

THE REACHING PEOPLE GIFTS
Miracles-Healing-Mercy
DR. ROGER BARRIER
Spiritual Gifts Part 4

A SPIRITUAL GIFT MAY BE DEFINED AS:

A SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATION-OF THE HOLY SPIRIT-WORKING THROUGH A BELIEVER'S LIFE-TO
ENABLE THE CHURCH TO EXECUTE ITS TASK ON EARTH.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10.

REACHING PEOPLE: Apostleship-Evangelism-Miracles-Healing-Mercy

MATURING CHRISTIANS: Prophecy-Teaching-Wisdom-Knowledge-Encouragement-Distinguishing Between
Spirits-Faith-Tongues-Interpreting Tongues-Giving-Helps

ORGANIZING THE CHURCH TO REACH PEOPLE AND TO MATURE CHRISTIANS: Administration-
Leadership-Pastoring

MIRACLES-AUTHENTICATING GOD'S MESSAGE

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:10.

Definition: The gift of miracles is an event of supernatural power, identifiable to the senses, accompanying a Christian, to authenticate the Word and/or the reality of God.

It was said of Jesus that He was "a Man approved of God among you by miracles [power] and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you (Acts 2:22).

Three words appear most frequently in the New Testament in connection with miracles.

These three words each fit a different aspect of the definition. The gift of miracles is an event:
of supernatural power (power),
identifiable to the senses (wonder),
to authenticate the Word and/or the reality of God (sign).

1. POWER: An event of supernatural power

A miracle is God stepping into His universe, setting aside the ordinary laws of nature to do something extraordinary.

The owner of a complicated model railroad usually operated it from a control box, but on rare occasions he stepped amidst the miniature tracks to pick up by hand an engine or boxcar to reposition it. Our Creator set laws in motion by which He has intervened to overrule some natural law.

The miracles of Jesus and the apostles evidenced:

- power over demons
- power over nature (stilling storm, walking on water)
- power over matter (water into wine, loaves and fishes)
- power over disease (which relates more to the gift of healing)
- power over death

READ THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES.

Acts 5:12 - Peter - judgment of Ananias - people respected the authority of Peter

Acts 8:5-7 - Philip - unclean spirits cast out, lame healed - people heeded carefully what Philip said.

Acts 13:9-12 - Paul - power encounter with Elymas the sorcerer - Sergius Paulus heeded Paul's witness and became a Christian

DELIVERANCE SESSIONS LEAVE ONLY BELIEVERS!

2. WONDER: Identifiable to the senses

The Mazatecs of Mexico speak of miracles as "long-necked things" because they cause people to stretch out their necks to see something amazing. Wonder is thought to come from the verb watch carefully.

To qualify as a miracle the event must be seen, or be palpable to one of the senses. The new birth does not fit this restricted definition, for the new birth takes place within and is not observable by others at the moment of occurrence, though its results will ultimately surface.

When Jesus healed the palsied man, people were amazed (Mark 2:12). After He walked on the water, the disciples were sore amazed (6:51). At the huge catch of fish, Peter was astonished (Luke 5:9). A miracle invariably elicited a feeling of awe, stemming from the marvelous display of divine power, making people wonder.

3. SIGN: to authenticate the Word and/or the reality of God.

For example, the miracles in John's Gospel were to signal the deity of Christ, causing people to believe in Him. "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples...But these [signs] are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name" (20:30,31).

K.P. YOHANNON AND WORKING OF GOD IN INDIA.

Revivals often accompanied with many miracles.

CAN YOU MAKE MY WATER BUFFALO WELL?

JESUS FILM AND WITCH DOCTOR. Witch doctor didn't want Jesus film. Pleaded and threatened. Show it anyway. Cut electric cord from generator to projector. Film never stopped. "If that is the kind of God you have, we need him. He became a Christian."

Primarily the gift of miracles was an authenticity gift giving credence to the message of the gospel.

Miracles don't just happen at random. Much more likely to occur in areas where the gospel is just getting a foothold.

A study of biblical miracles shows them clustering around critical periods of history.

Exodus (plagues and the manna confirmed Moses and Aaron as divinely appointed leaders)
the prophets,
Christ and the Early Church
Revelation

In each case they were wonders to signal or authenticate the servant of God.

But, they still occur today.

ALAN THE LAWYER

INDICATORS OF THE GIFT OF MIRACLES

- * God will put you in positions in which you must see the power of God demonstrated in order to vindicate his character.
- * You have a sense of the presence of the power of God in given situations and are willing to be God's instrument (risk involved) to accomplish great things.

