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P. O. Box 5601
Frankton, Hamilton 3242, New Zealand
Telephone: (64 7) 8466 555
Facsimile: (64 7) 8466 418
E-Mail: gfm@xtra.co.nz or admin@gospel.org.nz
Website: www.gospel.org.nz

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This booklet is dedicated to all those who genuinely and sincerely want to accomplish the vision and purposes of God for their lives in the 21st century through a greater understanding of the place of Divine Healing in their lives and ministries.

Acknowledgements:

Unless stated otherwise, Scripture quotations are taken from the "New King James Version" (NKJV) of the Bible.

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Foreword

One of the characteristics that stand out with Rodney's ministry is his love and devotion for the people of God in the local church. I have found Rodney's approach to ministry (and that of the Team he leads) to be soaked in godly humility. His desire is to see the Church move in godly power at a local level so that we, the people of God, may serve effectively as the ambassadors of Christ on earth within our circles of influence. Rodney has a passion to teach and release the gifts of the Holy Spirit within the body of Christ. However, as Christians we seem to have division and disunity among our churches over petty peripheral issues concerning the interpretation of obscure Christian doctrine.

This brings us to the topic of this booklet, **The Challenge Of Healing In The Holy Communion**. It is only the work of Christ on the cross - and His gracious gift of forgiveness and redemption - that unites us. When we come to the table of the Lord, where bread is broken and wine is poured out, we are to remember it is only Christ's gift to us on the cross that saves us. Matthew 6:14-15 says: ***"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins"*** (NIV). Therefore when we are reminded of what Christ has done for us, then we need to consider:

- **Are we holding up our end of the covenant agreement?**

True healing comes when we die to ourselves and allow Jesus to be Lord of our lives.

We are in this agreement as the body of Christ together. If the reality of living for Jesus in this generation is going to impact our society, then Christians need to get the central message of our faith sorted out. This is what unites us. Jesus died so that we might live abundant lives.

As you read Rodney's booklet, may you be reminded of the love of God that surpasses knowledge - because **"The best is yet to come!"** ~ *Pastor Simon Currie* (Lifepoint, Ruakaka, New Zealand).

In this booklet Rodney presents some well thought out and thought provoking teaching on the role and importance of Holy Communion in the life of the 21st century Church. The Apostle Paul writes to the Church and demands a response in the partaking of Holy Communion to examine ones self. This booklet will challenge you to evaluate and value the place of Holy Communion in your personal walk with God ~ *Pastor Jason Heron* (Northampton, England).

THE CHALLENGE OF HEALING IN THE HOLY COMMUNION

By Rodney W. Francis

Over the past number of years I have had a growing concern at the lack of the healing and miraculous power of God being demonstrated amongst the Christian believers. I have studied and wrestled with this from the Scriptures – even took four years to write a book entitled, **“DIVINE HEALING – A Key To The Growth Of The Christian Church”** (which we receive positive feedback to). It is good to know that the Bible contains a very positive message that it is God’s will to heal us! Jesus even commanded His followers to go out and do the same – **heal the sick!**

The challenge to each one of us who call ourselves Christian is to be able to translate the promises of God into a practical outworking reality, so that many others will be the recipients of healing and health. In writing my book I discovered that basically there are three main reasons why people do not receive healing:

1. Doubt
2. Unbelief
3. Hardness of heart.

All hindrances to the promises of God being fulfilled in and through our lives have their basis in those three main reasons. In the following portion of the Bible we can see how that these hindrances can develop into other areas whereby we are blocked, then robbed of receiving the promises of God.

