

Q&A: On faith-healing schools

Anonymous asks: *Thoughts on this? <http://bit.ly/lScR5M>*

The link goes to a news.com.au article about courses run by Bethel Church in California that “claim to teach people how to heal the sick and even raise the dead.” Apparently these courses are coming to Australia via Holyfire Ministry Training school and others.

Two points in one direction:

1. Given my experience of news.com.au, there is likely a little, um, exaggeration in the article. Perhaps you could make a headline about any ministry training college that “Faithful pay thousands to be able to make new Christians.” A cursory glance at Holyfire’s Prospectus shows a myriad of courses that are certainly not beyond the pale. Even a quick glance at Bethel Church’s website says of its Healing School Intensive that “Pastors and ministry leaders will learn ways to cultivate and maintain an atmosphere conducive to healing in their churches and ministries” which is different to “we’ll teach you how to heal.” Please note, these were quick, cursory scans of web pages. Let me know if I missed something.
2. I am not against training people for Christian ministry. We do spend a lot of money, for instance, training our gifted preachers to be better preachers. I see no problem with also training those that are gifted in other ways from receiving relevant training, particularly training towards maturity and wisdom.

One point in the opposite direction:

1. Yes, you can take it too far. 1 Corinthians 12:11 says of spiritual gifts, including healing, that “All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he

distributes them to each one, just as he determines.”

And while there does seem to be some precedent for the receiving of gifts through laying on of hands and praying for someone to receive that gift for the church, it is dangerous to think that impartation belongs to anyone but God the Spirit directly. Which is all to say that just because you take a course at a college (and pay its associated costs, perhaps making the same mistake as Simon in Acts 8:18) doesn't mean that you're going to be able to do miracles.