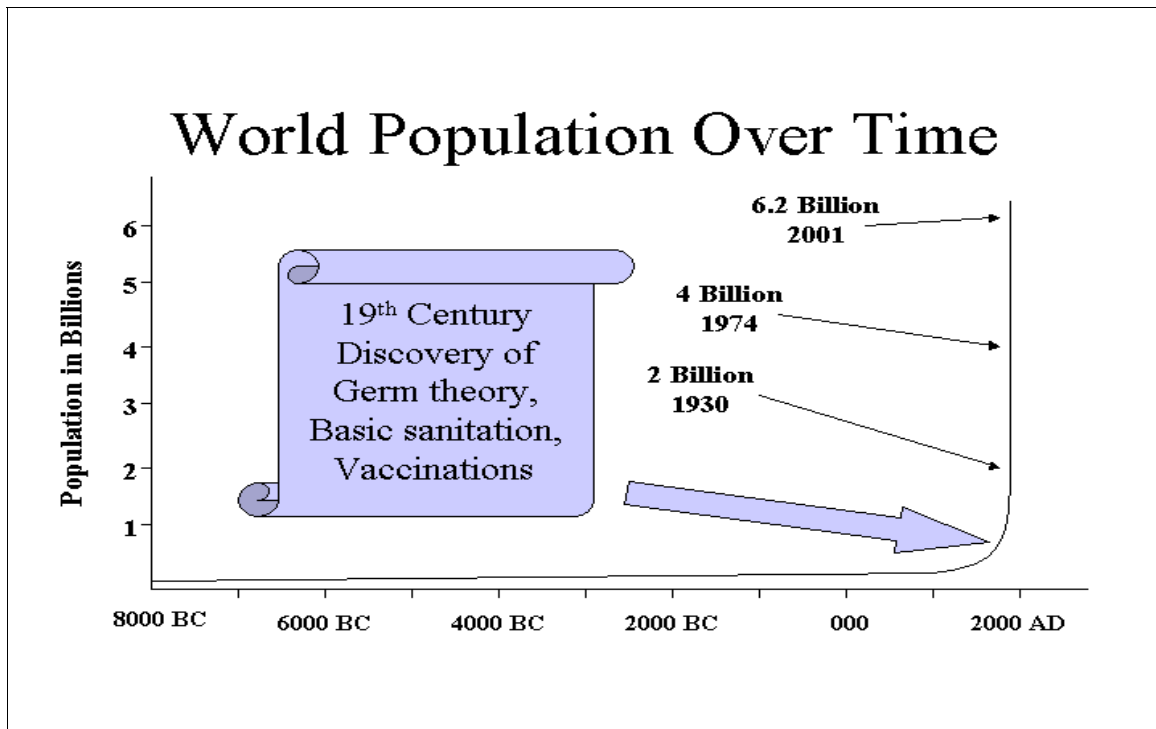




Lay People and Theophostic^{®1}-based² Therapy/Ministry Part 1: World Changing Forces & Vision for the Church

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I. “World Changing Forces” – Microbial Theory and Theophostic[®] Ministry



Microbial theory, basic infectious illness prevention, and the population explosion. Germ theory, basic sanitation, and vaccinations provide an excellent example of how a few key discoveries can change the world.

The total population of the world has remained essentially constant for most of the history of mankind. The really short summary is that world population fluctuated between 10 million and

¹Theophostic Prayer Ministry is a trademark of Dr. Ed Smith and Alathia Ministries, Inc., of Campbellsville, Kentucky. The Lehmans do not claim any endorsement for their ministry, or this essay in particular, by the trademark holder.

²“Theophostic[®]-based” therapy/ministry: We use the term “Theophostic[®]-based” to refer to therapies/ministries that are built around a core of Theophostic[®] principles and techniques, but that are not exactly identical to Theophostic[®] Prayer Ministry as taught by Dr. Ed Smith. Our own therapy/ ministry would be a good example– it is built around a core of Theophostic[®] principles and techniques, but it sometimes also includes material that is not a part of what we understand Dr. Smith to define as Theophostic[®] Prayer Ministry (such as our material on dealing with curses, spiritual strongholds, generational problems, and suicide-related phenomena, and our material on journaling, spiritual disciplines, community, and medical psychiatry).

300 million for most of the last 10,000 years, never reaching 1 billion until the 19th century.