1 Corinthians 11:23-34

Recently I was impacted by **1 Corinthians 11:23-34**, where it speaks to us of the Holy Communion and of our responsibility in rightly discerning the Body of Christ. It says that when we do not ***“examine”*** ourselves correctly before partaking of that Holy Communion, we will become guilty of bringing upon ourselves weaknesses, sicknesses, and even an early death! And this is the reason for this booklet being written. In desiring to see a greater breakthrough in the numbers of people being healed, it is important for us to look again at the way we come before the Lord in the eating and drinking ***“in remembrance of Him.”*** There are keys here for us to understand our obligation – as Christians – when we come before the presence of Jesus at the Holy Communion. Holy Communion is a time of remembering Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross for us; of renewing covenant; of demonstrating to God that we believe Him and will keep our side of that covenant so

that its effect will impact our lives in reality. It demonstrates to God that our lives are set aside for His will and purpose. It is a love covenant – a love relationship between Jesus and us.

In commencing this passage of 1 Corinthians 11:23-34, notice that what Paul is sharing with us was a direct revelation from the Lord Himself: ***“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you”*** (v. 23).

- **New Testament Christianity comes to us by revelation of the Holy Spirit of Truth. Revelation opens our eyes to the truth, and enables us (when obeyed) to walk free of the bondages of the world, the flesh and the devil – those things that rob us of the very power of Jesus Christ manifesting itself in and through us in a greater way.**

Holy Communion Is To Keep Us Wholly Focused On Jesus!

Holy Communion is remembering the broken Body of Jesus Christ for us – you and me. It is very personal. Holy Communion is remembering that Jesus shed His blood on the cruel cross of Calvary in order that we are made free from the bondages and power of sinful living (which is anything that comes between us and this Holy God, approachable only through His Son, Jesus Christ). Jesus did this for us – you and me. It is very personal.

Holy Communion keeps us wholly focused on the purpose of Jesus' coming to this world to be our Saviour. If we lose that focus, then we are prone to drift away into other things that do not have the power to keep us safe at the foot of His Cross! When we drift away, then the door gets opened for other things to enter in and rob us of the power of Christianity, which is a personal relationship with Jesus. Once that starts to happen, we become weaker and weaker (spiritually), and the door is opened to all kinds of attacks from the enemy, including weaknesses, sicknesses, and even an early death! And that is not the purpose of Christianity at all! The Holy Communion is there to keep us and protect us from all harm and danger. It reminds us of all that it cost Jesus to become our Redeemer! **But we have to discern the importance of it, how it is to affect us, motivate us and to keep that healthy power of Jesus flowing in our midst.** Taken rightly, the Holy Communion helps us to ***"proclaim (or show) the Lord's death till He comes"*** (v. 26). To ***"show the Lord's death"*** means to "promulgate, declare, preach, show, speak of, teach" (Strong's), or "to bring word down to any one, i.e. bring it home to him" (Bullinger's).

Our life carries a message – THE MESSAGE that all mankind desperately needs. It even goes further than that. **Our life is the Message, because Jesus Christ now lives inside of every born-again, Holy Spirit-filled believer on Jesus Christ! Our message is what we are. If we are not flowing in the revelation of the truth of Jesus, then there is a mixed message going**

forth. A “mixed message” carries no conviction of sin, or of the need for others to call out to Jesus for Salvation!

- **Holy Communion is there to remind us of the commitments we have made to follow Jesus totally and wholeheartedly! There can be no half-measures. Otherwise the weaknesses start to appear.**

We Are Not To Partake In An Unworthy Manner

There are some key words that we will look at as we walk through this passage of Scripture together. I have therefore broken down their word meanings to help us to understand them more clearly. We are told that we should not eat and drink of the Lord’s Table in an **“unworthy manner”** (v. 27). The word “unworthy” in its Biblical context means “irreverently” (Strong’s), or “not suitably, improperly. As an adverb, it properly refers, not to condition, but to manner, not in a becoming manner, in an improper manner, a manner not corresponding to” (Bullinger’s). There is a right and a wrong way to approach the Holy Communion Table. If we go about it unworthily, we are opening ourselves up to guilt.

“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord” (v. 27).

