

STUDY GUIDE

POWER GIFTS



POWER GIFTS

Q: “WHAT IS GOD TELLING ME TO DO?”

“For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum I have fully preached the good news of Christ.”

Romans 15:18-19

“And my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power...”

1 Corinthians 2:4

“Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?”

Galatians 3:5

It is clear from these scriptures that Paul saw the operation of the power gifts as essential to the spreading of the gospel and the building of the church. He does not present them as an option or something for just the “more spiritual” (church spiro’s) but a demonstration of who God is that should be present in every Christians life.

UNDERSTANDING THE POWER GIFTS

The spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians are often grouped into three groups, spoken gifts, power gifts and revelation gifts.

The power gifts are:

- Faith
- Miracles
- Healing

— *Life Group Leaders note* —

As you prepare to do this study, start believing God for Him to confirm His word with signs and wonders following. Expect this to be a time where your Life Group (and yourself) grows in the things of the spirit. Prepare to activate these gifts in your Life Group as you study them.



STUFF TO DO

Whenever possible, for each of the gifts in this study go through the following steps:

— HEAD —

YOUNG	What does the bible say about this gift?
GROWING	Where have you seen this gift used?
MATURE	How could I activate it in my life?

— HEART —

YOUNG	Spend time praying together, believing God to activate this gift as you pray?
GROWING	Encourage you life group to 'have a go'. Remind them it doesn't matter if they mess it up.
MATURE	Lead by example - have a go yourself.

— HANDS —

YOUNG	Discuss how you could use this gift in your discipleship of others/community/evangelism.
GROWING	How will you make room for god to minister this gift through you?
MATURE	What do you need to be careful of as you start to use this gift?



STUFF TO DO

Share a time with your Life Group when you were impacted by someone operating in one of these spiritual gifts.

Pray for anyone sick, needing a miracle of needing faith in your Life Group. Expect a miracle!

Pray together for God to empower you to operate in these spiritual gifts over the next few weeks.

PRAYER POINTS & COMING UP

SAFE CITY PROJECT

SATURDAY 22ND OCTOBER // 8 AM
CHEVALLUM STATE SCHOOL

STUFF TO THINK ABOUT

THE GIFT OF FAITH (1 Corinthians 12:9)

A gift of faith is to be differentiated from the faith that all believers have; as a gift, faith is the ability to know God's will and then with certainty and confidence to believe that this will be realised. This gift is often demonstrated by a person being able to believe God for something that is beyond the ability of their faith community to believe. This gift is often present when a person is operating one of the other spiritual gifts.

Since faith deals with the future and the unseen - things not physically experienced - the gift of faith is the special endowment given to someone called upon to exercise an extraordinary capacity of trust. God supernaturally empties him of any doubt and fills him with special faith that enables him to accomplish God's purpose despite every contrary and contradictory circumstance of life. Joshua, in commanding the sun and moon to stand still (Josh 10:12-14) is probably the clearest biblical example of this. Firstly he spoke to God (prayed) then he spoke by faith to the sun and moon. This would have to be a supernatural manifestation of uniquely remarkable faith. It is certainly not the kind of faith that one exercises every day. It is a special dispensation of faith God grants a believer when the task He has given that believer requires more than ordinary or general faith.

The gift of faith has a vastly superior function to that of general faith, which grows from the original seed of saving faith that God has planted in our hearts (Romans 1:17).



Some translators refer to the gift of faith as special faith. This indicates a faith bestowed by the Holy Spirit to meet our need in special and extenuating circumstances. This suggests further that the gift of faith is not permanently resident in any believer, but rather that each manifestation is a separate gift of faith.

God wants you to know you can go forth confidently knowing that when special demands are made upon you, He will supernaturally give you special faith to enable you to fulfil His purposes.

HOW DOES THE GIFT OF FAITH WORK?

The gift of faith seems to operate in a passive manner, but this is not always so. Daniel's protection from the lions (a passive instance of the gift of faith) seems to contrast with Samson's slaying the lion which is an example of man's active involvement in the manifestation of the power of God. This would be an example of the working of miracles. This impression that the gift of faith functions actively is because it often works in cooperation with more dramatic gifts (e.g. the working of miracles, the gifts of healings etc.).