The biggest single factor in preventing sustained population growth has been infectious illness. Prior to the discovery of microbial theory in the 19th century, 50% of the people born into the world died before reaching the age of five, with infectious illness being the number one cause of death. An even more significant problem was infectious plague. Any time population became really dense, it was just a matter of time until an infectious illness plague exploded in the dense population and quickly returned the population to previous low levels. Smallpox plagues and the black death in Europe are examples. This is also the best theory for the “mysterious” disappearance of the huge Inca civilization.

The 19th century discovery of microscopic organisms as the cause of infectious illness lead quickly to simple tools – basic sanitation and protective vaccinations – that essentially eliminated infectious plague as the single biggest population limiter. After 10,000 years with no significant sustained population growth, the world population grew from about 1 billion in 1800 to 2 billion by 1930, 3 billion by 1960, 4 billion by 1974, 5 billion by the late 1980's, and 6.2 billion in 2001³. Note that with infectious plagues out of the picture, this population growth occurred in spite of the biggest wars in human history. In my assessment, the discovery of microbial theory and the development of basic infectious illness prevention have resulted in a population explosion that has changed the ecology of the entire planet in the space of 200 years. This is an example of how a single strategic discovery can change the whole world.

Theophostic® principles and tools. Our perception is that the discovery of Theophostic® principles and tools for the church is analogous to the discovery of microbial theory and basic infectious illness prevention for world population.

Endemic psychological wounds, and the core lies anchored in them, have crippled the church in much the same way as infectious disease crippled world population prior to the 19th century. Any time more than a few Christians try to work together, triggering each other's wounds and lies eventually leads to conflict and division. When this happens, they either split or spend so much time and energy dealing with conflict that they can't get much else done.⁴ Psychological wounds and core lies also make Christians much more vulnerable to demonic harassment (including temptation), resulting in chronic and widespread problems with deception, confusion, and persistent sin. Our assessment is that psychological wounds, and the associated core lies and demonic infections, are the single biggest reason that the Church has crippled along for 2000 years, surviving as opposed to sweeping the world in true victory.

Theophostic®-based therapy/ministry is much more effective than any previous healing tools⁵.

³“Population: Trends in World Population,” Encyclopedia Britannica, Copyright 1994-1998; <http://www.mukil.com/english/script/worldpopulation.htm> 11/2/2001.

⁴Christian missions provides a sad example. Irreconcilable interpersonal conflict is currently the number one reason for Christian missionaries leaving the mission field (I have heard this particular point from several different people, but cannot remember the sources they quoted; if anyone knows the reference, please let me know).

⁵ See “Theophostic® Ministry: Assessment and Recommendations,” “Theophostic®: What is Unique?”, “Cognitive Therapy and Theophostic® Ministry,” and “Theophostic® & EMDR®: F.A.Q.'s and Common Misunderstandings” on the Documents page for additional comments regarding our assessment of Theophostic®-based therapy/ministry, and for thorough comparison between Theophostic®-based

We have been using Theophostic[®] principles and process in our professional work since May 1998, and received the advanced training in October 1998. Our assessment after 8,000+ combined hours of study and writing, and 10,000+ combined hours of clinical experience with Theophostic[®]-based therapy/ministry is that it is much more effective than any other tools, techniques, principles, or approaches of which we are aware. As of January 2002, medical and psychological research shows psychiatric medication, EMDR^{®6} (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), and cognitive-behavioral therapy to be the most effective treatments for psychological trauma. Our experience is that Theophostic[®]-based therapy/ministry is significantly more effective than any of these other tools or techniques. To our assessment, a number of other prayer for emotional healing ministries include many of the principles of Theophostic[®] in their prayer ministries. However, we perceive that the Lord has given Dr. Smith some new insights which have dramatically improved the bottom line effectiveness of his approach to prayer for emotional healing. Our experience with prayer for emotional healing in other ministry settings is that almost everyone experiences some benefit, but that the really dramatic, profound, and rapid healing (e.g., when Jesus comes into the memory in a very powerful way) is rare. If we were painfully honest, our own experience has been that this kind of dramatic healing occurs in less than 5 percent of non-Theophostic[®] prayer for emotional healing sessions. Our experience with Theophostic[®] is that experienced Theophostic[®] ministers with their own wounds and lies out of the way see significant, permanent healing in 85-95% of ministry sessions. With respect to our own healing, Theophostic[®]-based therapy/ministry has been significantly more effective than any other therapy or healing ministry we have received.

