

# ALPHA COURSE - IS IT BIBLICAL?

REVIEW OF THE ALPHA COURSE – “DOES GOD HEAL TODAY? ”



A Review by John Argubright – BibleHistory.net

Below is my Review of a Video from one of the Alpha Courses entitled “Does God Heal Today?” in which I will expose the dangerous false doctrine being taught by the creator of the course Nicky Gumbel.

The errors here are many. To sum it up, this is basically the doctrine of Benny Hinn presented with a British accent, in a less dramatic fashion and with a ‘Father’s Knows Best’ character.

Below is a partial transcript of the video, with the time mark of when he makes his comments. Followed by my commentary, from time to time, pointing out the false doctrine being espoused.

**Time 4:00-5:09 :** Nicky Gumbel of the Alpha course continues; *“Then back in 1982, this American pastor, John Wimber, came to speak in the church . . . he had a conversion experience and came to faith in Jesus Christ. . . . And he started reading the Bible and read the New Testament. And he read all the stuff. That is what he called it. The stuff that Jesus did and the stuff that the disciples of Jesus did. And he called it like “Doing the stuff.” Healing people, miracles. And he said this is amazing, this is what church is about. So he went to church and he was sort like waiting, like sitting through the service thinking; “When are they going to do the stuff. Because I have come to watch. I’ve come to watch people healed and miracles.” And now he was speaking to us as a Pastor saying this is the things we ought to do in church.”*

**Commentary:** First of all, who is this John Wimber that Gumbel says we should be listening to? John Wimber was one of the leaders who first began a charismatic movement called the Vineyard Movement. He believed every Christian has the ability to prophesy, speak in tongues, and heal the sick and that it should take place at every Church service. So right off the get go you should know what type of false doctrines you are going to be exposed to by Nicky Gumbel next. Unfortunately not everyone has the spiritual gift of discerning spirits.

**Time 5:25-6:30:** The false prophet Nicky Gumbel continues *"And again he talked about healing. And then he said "Now we are going to do some healing, but before we do some healing we are going to have some coffee. So, we never did healing so we had a very long coffee break. . . . But what he said was exercising the gift of the Holy Spirit. You know it, that we can. We look at the gift of the Spirit. That exercising the gift of the Spirit seems to be praying in that list we look at in 1 Corinthians 12 that says, 'the words of knowledge.' He seems to have this 'word of knowledge,' like supernatural revelation of things that were wrong with people that they (the preacher) could not have known about naturally. But had impressions, pictures, sometimes sympathy pains. (Feeling the same pain some else who needs to be healed has.) And he then read out a whole list. Twelve of them. Then he said "I am going to ask those people to come forward."*

**Commentary:** Now let me stop here because there is so much false doctrine in this 1 minute clip. First of all, nowhere in 1Corinthians 12 does the Bible talk about praying in the gifts that are listed there. Secondly nowhere in 1Corinthians 12 does it define 'the word of knowledge' as the ability to supernaturally know what is physically wrong with other people. This is Nicky Gumbel's charismatic theology, not the Bibles.

The 'word of knowledge' found in 1Corinthians 12, is simply understanding the truth of God's word and proclaiming it to others. It has nothing to do with the gift of healing. The 'stuff', if I may mock John Wimber, that he says he prayed for and received as supernatural revelations from God through visions is the same 'stuff' the old fake healer Benny Hinn has been playing over and over again on stage. I can see Benny now, putting his hand on his head in prayer and saying; "Oh, I got a Word of Knowledge. I see someone now out in the audience with back pain. Please come up to the stage so I can smack you on the head, and shove you backwards so my goons can catch you and tell you that you have been healed. Oh, and please send me a generous love gift."

Let's get back to the Alpha Course video:

**Time 7:40** After Gumbel gives testimony of people being healed of back pain, from being childless, etc. he continues: *"What does the Bible actually say about healing? So I started to look at this book (the Bible) as to see what did it say. And what I saw was, that it was in God's nature to heal. God loves you. And he wants you to thrive. He wants you to experience wholeness in your life."*

*The word Jesus actually means savior. And the Greek word for saved is 'sozo.' It is an interesting word 'sozo,' because it can mean 'I save.' And of course Jesus came to save us from our sins and brings forgiveness. But that same word also means 'I heal'*

**Commentary:** Now let's take another break after another 1 minute clip to see what we can find here. First of all Gumbel tries to redefine what Jesus name actually means. He intentionally skips Mathew

1:21 which tells you exactly what it means. And it means one thing, and one important thing only. It says that he was called Jesus, because he would save his people from their sins. It does not also mean 'to heal people from their sickness,' although he did do that in Scripture. And secondly, Jesus wasn't Greek and did not have a Greek name. He was Hebrew and He was called 'Yeshua' which meant 'salvation.' 'Yeshua' never meant physical healer. So let's get that straight.

The next point is that he tries to connect the Greek word 'sozo' to his name. 'Sozo' meaning saved, and in some cases healed. But 'sozo' was not His name or His title. His title, Savior in Greek, is that word 'Soter' not 'Sozo'. The word 'soter' meant savior and deliverer. It was not connected with physical healing in the New Testament. Also, in Hebrew the word saved is 'yasha' and does not mean healed in the Old Testament. So once again Nicky Gumbel is playing fast and loose with the Scripture. Don't let this trusting 'father knows best' figure and his eloquent speech deceive you.

