

ISSUE

21.25

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

June 23,
2019

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Steve Dixon
Ryan Ferguson
Ben Hight
Blake McAlister
Walker McAnear
Ryan Matney
Sam Nunn
Lance Purcell
Justin Smiley
Kevin Wise
Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope



When the Faith Healers Came to Lithuania By Derek Chambers

The phone call came late one night from one of the local brethren. “You should have seen it,” he said. “They were healing people with different afflictions.” “First they sang songs, then they preached a sermon, and then they healed people.”

So-called faith healers have been around for a long time in the United States. In Eastern Europe, however, they are quite a novelty. It was no surprise to me that this brother, who has been a Christian for just over a year now, was excited about what he saw. He knew from our previous studies that these things were not right, but was fascinated by them just the same. Reluctantly, I decided to accompany my friend to the faith healers’ service the following evening. Earlier that day we studied the matter briefly. I wanted him to understand exactly what mendacity would be taking place.

Knowing the curiosity of Lithuanians and the mass advertising of the faith healers, I expected to find quite a crowd at the service. Instead, there were only about 15 people. The service proceeded rather lethargically, with poor piano playing and little singing by the audience. The sermon was soft and empty with very few passages read. The American “pastor” ended his sermon by telling every-one to close

their eyes, bow their heads and pray. Then he offered an invitation. Anyone who wanted to be saved needed only to raise his hand. "Don't worry, no one will see you," he said. "Everyone's eyes are closed." About seven people raised their hands (my eyes weren't closed). He called them forward and instructed them to hold hands and repeat a prayer. Then the "pastor" pronounced them saved Christians. The people themselves, however, didn't seem much different. They didn't seem joyful at all, only confused. They seemed to sense that something was missing in their "conversion."

Then it was show time. There were going to be some real miracles they claimed. They spoke nobly of the previous night and all the healings that went on. They asked the family sitting next to me (whose son had been prayed for the night before) if their boy was any better. "No," they said solemnly. Then the "pastor" asked the mother if she was better (as they had also laid their hands on her the previous night). "Not yet," she said. "Well you're looking better," they claimed, "You're smiling twice as much tonight."

"Anyone who needs a healing, please come forward." First forward was another man who had been there the night before. He had already been "healed" of having one leg shorter than the other (the oldest trick in the book). However, the real problem was that he had been in a car wreck and many bones had been broken. He walked with a terrible limp, a limp that was no better after their "healing." He went forward for another "miracle," but nothing happened. "It will just take time," they said.

The rest of the "afflictions" included nervous tension, stomachaches, weakness, cramps, another lady with one leg shorter than the other, and my friend who asked them to remove a mole. Naturally, all the problems were "cured," except the mole. The following night another brother who attended their service informed me that they cured two more people with one leg shorter than the other, including the same lady I saw get healed of this same affliction the night before. (There seems to be a lot of people in Lithuania with one leg shorter than the other.)

The service finally came to a close and the small group in attendance left, seemingly disappointed and confused. It was not hard to see that the work of the faith healers had fallen flat. Ultimately, no one believed that any miracles had taken place and no one really thought they were saved. Fortunately I was



able to talk to a few of these people and invite them to our worship and lectures. My Lithuanian brother who invited me to the service saw just what a farce the service was and did not return.

I would like to offer three suggestions of why the faith healers did not do well in Lithuania:

1. They preached a false plan of salvation. According to these men, all that is necessary for salvation is “accepting Jesus into your life.” Although repentance was hinted, it was not preached specifically and baptism was completely ignored. “Baptism is nothing,” one of the “pastor’s” wives was overhead saying. The people who were told they had been saved somehow didn’t seem to quite believe it. They had enough sense to know that raising one’s hand and repeating a prayer didn’t save one’s soul. Therefore they found no satisfaction in their “salvation.” Acts 2:38: **“And Peter said to them, Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”**

2. Their worship was false. Instrumental music was used and the preachers applauded each other and everything else that went on. The prayers were spoon fed to the audience to be repeated and it seemed that one of the men was trying to pray in “tongues.” These men were sickeningly pretentious and their worship was just as wrong as it could be. John 4:24: **“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”**

3. The miracles were false. The men claimed that Jesus would work miracles through them, but there were none. There are some faith healers who can put on quite

a show and fool you with parlor tricks, but anyone could see that these men were all talk. Perhaps the people in the audience reflected upon the true miracles of Christ and His apostles in the New Testament—miracles which were certain, complete, and irrefutable. Jesus didn’t go around healing bellyaches and moles. He restored sight to the blind, the lame were made to walk, the dead were raised. Matthew 11:5: **“the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.”**

This group of faith healers is but one of the many groups of “miracle workers” in Lithuania. All of these groups boast of Jesus and the Holy Spirit working miracles through them. They also claim to know the truth because God reveals it directly to them, yet there are major doctrinal differences between all of these groups. In light of 1 Corinthians 14:33, how can this be?



In claiming to proclaim the praises of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, the faith healers deny both. They deny the true miraculous power of Deity and the true revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. If what these groups preach is true, then the Holy Spirit failed to reveal **“all things”** (John 14:26; 16:13) the first time around.

I am no longer worried about the Christians here in Lithuania being carried away by the doctrines and tricks of faith healers. With some very basic teaching anyone can understand how terribly erroneous these men are. Their efforts will continue with some minor success, but their works will be revealed in the last day. Romans 16:18: **“For such men are slaves, not to four Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.”**

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Welcome Visitors

**We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.**

● **Let us know if you have any questions.**