Dramatic increase in realistic availability. We believe that every church member can learn the principles of Theophostic[®] Ministry, and that many lay people will be able to use the tools of Theophostic[®] Ministry as lay ministers. This will result in a dramatic increase in the real availability of effective healing.

Summary: We believe that this new tool can change the world. Because Theophostic[®]-based therapy/ministry is providing a dramatic increase in healing for emotional and spiritual problems, we are expecting a dramatic increase in the emotional and spiritual health of each individual Christian, and a dramatic increase in the ability of Christians to work together. These changes should result in a whole new level of “victory” and effective ministry throughout the world church, and this should eventually result in an explosive increase of non-Christians coming to know Jesus. We are hoping and expecting that we are about to experience something that has never been seen before, and that this “new thing” will change the world as dramatically as microbial theory, basic sanitation, and vaccinations.

II. The whole church must participate

This “new thing” will require the whole church learn Theophostic[®] principles and participate in Theophostic[®]-based ministry. We can win the war, but all the soldiers have to get on the battle field. We’re not going to do well if 95% of our soldiers sit at home watching television coverage of the other 5% actually fighting the war.

therapy/ministry and traditional prayer for emotional healing, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and EMDR[®].

⁶EMDR[®] refers to Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, developed by Francine Shapiro, Ph.D. in 1987. For more information, see www.emdr.com; see also “Theophostic[®] & EMDR[®]: FAQs and Common Misunderstandings,” on www.kclehman.com.

Microbiology discoveries did not change the world through a few superstar doctors healing everybody. Microbiology discoveries changed the world when every grade school taught its children about germs, every child learned to wash his hands after going to the bathroom, every community built sewage and garbage disposal systems, every family learned to wash its dishes, and every child got vaccinations.

Theophostic[®] will not change the world through a few superstar ministers healing everybody. Charlotte and I could do Theophostic[®]-based therapy/ministry 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and we would still only get to a few thousand people. Theophostic[®]-based therapy/ministry will change the world as the whole church embraces this challenge and participates in this ministry.

Our vision

Everybody learn the basic principles. Our hope is that all Christians will incorporate the basic Theophostic[®] principles into the way they understand the world. This will be part of the foundation from which we can all work to bring healing into the church, just as the whole population understanding germ theory is part of the foundation for everybody participating in basic sanitation. The average person is not a doctor or a public health worker, but the average person understands germ theory well enough to wash her hands, wash her dishes, and get vaccinations.

Also, as congregational members learn the Theophostic[®] principles, they will be able to incorporate them every time they receive prayer in any ministry setting. For example, if a person is receiving prayer for emotional healing and the Lord brings guardian lies into her mind, she will recognize them and know what to do with them; if the Lord brings judgments or vows into her mind, she will recognize them and know what to do with them.

Every church have a team of lay people who can provide Theophostic[®]-based ministry. Our hope is that every church will have a team of lay people who can provide Theophostic[®]-based ministry. These lay ministry teams will not be able to deal with the most difficult cases, but they will be able to harvest a huge amount of “low hanging fruit.” Our hope is that mental health professionals trained in Theophostic[®]-based therapy/ministry will be able to provide consultation when lay ministry teams get stuck.

Families and friends provide Theophostic[®]-based ministry for each other. An especially exciting possibility (that we have already seen working in a few situations) is for spouses and close friends to use these tools to facilitate healing for each other. Parents can also learn to use Theophostic[®] principles and tools to provide healing for their children.

III. It's not simple, but it is possible for lay people to do this if we let Jesus be the general

Some people jump in, and experience Theophostic[®] to be easy. Even as lay people they experience great success very quickly. Others, like ourselves, experienced more difficulty in learning to use Theophostic[®]-based therapy/ministry.

