majority vote in the church.<sup>15</sup> It is based on what anyone can have who will take the word of God, trust in it and act on it by faith. But that certainly is not the belief and practice of the universal church. Here is one example of what I mean:

There is a well respected and accredited theological seminary in Dallas,<sup>16</sup> where Godly faculty teach their students that the bible is the only authoritative, inspired written word of God. I was told by a seminary representative that both the faculty and board of Trustees must sign a statement agreeing to twenty-three Doctrinal Statements<sup>17</sup> (designated as “Articles”) on an annual basis in order to continue their relationship with the seminary. I call your attention to one small paragraph from Article XII

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<sup>7</sup>Read Romans 8:11.

<sup>8</sup>Numbers 13:16.

<sup>9</sup>Numbers 14:9 (b), KJV.

<sup>10</sup>Read Numbers 14:10.

<sup>11</sup>If the majority of the people are for something do not construe that to be an indication of God’s will. Believe that God’s will may be the opposite. This is why the ministry of the Holy Spirit is so important today. God still speaks to his servants through the word, through dreams, visions and the still small voice of the Spirit. And this is very important, “For as many are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.” (Romans 8:14). In these *last days* Satan is stepping up his power as he knows his time is short. Read the daily newspapers for proof. But the Lord is also going to pour out his Spirit on the church with a mighty anointing in these last days. In this coming display, I believe the anointing of the Holy Spirit with power will be given to lesser known believers in a way not previously seen since the church was born on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus (see the birth certificate of the Church as recorded in the second chapter of the book of Acts).

<sup>12</sup>See Numbers 14:4.

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<sup>13</sup>One year for each day the twelve spies spent doing their reconnaissance in Canaan. The ten men who brought back the evil report died at the hand of the Lord by the plague. For this story see Numbers 14:27 - 40.

<sup>14</sup>In spite of the miracle of the Red Sea crossing, the annihilation of the Egyptian army, the provision of food and water for approximately two million Israelites, the people lacked the faith to trust God for His promised victory. This is proof (there are many others in the bible) that miracles alone are not enough to change man. His unregenerate heart must be changed and *that* is the work of the Holy Spirit. In this particular case Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, four men out of an army of 603,550 (see Numbers 1:46), took God at His word and trusted Him to lead the Israelites victoriously across the Jordan river to seize and occupy the promised land.

<sup>15</sup>Your church may not like you if Jesus becomes real in your life, but neither were the Apostles received with open arms. They won no popularity contests but received the greatest prize of all.

<sup>16</sup>Dallas Theological Seminary, 3909 Swiss Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75204.

<sup>17</sup>These twenty-three Doctrinal Statements are found on page 150 of the 1997 - 1998 Dallas Theological Seminary Catalogue.

which was excerpted verbatim from the Doctrinal Statements:

**“ARTICLE XII THE HOLY SPIRIT:**

We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Spirit, and that the deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection (Acts 4:8, 31; Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 13:8).”<sup>18</sup>

The first sentence in *Article XII* declares the belief that the gift of “tongues and miraculous healings were temporary” and therefore not for today. If you believe otherwise, since you cannot sign the annual agreement, you cannot be on or remain on the faculty or the board of Trustees. The second sentence of *Article XII* reflects a complete misunderstanding of what most charismatics<sup>19</sup> whom I know and know of, believe today. That sentence was apparently written because of the extremes and wrongs of some charismatics today and in the past. Put me in that category of mistaken charismatics until the Holy Spirit Himself corrected me in a Joel chapter two<sup>20</sup> dream some thirty years ago. I could take considerable space in this letter to write on what the Spirit said to me in that dream and what I believe to be misunderstandings, abuses and misuse of scripture on the Holy Spirit by well-intentioned Christians. However, that is not the purpose of this letter and I do not sit in judgment on anyone who is in disagreement with me. My comments will be limited to things proven to be true in my own life when I trusted by faith in what the bible says and what the Lord has convicted and convinced me of, based on scripture verses, in my thirty-three years plus pilgrimage, since becoming personally acquainted with Jesus.

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p.152.

<sup>19</sup>My short definition of a “charismatic” is one who accepts the complete work of the Holy Spirit in the church today as referenced in the New Testament, including the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7 - 11.

<sup>20</sup>See Joel 2:28.

Concerning *sentence one of Article XII*, here is something interesting for your consideration: About a year and one-half ago there was a three-day Conference held at our church during which two or three different speakers taught and ministered. I was told by an administrator at the seminary that Sam Smith,<sup>21</sup> one of the Conference speakers, had been on the faculty as a teacher of old testament studies for ten years, but was no longer there. When I asked why, he replied, “I don’t know.” Here is one interesting incident I know about which occurred while he was ministering during the Conference.

