**The Power Gifts**

**Introduction:**

* I Corinthians 12:7-11 ***7****Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.****8****To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,****9****to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,****10****to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.****11****All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.*
* In this passage of scripture, we are given a list of 9 different gifts or manifestations of the spirit that Christ has given the church.
* Today I am going to be talking about 3 of them – faith, healing and miracles. These are often referred to as the power gifts.
* I will do my best to give you a brief overview of each gift, talk a little about how to operate in them, and hopefully stir a desire within you to see more of these gifts released in our lives and churches.
* I have always been hungry for the power of God and desired for God to use me in supernatural ways and I’ve been blessed to see God use me in all three of these gifts.
* However, the more I study them and the more I experience, the more questions I often feel I have! I would be the last one to say that I have this all figured out, but hopefully today, I can give you some things to think about and share with you some of my own experiences.
* Let’s begin by talking about the gift of faith.

**The Gift of Faith**

* **Definition** – The gift of faith is the God-given ability to believe Him for the impossible in a particular situation. It is not so much the general faith which believes God for provision, etc., but goes a step beyond, where one “just knows” that a particular thing is the will of God and is going to happen.
* I want to suggest to you that this gift involves two general levels or that it can function in two different ways.
1. **Faith to function in individual ministries**
* In Romans 12:3, 6***3****For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment,* ***in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you****.* ***6****We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; …*
* It seems in practical life and ministry that the Lord imparts faith to individuals for their particular ministries.
* They have an unwavering confidence that God is going to anoint their ministry and prosper it at all times.
* I can look in my own life and ministry and there are areas that I just have a strong confidence in. I know that when I preach the gospel, people are going to get saved. It’s God’s grace on my life. It’s a level of faith that he has given me that allows me to boldly call them to come.
* When we talk about gifts, one of the things we see is that different gifts overlap. Yes I believe I have a gift or calling as an evangelist, but there is also a corresponding gift of faith that works alongside it and releases it with authority.
* **2. Faith for specific miracles or acts that God would perform in given circumstances.**
* Mark 11:22-24 – Jesus gives us an example of this kind of faith. ***22****“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered.****23****“Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them.****24****Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.*
* With this gift of faith, there is no doubt in the mind that God is going to do something. There is a supernatural faith imparted by the Holy Spirit that comes upon a person.
* There are so many examples of this kind of faith in the ministry of Jesus. He always acted without doubting and with such confidence. This kind of faith is shown many times in the book of Acts in the ministry of the disciples and Paul as well.
* I believe a key that unlocks this gift of faith is knowing the will of God**.** This can come by special revelation such as dreams and visions; the inner voice of the spirit; or the written word of God.
* I think that the gift of faith and the gift of knowledge are mingled inseparably together.
* When God reveals certain facts concerning His will in a circumstance, one “just knows” it will happen and this releases an unshakeable faith to act accordingly.
* Romans 10:17 gives us this principle of faith. *Faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ.*
* 1 John 5:14 ***14****This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.*
* This principle is evident all through the faith chapter. As these heroes of the faith heard the word of God, a supernatural faith was imparted that allowed them to act boldly.
* Smith Wigglesworth made this statement about the gift of faith. *There is a difference between our faith and the faith of the Lord Jesus. The faith of the Lord Jesus is needed. We must change faith from time to time. Your faith may get to a place where it wavers. The faith of Christ never wavers. When you have that faith the thing is finished. When you have that faith you will never look at things as they are, you will see the things of nature give way to the things of the Spirit, you will see the temporal swallowed up in the eternal.*
* I have experienced this very thing in my life from time to time where in myself, I didn’t have the faith, but then God supernaturally imparted that gift of faith to me.
* One of those times happened several years ago before we started the expansion of our building.
* I had been really stirred by God through the story of Joshua leading the Israelites into the Promised Land and I felt God speaking to me that it was time for us to move forward as a church.
* I started preaching a series called go forward and I was telling the people that it was time for some new stories. God had been faithful in the past, but he wanted to do something new.
* In the last message of the series, I was to announce a building project and challenge people to believe. As a leadership team, we had a measure of faith that this was what God was saying.
* However, on the Saturday night before the service I had a huge battle of fear and doubt. My faith was wavering and I needed the faith of Christ.
* I came to the church alone to pray. My father had previously lead our church through a 2 million dollar comeback and the devil was telling me I was going to lead the church right back into where we had come from.
* I was saying to the Lord, “I need to know for sure that you are leading us this way, because only then will I have the confidence to step into the Jordan that is overflowing it’s banks.”
* As I cried out to God, suddenly faith came. I heard the Lord whisper in my spirit the same words he whispered to Joshua, “Be strong and very courageous!”
* As these words rang in my spirit, faith exploded and almost subconsciously, I found myself saying, “You confirm your word with signs and wonders so tomorrow, give me a cheque to pay for the architect and confirm your word.”
* That was going to cost about $35,000 to $40,000 and would be the first step we would take.
* It was a bold request, but it was inspired by a faith that was not my own.
* I went home with confidence and preached my heart out the next day. I told the church, “God has told us to move so we are going to move and the Jordan is going to part in front of us.”
* I forgot about this request for a cheque until after the second service when a line of people had gathered to encourage me after my message.
* At the back of the crowd was a man I had never seen before holding a piece of paper. I heard the Holy Spirit say to me. “He has your cheque.”
* When I finally got to him, he told me how he had sold some property and was waiting for the Holy Spirit to tell him where to tithe his profit.
* At the beginning of my message he heard the Holy Spirit tell him to go and get his checkbook. He said, “Here, go hire yourself an architect.” It was a cheque for $40,000.
* Hearing the word of the Lord had released the gift of faith that released the miracle.

