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Miracles and the Supernatural Throughout Church History

22. Healing Specialists

This chapter surveys nineteenth-century ministers who believed God still heals the sick through prayer and faith. It argues that healing was central to Jesus' ministry and continued in the early church beyond the apostles, then profiles several figures whose ministries saw many people healed. Each kept spiritual renewal, not physical healing, as the main aim.

Key takeaways

- Healing in Acts was not limited to apostles: Stephen and Philip, ordinary servants, also worked signs and wonders (Acts 6:8; 8:6-8).
- Johann Blumhardt (Germany) saw a two-year deliverance of Gottliebin Dittus spark a whole-town revival ('The Awakening') at Möttlingen, with widespread repentance and healings.
- Blumhardt honored doctors and refused to sensationalize miracles, always pointing to the inner work of the Spirit and longing for a new Pentecost.
- Dorothea Trudel (Switzerland) prayed for the sick per James 5:14-15, opened healing homes at Männedorf, and won a court case that produced documented, doctor-confirmed healings; she too welcomed medical care.

- Dr. Charles Cullis (Boston), a practicing physician, added faith-and-prayer for healing after learning of Trudel; he saw tumors, addictions, and 'incurable' diseases healed while never abandoning medicine.
- Cullis answered critics that not all he prayed for were healed just as not all who are preached to are converted — the failure rate is no argument against the gift.
- The movement spread: William Boardman's Bethshan home in London, where Andrew Murray was healed and came to teach healing as tied to holiness.
- A.J. Gordon argued from Scripture, history, and reason that miracles, Spirit-baptism, and healing continue today, and that healing has a redemptive basis in Christ's atonement (Matthew 8:17).

Passages worth keeping

"We have seen long enough what the devil can do; now we desire to see also what Jesus can do."

Blumhardt's turning-point prayer during 'the struggle.'

"The first and main objective is to impress the heart; the cure of the body is secondary."

Trudel's method — spiritual care first, healing second, the shared conviction of all these figures.

How it connects

The common thread is James 5:14-15 lived out: simple, compassionate prayer for the sick, always subordinate to salvation and the Spirit's inner work, and never opposed to doctors.

Scripture referenced

- **Acts 6:8; 8:6-8** -- Stephen and Philip show healing was not apostles-only.
- **James 5:14-15** -- The elders' prayer and anointing with oil — the model Trudel and Cullis followed.
- **Hebrews 13:8** -- Christ 'the same yesterday, today, and forever' — basis for expecting healing now.
- **Matthew 8:17** -- Christ bore our infirmities — Gordon's ground for healing in the atonement.
- **Hebrews 2:4** -- God bearing witness with signs and wonders — Gordon's case for Spirit-empowered ministry.