Guilt is bondage. It is our conscience telling us that we

are “out of sorts” with Jesus our Master. In this verse it means “liable to (a condition, penalty or imputation): in danger of, guilty of, subject to” (Strong’s), or “held in, contained in, bound by, hence, liable, subject to” (Bullinger’s). The process of unworthiness and guilt takes us on a negative pathway away from that central abiding place that Jesus Christ has purchased for us with His own blood. That is why we are instructed to **“examine”** ourselves before we eat and drink of Holy Communion.

We Are To Examine Ourselves Before Partaking

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup” (v. 28). Biblically speaking “examine” means to “approve, allow, discern, examine” (Strong’s), or “to prove by test, put to the proof, examine; especially metals, etc., by fire, and of other things by use; to examine, judge of, estimate; hence, approve by trial” (Bullinger’s). The dictionary says: “to look at, inspect, or scrutinize carefully or in detail; investigate” (Collins). The content of this verse almost suggests that people had to come to a certain level of acceptance before they were **allowed** to eat and drink.

- **Do we know what the purpose of partaking of Holy Communion is about?** Or . . .
- **Do we partake because we happen to be in a service where others are doing it?**
- We need to ask ourselves, **“Why am I partaking of this bread and cup?”**
- **If we do not know why we are doing certain things, then how can we receive the benefits?**

It is somewhat disappointing to be a part of a Holy Communion Service when it is “simply a part of the programmed service,” rushed through (like we need to fit it in), instead of our taking the time **to sincerely seek to obey what the revelation of the Lord’s Table (Holy Communion) is all about.** If we do not have the time to take our time in partaking of the Holy Communion, maybe we are demonstrating to God that we do not consider it important enough, or that we don’t mind becoming weak and sickly, and even dying before our time! (Think what could happen if our Leaders were to put a whole service aside for Holy Communion, so everyone had quality time to focus upon its significance.) One thing we have learned in recent years is that the things of God, Holy Spirit Ministry, Spiritual Gifts, walking in obedience to God’s voice, etc., **all take time! If we do not have the time to give the proper time, then maybe we are too busy!** Adjustments and changes need to be attended to urgently. This is all part of the **“examining ourselves,”** so we can come before the Table of Remembrance (Holy Communion) properly prepared. If we don’t, then there are consequences – negative consequences that we “pay for” through weaknesses, ill health and even early death.

- **Do we really want a “Christian” life like that?**

Partaking Unworthily Brings Judgment

“For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning

the Lord's body" (v. 29). How important it is that we take the time to prepare ourselves for partaking of the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion). **It should be approached on His terms, not ours.** We should make sure that we do all in our power to come before the Lord in a worthy manner, with a desire to please and glorify Him. As this Scripture verse states, it is possible for us to partake of the Holy Communion in the wrong way, with the wrong heart attitude, etc. This then brings about negative "results" in our lives.

- **Let us not be guilty of eating and drinking through lack of discernment and ignorance of what it is about.**

If we do not approach the Holy Communion in the correct manner, we are setting in motion a principle that is going to leave us far worse off than before. We can ***"eat and drink judgment"*** (or damnation) upon ourselves. That means "a decision (the function or the effect, for or against a 'crime': avenge, condemned, condemnation, damnation" (Strong's), or "the decision arrived at, decree, determination; then, the decision of a judge; judgment" (Bullinger's). In this case it is **a self-inflicted judgment.** This judgment comes upon those who **fail to *"discern the Lord's body."*** The word "discerning" means "to separate throughout, i.e. wholly, completely, hence, to distinguish, make a distinction (a) to separate one's self from, i.e. to contend with, then, to contend with one's self, i.e. to hesitate, waver" (Bullinger's). The dictionary meaning is: "To recognize or perceive clearly; to recognize

or perceive (differences)” (Collins).

Judgment Comes Through Lack Of Discernment

Verse 29 raises a very important issue that is facing many Christians today.