**Gifts of Healing**

* **Definition** – The gift of healing is the God-given ability to impart healing to the physical body at specific times.
* As I’ve already mentioned, the gifts of the spirit often overlap and the gifts of healing work in conjunction with the gift of faith and often the gift of knowledge.
* I said gifts of healing because I Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30 all refer to the gifts of healing.
* It is the only gift that uses the plural in this way so why is that? Here are some thoughts.
* It could indicate the gift may operate on more than one level. It could refer to the fact that different kinds of sicknesses require different kinds of healings and various levels of faith. Some are gradual healings and others instantaneous.
* It could be that someone has a gift to bring healing in a specialized area. For example, one person may have faith for the healing of blindness, another deafness, another cancer, etc.
* I think it is the ministry of Heidi Baker where it seems like they have an unusual anointing for deaf ears.
* It is interesting that it says in Mathew 4:23 that Jesus healed every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.
* Romans 12:3 says that God has allotted to each a measure of faith. Jesus didn’t have a measure of the spirit but he had it in fullness.
* Jesus later gave his 12 disciples collectively power over all manner of sickness and disease in Mathew 10:1 *Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.*
* I can tell you that in our crusades in Africa, I always pray for the sick and I’ve seen God heal people through the gifts he has given me, but our team is also praying for people and they experience healings as they pray as well.
* I believe the measure of healing brought through an individual’s ministry relates directly to his level of faith.
* The bible is clear that all can pray for the sick. Mark 16:17a, 18b, ***17****And these signs will accompany those who believe: they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”*
* However, I Corinthians 12:29-30 indicates that some are used more in healing than others.***29****Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?****30****Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?*
* I think that scripture gives examples of different levels of healing in that some are instantaneous and others are gradual.
* There are a lot of examples with Jesus where the healing was instant – Mathew 8:3 *“and immediately his leprosy was cleansed.”* Mark 1:31 *“and immediately the fever left her.”*
* However, there may be some physical healing cases where this takes place gradually.
* In most cases where Jesus prayed for people, there was an instant and miraculous healing. However, in Mark 8:23b-25 there is a story of a healing in 2 stages.
* *after spitting on his eyes and laying His hands on him, He asked him, “Do you see anything?”****24****And he looked up and said, “I see men, for I see them like trees, walking around.”****25****Then again He laid His hands on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and began to see everything clearly.*
* In Africa we have learned that some healings are gradual and to keep praying.
* One time one of our team members had a word of knowledge that Jesus was going to heal a man who was blind in his left eye.
* I called it out from the stage and a guy came forward for prayer. The first time we prayed for him he couldn’t see, but we prayed again and suddenly he could see fingers.
* We kept praying and checking over the course of about 5 to 10 minutes and clarity kept coming until the point he could read the numbers on the keypad.
* If the principle of gradualness worked even in the ministry of Jesus to some degree, might we also expect to see it work in our own healing ministries to an even greater degree?