The gift of faith also operates through the speaking of words of faith - "I believed & therefore have I spoken" (II Corinthians 4:13) - whereby those words a man of God speaks when inspired by the Spirit are backed by God as His own word. The results are not always immediate, but they are sure. And this gift can function in many ways (e.g. for blessing, for cursing, for creating, for destroying etc.).

There are some notable examples of the gift of faith working through the spoken word: Josh 10:12-14, 1 Kings 17:1, Acts 13:11.

The Scriptures teach the principle of the word of faith: (Mark 11:23) .. "he shall have whatsoever he saith..." in relation to the injunction, "have faith in God," and Job 22:28 "Thou shalt decree a thing and it shall be established unto thee."

GIFTS OF HEALINGS (1 Cor 12:9)

Gifts of healings operate supernaturally to heal diseases and infirmities without natural means of any sort. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that comes upon a person's body, dissolving their disease, driving out their pains to heal them.

The use of the plural nouns here emphasises the abundance of God's healing gifts to afflicted mankind. It may also emphasise that Jesus' healing will deliver from every sickness, weakness, plague, deformity, and affliction. It also implies that there is a great variety of the manifestations of this gift (1 Cor 12:4-7).

The exercise of the gifts of healings does not give the gifted an ability to heal all the sick all the time. Some have misunderstood this and have asked why we do not go into hospitals and the like and raise up all that are sick. Even Jesus did not do this. He only went to what may correspond to a modern hospital once when He went to the Pool of Bethesda where there were multitudes of sick people. Even then He chose only one from all of them and healed him. On other occasions we read of great crowds of sick folk who came to Jesus and we are told He "healed them all." An important principle of Divine healing is that the person must come to Jesus as an exercise of faith and co-operation.

This is the ministry of healing that Jesus said would follow the preaching of the Gospel. It is one of the five evidences He promised would always follow the proclamation of the true Gospel (Mark 16,17,18). Several things are required in order to see the manifestation of this kind of healing.



The proclamation of the Gospel in the New Testament setting included an emphasis upon physical healing as well as the hope of eternal salvation. A great portion of the ministry of Jesus was taken up with ministering to the sick and afflicted.

The laying on of hands was also a specific feature of this particular aspect of healing. Consider some aspects of the significance of this act. In the cultural setting of the people, the laying on of hands was frequently used in order to confer something upon a person.

Recovery is not necessarily an immediate, instantaneous healing. It may be a process. It begins at the moment of contact, but it may be some time before it is finally complete. Do not lose faith. Do not start to doubt. Maintain an attitude of positive faith in God's statement. His word is true. It cannot fail.

PRACTICES THAT PRODUCE HEALINGS

They preached the Word of God. (Acts 2:14-36)

They exercised spiritual authority. (John 16:23) Jesus has given you the authority of this name. He wants you to go forth and exercise authority. Speak in His name. Command sickness to go in that name.

They encouraged people to be healed. (Acts 3:7) Without the active encouragement of Peter, the miracle might never have happened.

They spoke by the power of the Spirit.

They also acted with boldness. People marvelled at the boldness of Peter and John and recognised this quality of boldness as a result of their having spent time with Jesus (Acts 4:13). It had the same marks as did the boldness of Jesus. It was not the brashness of self-confidence, but the quiet authority of those who know that God is with them to confirm and attest His Word in their mouth and actions.

- a) Knowing that God has made a healing covenant.
- b) Having a thorough understanding of the Word of God relative to healing.
- c) Knowing God's will in the matter of healing.
- d) Possessing an assurance of faith that God will heal this person.
- e) Believing that God will confirm His Word with signs following.

They consistently taught daily of Jesus Christ. The message of the early Church was a relatively simple one: they preached and taught Jesus Christ (Acts 5:42).

The consistent emphasis upon the miraculous in the ministry of the early Church encouraged the emergence of charismatic leadership. Both Stephen and Philip were originally appointed as deacons to assist in administration (Acts 6:1-7). The next time we hear of Stephen, he is preaching a tremendous message to a great crowd of people (Acts 7). The next reference made to Philip describes his miracle ministry in Samaria, "He preached Christ unto them" (Acts 8:5).