- **How discerning are we?**

It is a lack of discernment that causes the decline in our relationship with God – and our effectiveness and fruitfulness for Him – for we fail to recognize the Holy Spirit’s revelation to us. This, in turn, always causes us to lose out on progressing onwards with Jesus.

- **Lack of discernment in spiritual revelation is one of the major inhibiting factors of the Western Church right now.**

Without it we continue to plunge on a downward spiral of programme mentality, tradition, and religious habits that take us further and further away from the truth of the Gospel. And we do it all in the name of the Lord!

- **Do you know what discernment is?**
- **Do you trust your discernment?**
- **How can you come to the place of being able to trust your discernment?**
- **Are you able to develop your discernment to become even more sharp and reliable?**
- **For the Christian discernment is a vital part of**

our lives.

- **Discernment has to be used and developed.**

These things can only happen as you are willing and able to share your heart and experiences with other discerning people. It is good to allow other discerning people to hear of your experiences. When you know you are discerning rightly, your confidence rises to enable you to trust your discernment even more. And the more you trust your discernment the more you will live a healthy and contented lifestyle.

- **So many problems come our way because of a lack of discernment.**

JESUS Is The Only Way To God!

In *“discerning the Lord’s body”* we have to see that there is no other way of entering the throne room of God; that there is no other Saviour outside of Jesus Christ; that there is no other way of forgiveness or cleansing from sin, and therefore no other way of acceptance from a Holy God; that there is no other way of entering God’s presence, except through the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ. Good works, church attendance, giving of our time and money, etc., cannot in any way substitute for our demonstrating our utter dependency upon Jesus Christ to get us to where we are meant to go in God’s will. Christianity is all about “dying to our own ways” in order that the resurrection life, reality and glory of Jesus Christ can shine through

us to convict a lost world of its need of a Saviour!
Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"
(John 14:6).

"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). That name is the name of Jesus!

"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle – I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying – a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth"
(1 Timothy 2:5-7).

God Wants The Very Best For Us ~ But!

To rightly ***"discern the Lord's body"*** means we have to acknowledge the sovereign plan of salvation as being on God's terms and not our own. As long as we rightly partake of Holy Communion, and knowing this truth, **then we will have the sure promises of God to keep us healthy and strong in spirit, soul and body.** That is God's heart, desire and will for us! He loves us! He wants the very best for us! But it only happens as we use the gifts God has given us to **discern** what He has done for us at the cross of Calvary. We must always remember that above all else.

Many Are Weak And Sick Among Us!

The consequences of a wrong motive, approach and **lack of discernment** at the Holy Communion Table is given to us in verse 30: ***“For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.”***

What does that mean? The word “weak” here means “to be feeble (in any sense): be diseased, impotent, be sick, be made weak” (Strong’s) or “without strength, infirm, feeble, weak; hence, sick, wanting strength or power” (Bullinger’s).

The word “sickly” means “one whose strength has failed through disease, languid, sick – applied to one sick at heart, sick in spirit” (Bullinger’s). To be “languid” means: “without energy or spirit; without interest or enthusiasm; sluggish; inactive” (Collins). The word “sleep” is spoken generally of the sleep of death: “to put to sleep, to slumber; figuratively to de cease, be dead” (Strong’s).

When we partake of the Holy Communion in a wrong manner of approach, and through lack of discernment, we are actually opening ourselves up for all the very opposite things that we desire to get from our partaking! When that happens, then the weaknesses, sicknesses and diseases are “allowed” or able to take root in us and we go on a downward slide away from the strength and protection of God. Notice again the Scripture uses the word ***“many” ~ “many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”*** So it is not talking about an isolated case here and there. We are being warned of a serious number of Christians who are not enjoying their

God-given right and inheritance for a strong and healthy life-style this side of eternity.