**Gift of Miracles**

* **Definition:** A miracle is a happening or event which is supernatural; the performance of something which is against the laws of nature.
* The “gift of miracles” is simply the God-given ability to cooperate with God as He performs miracles. This is a joint operation; man participating with God in the performing of the impossible.
* When we study the scriptures, we see that miraculous manifestations always accompanied Jesus and I believe they are to accompany us also.
* I want to suggest to you that without the miraculous, we have an incomplete gospel. We can only fully testify of Christ as we display the supernatural.
* Jesus said in *John 5:36 New International Version (NIV)****36****“I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify that the Father has sent me.*
* His works must accompany His Word.
* How was the gospel spread in the early church?
* Hebrews 2:3b-4 *This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.****4****God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*
* I Thessalonians 1:5a ***5****because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction.*
* The miraculous is a part of preaching the word of God
* I believe the miraculous is as fundamental to Christianity as is the new birth. It’s an integral part of the new covenant.

**What is the purpose of miracles?**

1. **For the deliverance and preservation of God’s people.**
* Because the Lord loves us and has compassion for us, he heals us, provides for us, and delivers us.
* 10 times in the gospels, we are told that prior to performing miracles for the people that Christ was moved with compassion.
* Mathew 8:16-17 ***16****When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.****17****This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases.”*
* Simply put, God performs miracles because he loves us and wants to deliver us and set us free.
1. **For the edification and building up of the faith of believers.**
* The manifested power of God always causes men to stand in awe of God and causes faith to arise in their hearts.
* John 2:11 ***11****What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.*
* The miracles Jesus performed validated his message and His identity. Miracles increase our faith and aid in its growth today in the same way.
1. **For the drawing of the unbeliever to hear the message of the gospel**.
* As Jesus performed miracles, the crowds came. The same was true with the disciples.
* In Acts 2, the crowds gathered in response to the outpouring of the spirit.
* If you follow the ministry of the New Testament apostles, you will see the important part miracles played in the advance of the Gospel.

**How do we operate in the gift of miracles?**

1. **Hear the word of God.**
* I’ve talked about this already in regards to the gift of faith and healing. In order to operate in this gift, there must first be a communication of the mind and will of God.
* There are illustrations of this in many places in scripture.
* Exodus 14:16 ***16****Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.*
* Moses stretched out his hand in direct obedience to the word of the Lord and the Red Sea opened. Most of the miracles that Moses performed happened in this way.
* Acts 14:8-10 ***8****In Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked.****9****He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed****10****and called out, “Stand up on your feet!” At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.*
* Paul perceived that this man had faith to be healed. I believe that he heard this from the Lord and then acted on it. He didn’t treat all cripples the same way.
* Even in the ministry of Jesus, He did only what he was directed to do: John 5:19-20 ***19****Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.****20****For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed.*
1. **Believe the word of God.**
* Romans 10:17 ***17****So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*
* As we hear the word of God, faith comes. It is through this sure faith that we launch out. We don’t just hear, but we act through the faith that comes by hearing.
1. **Speak the word of God.**
* Psalms 33:6 *By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
    their starry host by the breath of his mouth.*
* All of creation was spoken into existence. “And God said.”
* Whenever God desires to perform a miracle, he seeks an instrument through which to speak His word.
* We can see this principle throughout scripture.
* John 5:8 ***8****Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”****9****At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.*
* John 11:43 ***43****When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”*
* Many of the miracles that I am seeing in Africa come through hearing and seeing what God is doing and then releasing that. Cell phone story if there is time.

1. **Act on the word.**
* There are often acts of faith that must accompany the speaking of the word.
* Acts 3:6-7 ***6****Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk****.” 7Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong.***
* We always encourage people to do what they couldn’t do.

**Conclusion:**

* When it comes to moving in any of the gifts, I think everyone of us can do it.
* Are there some that move stronger or more regularly in them? Yes I believe that, but I often think it has a lot to do with how much they push into them as well.
* Paul told us to eagerly desire the spiritual gifts. He wouldn’t have told us that, if it weren’t possible to grow in them.
* Yes, God has given us a measure, but I think we can increase it as we push in and our faith grows.
* Let me conclude with some thoughts from Rinehard Bonnke on the gifts.
* The gifts of the spirit are not metals of honor but tools for the job. When we need a hammer he gives us a hammer. When we need a saw, he gives us a saw.
* The secret to moving in the power of God is to remain connected to the vine.
* Jesus has all power. He said, “All power has been given unto me!” He owns it. But because we are connected to him, the power of God can flow out of us.
* We are not a reservoir, we are more a faucet.
* We don’t own the power, we just let it pass through. A faucet doesn’t own the water, it just releases the water.
* Church. Let’s stay connected to the source and turn on the tap and release the power of God to the world around us!!