Since being diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease, I have gained a stronger, more focused faith in God. Some seem surprised that I am not angry with God for this unhappy turn of events, but a stronger faith has been a positive consequence of this disease, which is also called amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

I was told I have bulbar ALS in May 2007.

The bulbar form is the most aggressive. It is called bulbar because it first attacks the stem, or bulb, area of the brain, which controls speech and swallowing among other things.

ALS is incurable and fatal.

As a result of dealing with this trouble, I have read and re-read how Jesus Christ healed everyone who had even a modicum of faith. I am not sure that that all-encompassing scenario applies today. When Jesus was on earth he was on a tight schedule and needed to convince the world of his divine credentials; thus the abundance of miracles. I'm sure healings occur today, just less frequently.

Despite their rarity, someone in my position -- particularly if she believed in God prior to becoming ill -- doesn't discount the possibility of a miracle.

With that in mind, on a recent evening my husband and I went to a local church where regular "healing" services are held. We took our little granddaughter with us because our daughter-in-law had an obligation that night.

When we arrived, the service had already begun. A few dozen hopefuls dotted the pews in the cavernous sanctuary. Down front, standing at a lectern, an elderly woman spoke of God's power and how he answers the faithful. She spoke for several minutes, then prayed and invited anyone who wanted healing to come forward.

Assistants flanked her and joined her in praying for those who came down, laying hands on them and repeatedly saying "Thank you, Jesus!"

Some of the people who were prayed for fell when touched. One assistant seemed to make this happen more often. He, a young man wearing a brown-gold suit and wire-rim glasses and another assistant appeared to work as a team.

This young man would touch a seeker and the other, standing behind, would catch the person as he or she fell to the floor. I believe this falling down is called "slaying in the Spirit." Subsequently, the "slain" would lie prone for some time as the team moved on to another needy soul.

I watched this from my wheelchair at the back of the auditorium. My husband stood beside me rocking the sleeping baby.

Without warning, the young man was in front of me pulling me out of the wheelchair. Unable to pull back for fear of losing my balance, I had no choice but to go along as he pulled me to the front of the room.

And I thought: "Who knows? Maybe this is how it's done."

When we got to the front, speaking into a remote microphone this man told me to say, "Thank you, Jesus." When I was not successful, he told me to say, "baby." He kept repeating, "Say, baby!"

When my approximations were not adequate, he raked his fingers across the sides of my face and said something like, "I cast the spirit of deafness out of her!"
I couldn't tell him I wasn't deaf.

Then he went back to the "Say, baby!" shtick and for some reason chuckled when I still couldn't say it.

Finally, he pushed me back into the arms of the other man and told me, "It's the Spirit!" The second man laid me on the floor and off the two went to another person.

Well, as soon as they turned away I sat up, but I couldn't get to my feet. I looked to my husband -- who seemed to be miles away -- imploring him for help. But he was occupied with the tired baby.

I must've sat on that floor for a good 10 minutes watching others praying and testifying before a kind woman and man helped me up. These gracious people escorted me to my wheelchair and prayed over me once I was seated again.

I probably ought to have been be angry with the gold-suited man, but why waste the energy? I'm not even disappointed that I wasn't healed. The Lord knows what he wants to do and when he wants to do it.

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