**Time 10:20:** The false teacher Nicky Gumbel continues; *"But in the Bible, it's not just like emotional health, psychological health, or spiritual health. It is all those things. But also there is physical healing. And what I hadn't realized is 25% of the Gospel are taken up with the healing miracles of Jesus. And Jesus had compassion on people. Mathew said this: "Jesus went through Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people." Matthew 4:23. But the thing is this. It wasn't just Jesus. Jesus said to his followers. That's like you and me. He gave them authority. He gives you authority. It's not just like the special people who are healers this is for every Christian.*

**Commentary:** Let's stop at this point. First he says healing is for every Christian. Then the question would be why does the Bible in 1 Corinthians 12, which list some of the gifts say; "to one is given - - - , to another - - - , and to another is given the gift of healings." If you read 1 Corinthians 12 there is no way you could come up with the notion that every Christian was given all the gifts mentioned there by God. In 1 Corinthians 12:11 it states that the Spirit distributes these gifts to each one individually according to His will, not ours.

**Time 11:30** The Alpha Course video continues; *"He gave authority to go and tell the good news and heal those who were sick. And that's what they did, if you read the book of Acts, that's what they did. They went around healing people."*

**Commentary:** Well that's not exactly true. The apostles healed people, not all Christians did.

- 1) Peter commands the lame man to rise up and walk in Acts 3:1-12.
- 2) The Apostles' pray the Lord to "stretch forth His hand to heal." Acts 4:29-31.
- 3) People seek healing from the passage of Peter's shadow; and a multitude from other cities receive healing from the Apostles. Acts 5:12-16
- 4) Philip's mission to Samaria includes healing. Acts 8:5-8
- 5) Peter heals Aeneas of palsy. Acts 9:32-35:5

6) Peter raises Tabitha from the dead. Acts 9:36-42. I wonder why none of these faith healers today don't visit funerals and lay hands on them to raise the dead from their caskets.

The only non-apostle who did any healing was Ananias who was specifically instructed by the Lord to lay his hands on one man, the apostle Paul, who had been temporarily made blind by the Lord on the road to Damascus.

**Time 11:40** Gumbel states: *"And as you read church history all the way down, that is what you see. And still today God is healing people."*

**Commentary:** Actually the record of real miraculous healings, as done in the Bible, throughout history as is not a common occurrence. Maybe Nicky Gumbel might want to elaborate a little more on that one.

**Time 11:45-24:00:** From this point onward, Gumbel goes into story telling mode. He tell stories of people he said he knew who had been healed and stories of other people in general. A woman who said she had been healed of blindness during an alpha course and beyond. A woman who started a hospice network in order to help bring healing to people. A story of one of his friends who had kidney failure and had not been healed. And the story of a woman's child being healed after Gumbel had prayed for her.

**Commentary:** Since basically no doctrine is spoken of during these story's I will not comment on them.

**Time 24:30:** Gumbel continues; *"It is God who heals and not us. None of us has healing up our sleeves. There is no need for hype or shouting or technique involved. Jesus always prayed with love. He had compassion. That was his motive and that should be our motive. We don't put burdens on people. We never say: "It's your fault. You didn't have enough faith." If someone is not healed, it doesn't mean that God doesn't love them or is punishing them. So we pray with love."*

**Commentary:** Let me stop here so that I can finally commend him on the above statement, and for having at least some sense of Biblical soundness on the healing issue.

**Time 25:00** Gumbel continues: *"And we found that these 'words of knowledge', and these gifts of the Spirit really help. Sometimes it's a picture, an impression. We will do this later on this evening. We believe God will give people 'Words of Knowledge.' Pictures, impression, sympathy pains. I watched this over the years. I love this evening on alpha. We always see so many amazing things over the years. God acting in wonderful ways."*

**Commentary:** I guess I spoke to soon. It's amazing how fast a few good statements can take a complete 180 and start heading back in the opposite direction again. Now we are back to the 'Word of Knowledge' stuff which I covered previously as being unbiblical.

**Time 25:30** Then Nicky Gumbel continues with a story of people who had been given 'the Word of Knowledge' regarding other people's physical problems. This continues on until he goes back into time again when John Wimber was at his church and he says that Wimber was preaching and receiving 'Words of Knowledge.'

**Time 29:30** Then Gumbel continues; "He (Wimber) then said; "There are 10 people here who have athletes foot."

**Commentary:** Okay time to stop the video one more time because it's hard for me to control my laughter. Sad part about this is that Gumbel is serious.

**Time 29:40** Then Nicky Gumbel goes on to say that one of Wimber's ministry team laid hands on him and prayed for him to receive power. Gumbel said it was like 10,000 volts going through his body. And he said it was so powerful that he could not take it anymore.

**Commentary:** Okay, I have to stop the video one last time and say this. I agree, I just can't take this anymore.

Now if after all of this, if you still want to go out and get the Alpha Course for your church. Here's a 'Word of Knowledge' for you. Don't waist you money. Go buy a can of Lamisil and get rid of you athletes foot problem in a week. Unfortunately the Alpha Course is being used in churches all across the world indoctrinating youth and new believer's into the false doctrines of the Charismatic movement.

Please see our Review of the Alpha Course video "How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? Which exposes their indoctrination of youth into speaking in tongues and strange physical manifestations by [CLICKING HERE](#).

**OUR FREE BOOK:** "What the Bible says about Speaking in Tongues – The Holy Spirit verses Deceiving Spirits" is also available by [CLICKING HERE](#) for the Free PDF Version. [CLICK HERE](#) to buy the Smart Phone version & help support our work.

