

The Gifts of Grace – Healings and Miracles

1 Corinthians 12:7-11, “*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.*”

In my opinion, every ‘born-again’ believer should recognise, understand and experience the nine Gifts of the Holy Spirit. **1 Corinthians 12:1** says, “**Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant** (misinformed).” Ignorance comes through a lack of proper knowledge, and if we don’t **know** about these gifts, how will we be able to desire and experience them in our lives. Last Sunday we examined two of the “**Revelation**” gifts (the **Word or Wisdom** and the **Word of Knowledge**), and then later, one of the “**Vocal**” gifts (**Prophecy**). Today we will start with two of the “**Power**” gifts, **Gifts of Healings** and **Working of Miracles**; and then move on to the **Gift of Faith**.

Here are some of the reasons why I think the “**Gifts of Healings**” and “**Workings of Miracles**”, as referred to in this passage of scripture, are gifts still available to the church today. I am convinced that the “Gifts of Healings” and “Workings of Miracles” are not limited to Jesus and the apostles as many believe. In fact the New Testament never describes the ability of Jesus and the apostles to heal and work miracles as “the gift of healings” or “the gift of miracles.” When you examine **1 Corinthians 12:7-11** you clearly get impression that these gifts are given according to God’s grace to various people in the church: “**To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good**”. It doesn’t make sense when reading these verses to think that Paul means no one at Corinth would be given the “gifts of healings” or the “workings of miracles,” but only the apostles. This looks even more unlikely when you read **verse 28** where the gift of “apostle” seems clearly distinct from the “gifts of healings” and “miracles”: “**God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings.**” This implies that the ‘gifts of healings’ and ‘miracles’ are different from, and in addition to, the gift of the apostle, prophet and teacher.

In the early church, apostleship was authenticated signs and wonders. However, this does not mean that we should keep the “gifts of healings” and “miracles” away from ordinary church members today. If the only thing that set the apostles apart as authoritative and true was their signs and wonders, then false prophets could claim the same authority and truth, because Jesus and Paul both tell us that false prophets will do signs and wonders to lead people astray (**Matthew 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9**). The “gifts of healings” today do not compromise or call into question the unique place of Jesus and the apostles, or the unparalleled role that miracles had in their ministries. As far as I can see the argument against ‘spiritual gifts’ (for today) has no substance. I believe that “gifts of healings” and “working of miracles” are for us. So let me point out three things about these gifts before we examine the way they operate.

- 1. They’re not for Self-Exaltation but for the Sake of Love.** “Gifts of healings” and “workings of miracles” are not for self-exaltation but for the benefit of others. They could easily become the basis of pride - just like teaching or preaching or mercy or hospitality or prophecy, or any of the gifts. They are meant to be pure and true expressions of love. Paul says in **1 Corinthians 13:2**, “**Though I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.**” Gifts are never the main thing. Love is the main thing. Using *spiritual gifts* effectively is just one way to love - a way of expressing it.
- 2. They’re not the Ability to Heal at Will.** The second thing to say is that if God gives us “gifts” of healings and miracles, it does not mean that we can heal or perform miracles at will; or that everyone we pray for will be restored. “Gifts” (in the plural) probably means that different kinds of gifts, for different kinds of healings, are given to various people according to God’s sovereign will. This suggests that one person will not have a monopoly on every sort of healing that’s necessary. And it may mean that there will be times when a person with some gifts to heal will not be able to heal. On the other hand, the gifts only operate as He wills. So the Holy Spirit will activate the gift that is necessary at any point in time through anyone He chooses.
- 3. They are to Be Sought and Desired.** Finally, this implies that we may rightly seek for ‘gifts of healings’ and ‘miracles’, and this is done in the pursuit of love. Praying for healing or a miracle is just one way to show love to someone. But it is a necessary way. And once we realise this, we may be led to seek the “gifts” more often. I base this on **1 Corinthians 14:1**, “**Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts...**” Once you set your heart to pursue love, you will be in a

position to be zealous for spiritual gifts. Therefore, I urge you to seek these gifts. They are subordinate to love but you would do well not to reject them or despise them. You should simply seek with all your heart to do good to others, and pray humbly that, if God wills, you would be granted “gifts of healings” or “miracles” for the blessing of the church and the glory of God's name in the world.

How and why do these two “Power” Gifts operate?