- **It shows us that far too many Christians are not discerning enough in their approach to the Holy Communion of Remembrance of the finished work of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.**
- The question is, "How can we make improvements on our own spiritual and physical condition before God?"

Discerning The Lord's Body Includes Accepting Divine Healing

In our discerning of the Lord's body and what He accomplished on the cross of Calvary for our redemption, we see that it included Divine Healing. I will let the Scriptures speak:

"Surely He has borne our griefs (literally meaning "malady, anxiety, calamity, disease, grief, sickness" – Strong's) ***and carried our sorrows*** ("anguish, or figuratively, affliction, grief, pain, sorrow" – Strong's); ***yet we esteemed*** ("reckoned") ***Him stricken*** ("to punish, defeat, destroy" – Strong's), ***smitten*** ("struck down") ***by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded*** ("pierced through") ***for our transgressions, He was bruised*** ("crushed") ***for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has***

laid on Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:4-6).

Isaiah, like the Apostle Paul, had a revelation of the work of Jesus on the cross and what His sacrificial death would provide. He spoke of it way back then as a present tense happening: ***“by His stripes we are healed.”*** The word “healed” here is from the Hebrew word “rapha” which means, “to mend (by stitching), i.e. figuratively, to cure: (cause to) heal, physician, repair thoroughly, make whole” (Strong’s).

If we turn to Matthew 8:16-17 we can see that Isaiah clearly prophesied that the sacrificial body of Jesus on the cross included deliverance and healing of physical, as well as spiritual sicknesses:

When evening had come, they brought to Him (Jesus) many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: “He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.”

This is very clear. Jesus dealt to both spiritual and physical problems that beset the people of His day. He came to fulfil the Father’s will, not to work against it. If it was not the Father’s will that we be healed, then Jesus would never have engaged in doing what He did. The Father’s heart is for His creation to be made well, whole and strong for His glory.

When we come through to the Epistle of Peter, this is what he has to say: ***For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: “Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth”; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree (cross), that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls*** (1 Peter 2:21-25).

Notice the wording that Peter uses when referring to healing in the atonement: ***“by whose stripes you were healed.”*** “Healed” here is “to heal, to cure; to cause to live, revive, or recover from illness” (Bullinger’s). Peter saw it as an accomplished fact. The work on the cross had been totally completed and he was walking in the revelation of what the truth of the Lord’s body is all about.

These Scriptures all confirm the accuracy and rightness of Isaiah’s prophecy that Jesus’ death on the cross was to purchase a total wholeness for us: body, soul, and spirit. It is important that we discern clearly what the body of the Lord has purchased for us, so we can enjoy the blessed benefits of all that He came to provide the human race. Let us not deny Him His rightful place in our lives, and let us not short-change

ourselves because we are not correctly discerning His body. When we partake at the Holy Communion table, let us discern clearly what has been accomplished for us, and then eat and drink worthily so we can enjoy **all that Jesus has already provided for us.**

We Need To Judge Ourselves

“For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world” (v. 31-32). The word “judge” here has a different meaning to the word “judgment” that we read of in verse 29. “Judge” here is from the Greek word “diakrino” meaning “to separate thoroughly, to withdraw from, or (by implication) impose; to discriminate (or decide): to contend, make (to) differ, discern, etc.” (Strong’s) or “to separate throughout, i.e. wholly, completely, to distinguish” (Bullinger’s). It is a discerning word.

- **It is telling us of our need to discern ourselves when approaching the Lord’s Table; to get ourselves sorted out in such a way that we approach that time of Remembrance in a worthy and proper manner.**

When we come before the Lord’s Table, it is not about what the other person may or may not be doing, but it is about **presenting ourselves before the One and Only True God through the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ, trusting in His blood and mercy, and remembering**

what it cost Him to obtain our access to the throne of a Holy God! The word **“judged”** means “to distinguish, i.e. decide (mentally or judicially); by implication, to try, condemn, punish: avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, etc.” (Strong’s).

