

Dear Monica,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know what the Bible has to say about the gift of healing. You asked if the gift of healing was available to anyone and if that gift could be passed on to others.

The miraculous gifts that Jesus' disciples received at Pentecost were necessary in order to fulfill Jesus' last command to them before he ascended into heaven. "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." (Mark 16:15) "Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by signs that accomplished it." (Mark 16:20) We believe the special gifts of the spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-11) were much needed at the time since the gospels were not yet written. Seeing that the apostles were preaching the good news of Christ's kingdom on earth (as well as in heaven), it was fitting that they should confirm their message by doing miracles which gave a foretaste of what that time would be like when "the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." (Isaiah 35:5)

Although the apostles could confer the special gifts of the spirit to others, that ability belonged to the apostles alone. Even Philip, a disciple, known as the evangelist, who was able to perform signs and great miracles, could not confer the gifts of the spirit, but needed to send for the apostles to do this. (See Acts 8:14-17.) We believe that once the apostles died, the special powers they possessed ceased and were not transferred to others.

In summary, we do not believe in the power of apostolic succession or in the laying on of hands for the purpose of healing in this day and age. That power passed away once the apostles were off the scene. In regard to the miraculous gifts of the spirit mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul states, "But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. . . . And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:8, 13)

We hope we have answered your question. Please write us again.

Sincerely,  
Christian Questions Radio