To my aunt, Kerry Kennedy, who embodied the importance of pursuing one’s passion in life

and

To my wife, Leigh, for her help in seeing this journey through
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work would not have been possible without the financial and moral support of the Graduate Department of Religion at Vanderbilt University. The travel grant for presenting research at international conferences from the Graduate School allowed for primary research as well as an opportunity for critical feedback. The Center of Ethics at Vanderbilt University provided a fellowship that greatly aided the writing of this dissertation in the fall of 2007.

I am especially indebted to my dissertation committee, including J. Patout Burns, Barbara Tsakirgis, and Bronwen Wickkiser for their important support, feedback, and professional guidance. William Babcock, Annemarie Carr, and Ljubica Popovich were invaluable influences to the following work. Much of what is written in the following pages grew from conversations and classes taken with these professors. I would like to especially thank the chair of my dissertation committee, advisor and mentor Robin M. Jensen. She has been a gracious instructor, editor, and guide since I arrived in Nashville. She taught me the importance and benefit of examining the era of Late Antiquity through the lens of art and imagery. My sincere hope is to follow in the footsteps her creativity has pioneered. It has been my greatest privilege and pleasure to study under her guidance. I would also like to thank Patout Burns, Dale Johnson and James Hudnut-Beumler, in addition to Dr. Jensen, for their tutelage in the practice, craft, and importance of pedagogy. Through their example, I have learned how to translate the enthusiasm for one’s research into effective teaching.

Finally, this endeavor could not have been possible without the support of my family, particularly my mother and sister, and especially my wife, Leigh. She was unfaltering in her encouragement and support, even when I wavered. And to my aunt Kerry Kennedy.
Many of the following pages were written on her laptop computer. Her love of writing and the arts will never be forgotten.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ................................................................................................................. iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .............................................................................................. iv

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ............................................................................................ ix

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................... 1

   Issues of Terminology: Superstition, Deisidaimonia, and Religio ...................................... 10
   Issues of Terminology: Miracle, Medicine, and Magic .................................................... 13
   Review of Secondary Literature ..................................................................................... 20
   Outline ......................................................................................................................... 28

II. THE ROLE OF HEALING AND MIRACLES IN PAGAN SOURCES ............. 33

   Superstition and Magic as Terms of Slander ................................................................. 35
   The Role of Magic in Antiquity ...................................................................................... 39
   1. Celsus on Magic and Miracles .................................................................................... 39
   2. The Practice of Magic in Late Antiquity and the Greek Magical Papyri (PGM) .......... 44
   3. Apollonius of Tyana .................................................................................................... 47
   4. Apuleius of Madauros ............................................................................................... 59
   The Cult of Asclepius in Antiquity ................................................................................. 63
   1. Aelius Aristides’ Sacred Tales .................................................................................... 69
   2. Julian the Apostate: Pagan Appropriation, Christian Appropriation.......................... 74

III. THE ROLE OF HEALING AND MIRACLES IN THE CHURCH FATHERS............... 88

   Christian Impressions of Asclepius ................................................................................. 90
   2. Second and Third Century Evidence ........................................................................ 101
      Apocryphal Texts ........................................................................................................ 101
      Greek Patristic Texts: Justin and Clement of Alexandria ........................................... 103
      Greek Patristic Texts: Origen and Athanasius ............................................................ 110
   3. Latin Authors: Tertullian and Arnobius .................................................................... 113
   Ambrose and Augustine on Christ the Physician .......................................................... 122
   Ambrose and Augustine on Miracles ............................................................................. 129
   Conclusion ..................................................................................................................... 140
IV. THE HEALINGS OF CHRIST IN CATACOMB ART ........................................... 142

   Patristic Attitudes towards Healings and Imagery ........................................ 143
   Catacomb Scenes of Christ Healing ............................................................. 148
      1. The Healing of the Paralytic ............................................................... 148
      2. The Woman with the Issue of Blood .................................................... 152
   The Visual Appearance of Asclepius ......................................................... 154
   The Visual Appearance of Christ ............................................................... 157
   The Anatomy Lesson ..................................................................................... 162

V. THE RAISING OF THE DEAD AND OTHER MIRACLES IN CATACOMB ART ............................................................................................................. 170

   Patristic Citations of Competing Deities ...................................................... 171
   Hercules, Orpheus and Asclepius in the Catacombs ...................................... 174
   The Raising of Lazarus ................................................................................. 184
   Moses in the Catacombs .............................................................................. 188
   Other Catacomb Images of Miracles ............................................................ 192
   The Significance of the Catacomb Paintings ............................................... 195

VI. THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST IN RELIEF SCULPTURE ................................ 198

   The Chronology of Christian Relief Sculpture .............................................. 199
   The Healing of the Paralytic ........................................................................ 201
   The Healing of the Blind Man ..................................................................... 206
   The Woman with the Issue of Blood ........................................................... 208
   Scenes of Christ Raising the Dead .............................................................. 210
   The Wedding at Cana and the Division of the Loaves ................................... 218
   The Centrality of the Gospel of John .......................................................... 219
   Jesus and Asclepius in Relief Sculpture ...................................................... 226
   Conclusion .................................................................................................... 229

VII. THE STAFF OF JESUS ................................................................................ 232

   The Appearance of the Staff ....................................................................... 233
   The Heritage and Terminology of the Staff ............................................... 237
   Jesus the Magician: The Arguments of Morton Smith, Thomas Mathews, and Paul Corby Finney ................................................................. 241
   Theurgy and Philosophy ............................................................................. 249
      1. Jesus the Philosopher ........................................................................... 251
   The Staff of Moses ....................................................................................... 255
      1. The Brazen Serpent ............................................................................. 259
   The Staff of Peter ........................................................................................ 263
   Conclusion ................................................................................................... 269

VIII. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST THE MIRACLE WORKER ............ 273
Epilogue: The Role of Healing and Miracles into the Early Medieval Era... 273
Assessment of Previous Analysis ................................................................. 276

BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................................................................................ 282
APPENDIX A ............................................................................................................ 302
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACW</td>
<td><em>Ancient Christian Writers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANF</td>
<td><em>Ante Nicene Fathers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANRW</td>
<td><em>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAR</td>
<td><em>Biblical Archaeology Review</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCL</td>
<td><em>Corpus christianorum latinorum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td><em>Church History</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSEL</td>
<td><em>Corpus scriptorium ecclesiasticorum latinorum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOP</td>
<td><em>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC</td>
<td><em>Fathers of the Church Series</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td><em>Harvard Theological Review</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC</td>
<td><em>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JBL</td>
<td><em>Journal of Biblical Literature</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JECS</td>
<td><em>Journal of Early Christian Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JEH</td>
<td><em>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JJA</td>
<td><em>Journal of Jewish Art</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRS</td>
<td><em>Journal of Roman Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td><em>Journal of Theological Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCL</td>
<td><em>Loeb Classical Library</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIMC</td>
<td><em>Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPNF</td>
<td><em>Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG</td>
<td><em>Patrologia Graeca</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Patrologia Latina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAC</td>
<td>Rivista di archaeologia cristiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Sources chrétiennes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLSP</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VChr</td>
<td>Vigiliae Christianae</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>