1. **The Gifts of Healings.** This refers to supernatural healing without human aid; it's a special gift to heal specific diseases. It has nothing to do with your own abilities, intellect or choice. It is the “Power” of God working through a believer to heal! However, healing can also come through the touch of faith (James 5:14-15); by speaking the word of faith (Luke 7:1-10); or by the presence of God being manifested (Mark 6:56; Acts 19:11-12). Many believe that there are three distinct types of healings: **physical** (diabetes, blindness, cancer, deafness, etc.), **emotional** (jealousy, worry, discouragement, depression and other destructive attitudes), and **spiritual** (pride, bitterness, greed, guilt, etc.). But although there may be three main types of “healings”, there is much diversity with the “gifts” of healings. While one person might be given the gift of healing to rid a person of cancer or perform a creative miracle, another person might be given a diversity of the same gift to correct lower back problems (or remove a root of bitterness). But whatever gift manifests, it will be the best and most appropriate for the person that God wants to touch.

According to **Mark 16:17-20**, the “gifts of healing” belong to all believers. You know whether or not the Holy Spirit has given you a “gift of healing” by the following:

- * By the inner witness of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16).
- * When you have a special ability to believe for physical healing for someone (Romans 12:3-8).
- * When you have an overwhelming feeling of compassion which moves you to action (Matthew 20:34).

The “gifts of healings” are closely related to the “working of miracles.” Although they are different they both are super-natural (divinely given). Jesus Christ alone had the ‘*gifts of healings*’ and the ‘*working of miracles*’ without measure. So He could perform miracles and heal at will. However, today (with us) it is as the Holy Spirit wills. Many people who have been used for ‘healing’ have had the gift of the “working of miracles” operating as well - as both come directly from God and not through any delegated human authority or intermediary.

2. **The gift of the working of miracles.** Most people are suckers for a good miracle, aren't they? Nothing seems to convince people of the power of God so much as a miracle. The “rational” gnostics proudly proclaim that they believe in nothing they can't see, feel, hear, or touch. Miracles provide that “solid evidence” they desire. The Bible is loaded with stories of miracles! God worked miracles through Moses in an attempt to reach the hard-hearted Pharaoh. Elijah called down fire on his enemies and dried up the skies. Jesus walked on water, turned water into wine, and raised the dead. The first century apostles worked many miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (in the book of Acts). Yet we don't see many genuine miracles performed these days? Why is that, and will we see this gift of the Holy Spirit poured out again? I'm sure we will!

Let us now define a miracle. A miracle is the performance of something which is completely against the laws of nature; it is a supernatural power to intervene and counteract earthly and evil forces. The word “miracles” comes from the Greek word ‘*dynamos*’ which implies “*power and might that multiplies itself.*” The ‘gift of miracles’ operates closely with the other **Power** gifts - ‘faith’ and ‘gifts of healings’. And it does so in order to bring about authority and dominion over satan, sickness, sin, and the binding forces of the principalities and powers of darkness. Miracles can also be defined as super-natural intercessions of God Almighty. God intervening in the natural state of earth's affairs - the laws of nature. Through this “gift” He equips and exhorts a believer with energy or power to do something that is not natural or normal to us. But remember, the greatest miracle (and often least talked about) is the **miracle of salvation**. Sure, it doesn't appear as spectacular as parting a sea or even raising a person from the dead. But then again, most people are more impressed by the manifestations of outward signs and wonders, than spiritual new-birth. God, on the other hand, isn't so concerned about outward appearances, the spectacular, or flamboyant displays of showmanship; but rather a person's **heart condition**. It is God's desire that believers utilise these ‘spiritual gifts’ to combat unbelief and bring non-believers to repentance in order that spiritually dead people can be transformed into new creatures in Christ Jesus.

After you become a “new creature” in Christ, a miraculous transformation begins to occur in you every day to conform you to Christ's image (**Ephesians 1:17-20**); and to strengthen your inner man (**Colossians 1:10-11**). The power of God was miraculously manifested in the lives of believers in the early church (**Acts 4:33; Mark 16:20**); yet today God wants His power, not only working in you, but also through you (**Acts 1:8**). And remember, signs and wonders are the product of the spoken Word of God, because the Word of God and God are one (**Psalms 33:6**). The more revelation you get concerning the Word the greater the possibility is that signs and wonders will accompany you.