HEALING-AUTHENTICATING GOD'S MESSAGE

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:9.

Definition

The gift of healing refers to the supernatural healing of physical disease in response to a laying on of hands, or praying, or commanding to be healed or some combination of them.

1. The Gift of Healings Takes Different Forms.

The literal translation of this word in 1 Corinthians 12:9 is "gifts of healings." The double plural obviously indicates that there are many forms of healings.

*In rare cases healing is spoken directly to the sick one, as Peter and John did in the case of the lame man. "But Peter said, 'We don't have any money for you! But I'll give you something else! I command you in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, *walk!*'" (Acts 3:6).

*Sometimes hands are laid on the sick one:

Acts 28:8 "And it came to pass that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux; to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him and healed him."

*Sometimes a healing takes place immediately in order to strengthen the sick person's faith. A healing at the moment of prayer can impressively reveal God's power in a group of people.

*Many healings do not occur immediately.

Jesus heals blind man: "I see men as trees walking." Let's finish the job.

*Often the prayer of blessing is the beginning of a process. The prayer brings the whole person under God's influence. Perhaps he is first given a deeper recognition of sin, leading to confession. Or he learns to know God better, with deeper experiences in prayer.

HEALING OF VI JOHNSON

Immediate healing may bring a danger to the person who prayed. He can relate the healing too strongly to himself and forget that the power to heal comes from God. Thus he is in danger of falling into a magical view of healing.

2. The Bible Makes It Clear That God Has No Intention of Healing Every Illness.

Paul could not help his close friend Epaphroditus, who was so sick he nearly died and probably was sick quite a while? (Phil 2:25-27).

Why did he not heal Timothy's chronic stomach condition instead of prescribing the medicinal use of wine? (1 Tim 5:23).

Why did he leave Trophimus ill at Miletus? (2 Tim 4:20).

In fact, Paul himself was not in good health during much of his ministry (1 Cor 2:3, 2 Cor 11:30, 12:5, 7-10; Gal 4:13). Instead of sending someone with the gift to heal Paul, the Lord gave him Dr. Luke as a constant companion to care for his physical needs.

3. This Gift Does Not Necessarily Depend On The Sick Person's Faith.

It seems that in the exercise of this gift that sometimes the recipient of the healing possessed "faith" to be healed (i.e. believed God could and would heal him).

At other times the healing seemed to have nothing to do with the recipient and depended solely upon the person with the gift.

And still other times it appears as if it depends totally on God and not upon either the healer or the ones being healed.

JESSIE-"If you just had enough faith!"

God's main purpose for the believer is to conform him to the image of Christ. Whether or not God heals depends on whether illness or recovery best contributes to that end. The gift of healing should not be exercised on the basis of the patient's faith but on the condition of the will of God.

4. God Heals According to His Will, Plan, Discipline, and Glory.

John 9:1-3: Jesus and man born blind.

'Who sinned, this man or his parents?'

"Neither, this happened so that the glory of God may be displayed in his life."

There is no gift so trafficked with and commercialized today as this one. It is something nobody can demand in every situation, for sickness is sometimes in God's will, and may be His discipline or His chastening.

Need to Know God's Will: Word of Knowledge is useful here.

RUTH ANN PRATHER

BARBARA BRIGHAM

5. Not All Supernatural Healing Is from God!

Not all healing is divine; some is demonic, some psychic.

The powers of darkness enabled the magicians of Egypt, Jannes and Jambres, to do many unusual feats (Ex 7:11, 12, 22; 8:7, 2 Tim 3:8).

Jesus was falsely accused of casting out demons by diabolical power (Matt 12:24).

The world of the first-century believers was full of demon-energized healers and magic workers (Acts 8:9-11; 13:8-10)

6. In Case of Emergency, Call the Elders-James 5:14-16!

We've all seen signs, "In case of emergency, call..." James says, "In case of sickness, call the elders.

James 5:14-16

Initiative by the sick--The elders respond to the call of the sick man.

Application of Oil

Evangelicals are divided as to the meaning of the oil. Many groups anoint with oil as a sacred symbol of the Spirit. Many others believe oil means medicine.

Two extremes are to be avoided. One is just to pray and refuse medical help. The other is to use physicians and never pray. The advice of James combines both pills and prayer.

The Prayer of Faith

Bodily healing from the Lord our Healer

Forgiveness

RALPH REED

The gift of healing should be practiced by many Christians in everyday life. We should surely begin in our own family and among people who are close to us. If the gift from the Holy Spirit is present, he will lead us again and again into situations in which it is obvious that we should pray for a sick person.

