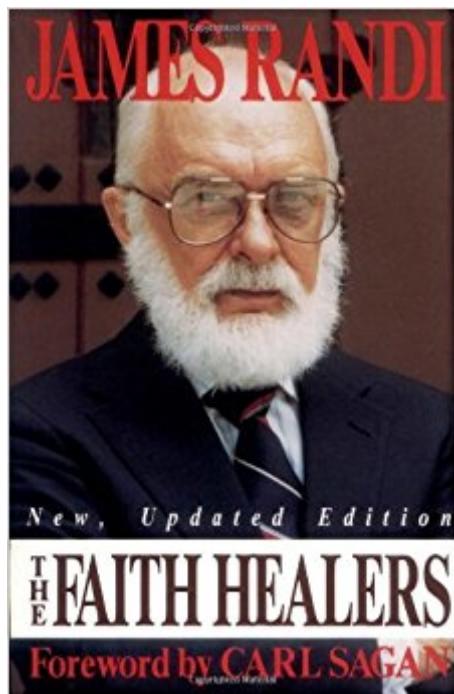


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The Faith Healers



Synopsis

James Randi, the celebrated magician, has written a damning indictment of the faith-healing practices of the leading televangelists and others who claim divine healing powers. Randi and his team of researchers attended scores of "miracle services" and often were pronounced "healed" of the nonexistent illnesses they claimed. They viewed first-hand the tragedies resulting from the wide-spread belief that faith healing can cure every conceivable disease. The ministries, they discovered, were rife with deception, chicanery, and often outright fraud. Self-annointed ministers of God convince the gullible that they have been healed - and that they should pay for the service. The Faith Healers examines in depth the reasons for belief in faith healing and the catastrophic results for the victims of these hoaxes. Included in Randi's book are profiles of a highly profitable "psychic dentist", and the "Vatican-approved wizard."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It is almost impossible to read this book and not be outraged by the callous and reprehensible behavior of the so-called "faith healers." Not only does Randi reveal the methods and tricks used by these charlatans, but he provides example after example, including actual documents, to back up his findings. He demonstrates just how disgracefully these individuals use every underhanded trick they can come up with to wring money out of people who honestly believe that their hard-earned dollars are going to support a good cause; they believe they are doing the right thing, when in actuality their donations are used to purchase sports cars, clothes, and new homes for these

supposed "men of God." It is unfathomable how someone like the previous reviewer can accuse Randi of being jealous of the money earned by the "faith healers." Randi is unfailingly respectful of those whom he sees as honestly pursuing their convictions, even though he feels they are misguided; for example, he bears no ill will towards Ernest Angley, one of the most famous faith healers of all, because he feels that Angley is sincere. But as for the charlatans and deceivers who prey upon the weak, Randi spares none of his wrath, and rightfully so. Why shouldn't he take off the kid gloves when dealing with people so vile that they would exploit the honest religious faith of good people for their own monetary gain? Does the previous reviewer feel that it is legitimate for a minister to mail out packages of kool aid, call it the "blood of Christ," and ask for donations in excess of \$100 from simple, hard-working people?

I am a United Methodist pastor. I serve a local church and work as a hospital chaplain. To round things off, I am a member of the Order of St. Luke the Physician. James Randi, the author of this tome is none of these things but he is a skeptic with an open mind. This book is long overdue and very well done. My background before entering the ministry was in math, physics, engineering and biology. I know and understand the scientific method and what it can and cannot do. I also understand the limitations of theology and anecdotal reporting. James Randi does as well. He makes no claims of being religious but is willing to look and consider each case put before him. I rather suspect him of being an agnostic but that does not prevent his outrage from showing at some of the tricks faith healers have been known to use. His book is a well presented exposé and it is a shame that more people, including governmental agencies, broadcasters and church members across the Christian spectrum are not outraged by what is routinely done to people of faith. Nowhere does Randi claim that healing by prayer is impossible, though he does admit to being skeptical about it. What bothers him is seeing flocks being fleeced unmercifully by people who claim to be God's anointed and seeing those same ministers actually hurt people and perpetrate frauds. I respectfully submit that such behavior should bother everyone. I know it bothers me, especially since it eventually hurts the faith of those most in need of healing. I do believe in the power of prayer and make no apologies for it. I believe it does work and is efficacious. I do not believe that prayer always gives the desired results. Modern medicine can cure many things, treat many more and fails in yet others.

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