

GUIDELINES FOR BELIEVERS WHO REQUEST ANOINTING

God longs to pour out healing when we suffer. "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14).

What is anointing?

Anointing is a biblical rite established in the Old Testament and carried into the New Testament. Priests and kings in the Old Testament were anointed with oil as a symbol of the Holy Spirit coming upon them to lead God's people. Jesus enlarged the rite of anointing by inviting believers to engage in this when sick.

When is anointing appropriate?

Contrary to what some people believe, anointing is not a last rite. The Bible invites us to pray with anointing whenever there is a need, not only on a person's deathbed.

Who can be anointed?

Any believer in Christ who has a need for healing and a desire to be prayed for and anointed.

Why does the pastor or elder anoint with olive oil?

Oil represents the Holy Spirit. Olive oil was used for anointing in Bible times.

What can I be anointed for?

Any sickness, including physical, emotional, spiritual, mental, and social, as well as uncontrollable or addictive behaviors. People have been anointed for depression, bad habits, mental challenges, disabilities, and other challenges from Satan, as well as for physical illness.

How should I prepare for anointing?

Psalm 66:18 says, "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." All known sin must be confessed. When you cling to sin, God cannot bless you as He wants to. "If any who are seeking health have been guilty of evil speaking, if they have sowed discord in the home, the neighborhood, or the church, and have stirred up alienation and dissension, if by any wrong practice they have led others into sin, these things should be confessed before God and before those who have been offended. . . . When wrongs have been righted, we may present the needs of the sick to the Lord in calm faith, as His Spirit may indicate" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 229).

If you feel like you cannot gain victory over a sin problem, this can be made a subject of prayer in the anointing service. Place your trust in the Lord and His grace. Jesus is able to heal every need. Besides searching your life for sins and confessing them, you may study and read the following:

James 5:13-16	Psalm 107:17-20
Psalm 66:18	Psalm 41:10
Jeremiah 30:17	Jeremiah 17:14
Isaiah 61:1-3	Psalm 103

Also, you may wish to read the chapter "Prayer for the Sick" in *The Ministry of Healing*.

Will I have to disclose why I'm being anointed?

You do not have to mention specifically why you wish to be anointed. But those praying for you will need to know your need in a general way so they know how to pray for you.

What will happen at the service?

You will have opportunity to share your reason for requesting the anointing with a small group of people conducting the anointing. These people will kneel in a circle around you to pray and claim specific promises of healing for you. You may request special friends to accompany you and pray for you as well. One person will close the prayer time by praying and touching your forehead with oil. Sometimes the group chooses to quietly sing a song after the anointing is finished.

How can I know if I will be healed?

You can trust God to bring you healing, even if it is not in the way you want or expect. (Remember that healing is not only physical but can include forgiveness, peace of mind, emotional well-being, and so on.) Realize that God sometimes chooses to heal in stages. Some have been healed from pain. Others have found relief through doctors and surgeries. Know that on every occasion of anointing, blessings can be received. Trust that God will heal you as He sees fit—even if you must wait until eternity. You can claim James 5:15: “And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well [whole]” (NIV).

Resources for anointing:

Bible: James 5:13-16 and other passages about healing

The Ministry of Healing, by Ellen White

“Anointing: The Lost Rite,” *Ministry Magazine*, Sept. 1989

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