When we first began to do Theophostic[®], we thought that the therapist/minister had to be very active in figuring things out, especially in figuring out what was in the way when the process became stuck. I approached the task of finding and moving blockages in much the same way I approach medical problems – I would carry in my head a “differential diagnosis” chart of all the

possible problems, and would then ask questions and try ministry tools in order to test and clarify the different possibilities. As we gained experience, the list of “common problems” on my differential diagnosis chart and the number of ministry tools in my tool box both kept growing. This was good, in that we learned more and more about what could be blocking the way, and were able to find and move the blockages in more and more cases. But at times we wondered whether lay people could really use these tools. The growing complexity felt challenging and tiring at times, and we are full-time mental health professionals. How could we expect lay people to master this material at the level necessary to use it in the way we were using it?

The key is to understand what we need to know and what we do not need to know, what we need to do and what we do not need to do. Fortunately, we have also been gaining confidence in the Lord’s ability and desire to guide many of the details of the Theophostic® process, and we have recently come to a clearer understanding about an important aspect of how He does this.

Jesus is the Commander in Chief who can see the whole battle, and we are the soldiers in the field who can only see what is immediately in front of us. He’s the one who carries the “big picture” in His head, the one who knows where to find the memories where the core lies are anchored, the one who knows what is in the way and the order in which the different pieces need to be removed. Our experience is that He does *not* require us to “figure out” these aspects of the big picture. Our experience is that He *does* require us to know enough to recognize what He shows us, and to know how to use the tools required to play our part in the Theophostic® process.

In concrete and specific terms:

We ask “Jesus, what do you want _____ (the person receiving ministry) to know about this?” as the backbone of our Theophostic® ministry prayer. We pray this simple question over and over and over in our Theophostic® sessions.

After praying this simple prayer, we pay attention, observe carefully, and follow Jesus’ guidance by dealing with whatever He brings forward. Our belief is that it is possible for lay people to learn to do this. The goal of most of Dr. Smith’s material and most of our training material is to teach lay people how to do this. It is not simple, but it is possible. I think it is possible to do this with the same or less time and energy as we spend on hobbies, watching sports on TV, and other things we find time to do that are less important than healing and transforming the world church.

Our experience is that Theophostic®-based therapy/ministry is not a quick and easy solution. It is not a pill you can take to solve all your problems. It is not a painless procedure. For us, Theophostic® principles have become an important new part of the paradigm through which we understand the world. We have developed a new lifestyle, in which Theophostic®-based therapy/ministry has become part of our daily spiritual disciplines – the spiritual disciplines of turning away from denial and other defenses, of turning towards the truth, no matter how painful, of embracing triggers and going with Jesus to find and resolve the wounds, lies, judgments, etc. that hinder our relationship with the Lord and our Christian discipleship.⁷ It has not been simple and it has not been painless, but it has been worth it.

⁷ See “Spiritual Disciplines and Emotional Healing Ministry: Choosing Healing” on our website, for additional discussion of Theophostic®-based therapy/ministry and ongoing spiritual disciplines.

See “Lay People and Theophostic® Ministry, Part 2: Promoting Healing, Preventing ‘Breakage’” on the Articles/FAQs page of our website for more practical specifics on implementing this vision.

Regarding our place in the Theophostic® community: We respect Dr. Smith tremendously and value our friendship with him, however, we are not in any way officially connected with or endorsed by Dr. Smith and Theophostic® Prayer Ministry. We want to share our reflections, experiences, and discoveries regarding the Christian ministry of emotional healing, and many of the thoughts we share have arisen as we have integrated Theophostic® principles and process into our professional psychiatric and lay pastoral counseling practices. But we want to be clear that the material on our web site does not *define* Theophostic® ministry. “Theophostic®” is a trademarked name, and Dr. Ed Smith, the founder and developer of Theophostic® ministry, is the only one who has the right to define Theophostic® ministry.

We have studied many sources, including medical psychiatry and neurology, psychological research, various secular psychotherapies, and various Christian emotional healing ministries. Our emotional healing ministry includes the core Theophostic® principles and techniques, but we also include “non-Theophostic®” material. For example, our material on medical psychiatry and the biological brain, EMDR, dealing with curses, dealing with spiritual strongholds, dealing with generational problems, and our material on journaling, spiritual disciplines, community, and on dealing with suicide-related phenomena are not a part of what we understand Dr. Smith to define as Theophostic® Prayer Ministry.

The material on our website is not a substitute for the Basic and Advanced Theophostic® Ministry Training provided by Dr. Smith. For further information about Theophostic® Ministry, its developer Ed Smith, D.Min., or to order training materials, please visit www.theophostic.com.