GOD WANTS HIS CHURCH TO BE AN INSTRUMENT OF HEALING TODAY

God's purpose and desire for the Church of our day is that it might also make a tremendous impact upon the heathen world. This can only happen as we believe God for a great restoration of His miraculous power upon the Church. The Holy Spirit is working throughout the earth to accomplish this. May our hearts and minds be open to the Spirit, that He may accomplish His purpose in us! It has frequently been observed in contemporary church planting within the emerging nations that healings and miracles have been the keys that



have opened effectual doors. In fact, this appears to be the most frequently used method of gaining effective entrance into a new area. Many Asian evangelists and church planters enter a new community without any credibility or favour. They trust God to lead them to the person or persons whose hearts He has prepared. It often transpires that one of more of such people are in need of healing and restoration. As God grants healing in answer to prayer the resultant miracle becomes a key that opens the door to that community.

WORKING OF MIRACLES (1 Corinthians 12:10)

The gift of workings of miracles are giftings to do extraordinary things. Again, since the plural is used, each miracle is a separate gift of the working of a miracle.

A Miracle happens when God supersedes the ordinary course of nature. The gift of the working of miracles comes when God endues us with power by the Holy Spirit to do something completely beyond the range of human ability. He gives it to us at a specific time for a special purpose. A miracle is usually an instantaneous occurrence as distinct from a manifestation of healing which may be gradual.

All the gifts of the Spirit are miraculous, but the use of the word 'miracle' in this instance refers to acts of power.

The Bible is a book of miracles. God is a God of miracles. Christianity is a faith founded upon miracles. Without the manifestation of miracles Christianity is lacking in credibility for God attested the ministry of Jesus through miracles, wonders and signs. (Acts 2:22)

If Jesus were not alive, His name would have no power to heal the sick and work miracles (Acts 4:33). Peter convinced the unbelieving Jews of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and their need of repentance on the strength of the fact that Jesus' name still had the power to heal the sick and work miracles.

- a) Samaria gave heed to Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did (Acts 8:5).
- b) All the inhabitants of Sharon and Lydda turned to the Lord when Peter told Aeneas, "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole; arise and make thy bed." And he arose immediately (Acts 9:34).
- c) Many people in Joppa believed when Peter raised Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:42).
- d) The people at Lystra thought the gods had come down to them when they saw the crippled man walk and leap at Paul's word (Acts 14:8-18). "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people... and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folk and them that were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed everyone" (Acts 5:12-16).
- e) The Book of Acts closes with miracles in full swing (Acts 28:8,9). When the people saw Publius healed, they believed that if God would heal one then He was able and willing to heal everyone that had need. When people think and believe right about God, then they get from Him what He wants so much to give to them.

The working of miracles is the enabling of the Holy Spirit, giving the believer the ability to work a miracle, in contrast to God working miracles in the life of a believer. Thus many who have never received the gift of working miracles have often experienced astounding miracles that God has wrought on their behalf.



SOME EXAMPLES

- a) Miracles of deliverance such as Peter's in Acts 5:17-20 and again in Acts 12:1-10. Also Paul and Silas in Acts 16:15-30.
- b) Miracles of transportation (Acts 8:39). "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip that the eunuch saw him no more."

These, and many other instances, are miracles performed by God in the lives of believers, sometimes even without the cooperation of the believer.

These are not, therefore, instances where the gift of working of miracles was operating. In contrast now are three where this gift was in operation:

- I. Acts 19:11, "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."
- II. Acts 9:40, Peter raised Dorcas from the dead.
- III. Acts 20:9-12, Peter restored Eutychus to life.

PRACTICAL OPERATION OF THE GIFT

- a) The anointing of the Holy Spirit to create special confidence and authority.
- b) A spoken word of faith and authority. Elijah said that the God who answered by fire should be Israel's Lord. The fire that came down was an example of the working of miracles.
- c) A bold act of faith.

The majority of this "Stuff to think About" is taken from Gerald Rowlands, Church Planting International (Queensland Australia), The Holy Spirit And His Manifestations.

Some additional quotes from <http://www.abu.nb.ca/courses/NTIntro/Spirit7.htm#S323>



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