Once Sam came to the pulpit and began to speak, it was obvious that he had grown beyond *Article XII, sentence one* of the seminary Doctrinal Statements. To conclude his teaching that night, a part of which was on forgiveness, he said that he felt led to pray for healing of anyone in the congregation who had problems with a joint or with joints in their body,<sup>22</sup> such as arthritic conditions and joint problems with ankles, knees, fingers, elbows, TMJ’s, etc. He asked everyone to stand who wanted to be prayed for. After a number of people stood up, he then asked that anyone near those who were standing, to lay hands on them as he prayed for healing. A woman one row in front of me and one seat to my right stood up. I then stood up and laid my hands on her shoulder (or shoulders, I am not sure which) while Sam prayed for everyone. While he was praying, ***the Lord healed a joint problem in my lower neck, that I had completely forgotten about, without my asking! I felt Him healing the problem while He was doing it, as Sam prayed!*** The problem I had was a stiffness in my neck, which comes with normal aging, that made it difficult to turn my head from side to side. What I felt in my neck, as it was being healed, was similar to what I felt when the Lord healed my lower back, (without my asking) about which I wrote in my February letter. If I had a list of the people who stood for prayer that night, it would be interesting to talk with them, especially the woman I laid hands on!

What I wrote in my February letter, and what I

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<sup>21</sup>Sam Smith is a fictitious name used for confidentiality purposes.

<sup>22</sup>I have specified *body joints* since *joint or joints* as stand-alone words today have other meanings. Just thought I’d throw that in to see if you are reading the footnotes. This is a fun trip for me. Hang in there!

have just written, partially defines the problem in the church today concerning the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit as referenced previously in *Article XII*, paragraph one, *sentence one*. Some seminaries, where young men and women go in preparation to serve as God's servants, are teaching things to students about the Holy Spirit which, in my opinion and from my experience are not true, partly because of some mistakes, excesses and abuses that have occurred. What a powerful body the church can become in these *last days* with this dichotomy healed.

In my February letter I also wrote briefly on the healing ceremony in the fifth chapter of James. Here is some additional comment on that scripture: The first part of verse sixteen, RSV, reads, "Therefore confess your sins, one to another and pray for one another, that you may be healed." After I had been called on a number of times to pray for healing with the anointing of oil in the name of the Lord, the Holy Spirit spoke to me one day and said, "Unconfessed sin causes much illness." This is not the only reason to "confess your sins and pray for one another," but this is **one of the reasons**. Unconfessed sin does not cause all illness but **some** illness. Of course, if you consider the Adamic sin, then all illness *is caused by sin*. But exclusive of the Adamic sin, *all illness is not caused by sin*. Now notice what the last part of verse fifteen says concerning the one who calls the elders for prayer, "and *if* he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." If unconfessed sin caused *all illness*, the scripture would read, "and *since* he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." Confessing your sins, faults and weaknesses to one another and praying for one another deals with and eliminates some illnesses **before they are manifested by symptoms** and that is not the only benefit. In the fifth chapter of John's gospel, Jesus confirms this teaching. You may recall in this incident that "there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in the Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had." Jesus approached one man there who had been ill for thirty-eight years, asked him if he wanted to be made well. It is interesting to note that the man did not say, "Yes." Instead, he told Jesus why he couldn't be healed. This

is typical of the church today. Most of us choose to glorify the symptoms instead of saying "Yes" to Jesus by trusting in His word and, by faith, claiming His promises. In spite of the man's reply, Jesus healed him. Later He found the man in the temple and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, *lest a worse thing come upon you*."<sup>23</sup> This man who was a cripple and unable to walk, had been that way for thirty-eight years **because of sin in his life that had not been dealt with**. Jesus dealt with our *sins, diseases and sicknesses at the cross*. That's why He died. The Apostle Peter said it this way, "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes *you were healed*."<sup>24</sup> Jesus said, "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."<sup>25</sup> The word *saved* in this scripture is translated from the Greek word *sozo* which means "to deliver or protect, heal, preserve, do well, be whole or to make whole."<sup>26</sup> Please believe that I have much to learn in this area. But also believe that I have prayed for people, some of whom were miraculously healed and blessed, that I have seen others healed by our Lord and that I have received enough healings in my physical body to know that I am working "in the mother-lode!"

Because of what the Holy Spirit said to me concerning the relationship between unconfessed sin and illness, under certain circumstances I now ask some who come to me and request prayer for healing if there is any unconfessed sin in their life. Up to now the answer has always been, "No." However, should the answer be "Yes," I will suggest that this be cleared up between the individual and the Lord before we pray. This may seem to run counter to what I have previously written, and what the James' chapter five scriptures teach, but I do not think so and I am comfortable with this procedure after the Holy Spirit spoke to me.

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<sup>23</sup>Read John 5:1 - 14 for this complete story.

<sup>24</sup>1 Peter 2:24, Italics added, See also Isaiah 53:5.

<sup>25</sup>John 3:17.

<sup>26</sup>New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of The Bible, Strong's Number 4982, p. 1227 & p. 88, Greek Dictionary.