As we prepare ourselves for the partaking of Holy Communion, we should judge ourselves in such a way that it enables God Himself to put His finger on any part of our life. It pays to keep short accounts with Him! Then we are in a much better position to live for His praise, honour and glory. We become an example and not a liability. If we do not correctly discern or judge ourselves, then the door is opened for condemnation to enter in and take us down a vulnerable path away from the healing power of God. The Bible is talking about serious matters here.

- **If we truly desire to see much more of the physical healings and miracles of Jesus Christ in our midst, then we cannot overlook this section of Scripture. It is clearly telling us that there are reasons why many Christians become weak, sick and even die (spiritually and then physically) before their time.**

This portion of Scripture is clearly telling us that if we neglect certain things in approaching the Holy Communion, then we can reap weaknesses, sicknesses and even early death. **Therefore it is also telling us that if we**

do partake of Holy Communion in the way God desires us to, then His hand is liberated to keep us in good health – body, soul and spirit. Let us be found doing that which pleases Him.

May God give our Leaders (and us) the courage and boldness to rightly discern the importance of Holy Communion, and give whatever time is necessary to enable Christians to come before the throne of God in a proper manner, and properly prepared to partake worthily of the Lord's Table of Remembrance. **When that happens we should expect there to be a rise in the level of strength, health and healing to be flowing in our midst, with many more testimonies coming forth of "the power of the Lord being present in our gatherings to heal"** (Luke 5:17).

Recommended Reading:

1. *Divine Healing – A Key To The Growth Of The Christian Church*
2. *Unbelief – The Power That Needs To Be Broken*
(both by Rodney W. Francis)

Rodney is the Founder/Director of "The Gospel Faith Messenger" Ministry which ministers to thousands through literature, Bible Correspondence Courses, books, manuals, preaching/teaching, conducting Seminars, "Schools of The Holy Spirit," "International Training Schools" and the "Equipping of Timothy's." He has authored more than 25 books and carries a heart to see this generation of believers equipped with Holy Spirit Gifts and Leadership skills to do the job of fulfilling the

purposes of God. He ministers out from Hamilton, New Zealand, carrying credentials both with “The GFM” Ministry, and “United Kingdom Elim (ECl)”.

Other books, booklets and manuals by **Rodney W. Francis** (and others):

Books:

- Developing Prophetic Ministry
- Equipping For Leadership
- Divine Healing – A Key To The Growth Of The Christian Church! (*English, Nepalese, Telugu India and Italian languages*)
- You Can Measure Your Love For God (*English, Nepalese, Telugu India, and Italian*)
- The Prophetic In The Exodus (*English and Italian*)
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- The Evil Powers Of Canaan
- Discovering The God-Factor
- How To Handle Criticism
- Keys To Worship God
- Spiritual Warfare
- Blessed Are . . . (Teaching on the Beatitudes)

Booklets:

- The 'Dunamis' Power Of God
- God's Supernatural Call!
- The Power Of The Prophetic
- Do You Know And Understand The Prophetic Foundation Of Your Life And Your Church?
- Prophetic Acts And Declarations (by Joan Emery)
- Capture Your Vision!
- The Prophetic Double Anointing

- Discernment – A Key To Christian Maturity (by Kathy Nunes-Vaz)

Manuals:

- School Of The Holy Spirit (*English and Italian*)
- Counselling And Deliverance
- The Book Of James (Verse by verse teaching)
- Bible Basics (Foundational teaching for newer Christians)
- Kingdom Living (Teaching on Matthew Chapters 5 to 7)
- Curses (What the Bible has to say) (by Rodney Francis, Len Buttner and Kerry Wright)
- Baal Worship
- Prophetic Music (by Kerry Wright).

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P. O. Box 5601
Frankton
Hamilton 3242
New Zealand

Telephone: (64 7) 8466 555 or (64 7) 8460 684
Facsimile: (64 7) 8466 418
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