INDICATORS OF THE GIFT OF HEALING

- * A desire to see God alleviate physical problems in people and the willingness to be used by God to do so.
- * An unusual ability to sense the power of God present for healing.
- * Often comes in conjunction with the gift of knowledge.

MERCY - DEMONSTRATING GOD'S LOVE

READ ROMANS 12:8.

In general Christians should be tender-hearted and compassionate to those in need around them. But some Christians are endowed by God in a special way to sense and seek out and help those in need.

Definition

The gift of mercy refers to the "beyond the average" capacity to empathize with those who are suffering and miserable and to manifest the sympathetic love of God to them in some practical way with a cheerful spirit.

Jesus had this gift. He said of himself, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Tyrants and adulterers not only receive an encouraging word through a personal encounter with Jesus, but are freed from the mental anguish which their deeds have produced.

Whenever Jesus was moved with compassion, He did something about it. His pity, no vague abstraction, was expressed in concrete deeds of mercy. He healed the blind, the lepers, the sick. He fed the multitudes. His whole life on earth demonstrated his compassion. His sacrifice on the cross was the supreme evidence of this pity.

Whoever has this gift does not steel himself in the face of another's miseries. Rather he is drawn to his suffering brother. He must do something about it. The gift involves more than a feeling of pity; it requires action.

Mercy heals by setting love free and creating a genuine relationship between people.

Today people with material needs receive government help. But that alone does not free and support them. They need new self-confidence, new hope. This comes about through warm human contact. Government aid will lead a person out of his misery only when it is coupled with mercy.

Our deeds of mercy may be the strongest witness to the outside world of our faith in Christ. A professor of political science at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, recently wrote, "The most important contribution almost all of us make in this world is in our interpersonal relations. Our personal acts of kindness and concern have probably a hundred times more actual impact on the lives of others than our advocacy of 'enlightened' social ideas.

"The world would probably not be one whit the worse if 95% of all the books and learned articles were never written and most of the lectures never delivered. But each time an individual performs an act of kindness, someone's life is brightened at least a little.

DR. DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE

A terminally ill man became a Christian through the witness of a hospital visitor who brightened every sick room he entered. After listening to the late Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse on the radio, the new convert expressed a wish to meet the radio preacher. The hospital visitor, a close friend of Dr. Barnhouse, relayed the request. Together the two men went to the hospital. The patient was suffering from advanced cancer which horribly affected one side of his face. As Dr. Barnhouse followed his friend into the room, he was taken back by the smell of death already there. Then his friend laughed gaily, "Hello, John! I've come to see you."

At first, Dr. Barnhouse thought the sick man was unconscious; then he saw a smile break at the corner of his mouth. The friend went down on his knees beside the bed, put his arm under the pillow, and cradled the dying man in his embrace. Smiling, he said, "John, I've been praying for you! I've had assurance that you are being blessed, and that you are going to be with the Lord, full of joy!"

Then he introduced Dr. Barnhouse who later commented, "I tried to talk to the man, but I received much more than I could ever have given. I saw the visitor, through the Holy Spirit, communicate his infectious joy of the Lord, which the sick man needed far more than pious platitudes. As my friend talked, his words flowed with praise to God. He spoke of the wonder of the Lord--how marvelous He is, how He never makes a mistake, how He does all things well, how He would soon take John home to be with Himself,

how wonderful it would be to see the Lord Jesus Christ."

Concluded Dr. Barnhouse, "That day I saw the gift of the Holy Spirit in the life of this hospital visitor which enabled him to do such an act of mercy with cheerfulness."

INDICATORS OF THE GIFT OF MERCY

- * Tears come easily as you hear or see things which sadden
- * Most people think of you as possessing a very empathic personality
- * You are unusually sensitive to the hurts of others
- * You have an unusual desire to express your love to helpless people
- * People in need like to have you around because you cheer them up.
- * You are not easily repulsed by the sight of miserable people but instead you usually think "How could I help?"

TOOL BOX-God wants to manifest Himself through us in many of these ways.

SAM HALL

Washcloth pulled off. Member winced. I walked over and put it back in place. "I guess you have seen a lot of that." Yes. I could put it back without much feeling. He had all the feelings.

Probably neither of us had the gift of mercy. He had the feelings and I had the action. Mercy utilizes both. Mercy is not my major gift. But, I can still do an act of mercy.

Listen to these sermons. Not just to find one gift you like best, but to see all the ways God wants to manifest Himself through us.

ALL OF US WANT TO BE USED BY GOD. THE WORLD NEEDS US.