

The Supernatural Gifts of the Spirit: The Gifts of Miracles and Healing

1 Cor 12:4-11

By John Wolf

I Corinthians Chapter 12: versus 4-11. I will be reading from the New International Version.

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

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 the message of wisdom, to another the 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 gives them to each one, just as he determines.

The title for this message I am bringing to you today is called, “The Supernatural Gifts of the Spirit; the Gifts of Miracles and Healings”. Most of those that believe the gift of healing and miracles that are active in today’s church are referred to as charismatics and pentacostals. Most of them are in churches associated with a Third Wave of theology or otherwise known as the ‘Sign and Wonders Movement.’ The Third Wave Movement features the outpouring of healings, prophesies, exorcisms and other gifts of the spirits.

The Third Wave Movement began in 1980. And this Movement brought forth the greatest acceptance of charismatic belief and practice to modern evangelicalism. Four theological seminary professor of church growth, Peter Wagoner, is one who popularized the Third Wave Movement. And, as a result, by the mid-1980s, the Third Wave Movement’s teachings not only invaded modern day evangelicalism, but also invaded many parishes and organizations. One of which is known as Campus Crusade for Christ. There are many others as well.

Evangelical theology has unfortunately deteriorated as a result of all of this. And, without a solid foundation in theology, it is impossible to challenge one’s experiences based Christianity. Which, sadly, is all too common and popular in today’s church. For more information on the history of the Third Wave Movement, check out the book “Promise Unfulfilled” by Rohm McQuen of Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary.

In this message, I will be arguing that the supernatural gifts of miracles and healings have ceased and are no longer in use or needed by today’s church. I am not arguing that all of the gifts of the spirit have ceased, as what some Baptist Fundamentalists believe. I am just arguing that the temporary sign gifts have ceased; such as, miracles, healings, tongues and interpretation of tongues. But, I only have time in this message to go through miracles and healings.

I personally believe that I have the gift of evangelism, the giving of sermons, the gift of teaching and the gift of prophecy. But, if I did not have all the gifts of the spirit, as what some believe to be biblical, as if all gifts have ceased, I would not believe as such.

Listen to my arguments as for why the gifts of healings and miracles have ceased. We know from the bible that miracles and healings confirmed God's revelation before we had the written Word, as it is said in Hebrews 2:3-4 (English Standard Version):

³ how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, ⁴ while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

You see, the sign gifts were not given for personal edification, but for God to testify of the great salvation that the apostle proclaimed. Therefore, we no longer need the sign gifts today because we have the written Word of God. We no longer need these gifts. God has given us his holy Word. There is no reason to have miracles and healings and tongues anymore.

Those that disagree with this message will argue that the Lord Jesus did miracles and, therefore, trains us to do the same. Do miracles as he did. That is one of their arguments. Let's address that agreement there; that the Lord Jesus did miracles and he commands us to do as he did, as many charismatics, pentacostals and The Third Wave signs and wonders 'types' will argue.

Let's look at his miracles. Jesus, as we know from the scriptures did three types of miracles. They were, 1) He did healings,
2) He did exorcisms. He casted out many devils.
3) He did miracles of nature.

So, there are healings, casting out demons or exorcisms, and miracles of nature.

An example of a miracle of nature is when he feed the five thousand, when he calmed the storm in the boat, and, when he walked on water. These are three types of miracles of nature.

The miracles that Jesus did confirmed that he was the Son of God, as it says in the scriptures, in John 2:11 and Acts 2:22. After Jesus ascended into heaven, a charge was given to the apostles to preach and proclaim the gospel. This is given in Mark 16 and Matthew 28. Therefore, they could do supernatural signs to substantiate that they were sent from God. However, none of the apostles could do miracles of nature, such as; walk on the water, feed the five thousand, walk through walls, or calming a storm in a boat. They cannot do the miracles of nature.

The gifts of healing and miracles were only for the apostles and are not given to the Christians of today. Those claiming to be able to heal have been many throughout the centuries. Look at the history. The Catholic Church, at one time, claimed to be able to heal people with the bows of John the Baptist. Or, even the vials of Mary's breast milk. Charismatic charlatans, in a way, have something in common with witch doctors, who also think they can raise the dead. However, not a single piece of evidence exists for such miracles.

I challenge any charismatic that is listening to this message; any charismatic that claimed to have raised anyone from the dead; I challenge him or her to show me the evidence. Show me some proof. I challenge charismatics that pass of this one and they can never give me any evidence. They say, 'Well, I need to keep it discreet, the people whom I have raised from the dead, the ones whom I have performed miracles for, they don't want you to know about it'. I go, 'Really?' When Jesus healed people, they went and told everybody, the people who he healed. If the charismatics and the people they healed; where is the evidence? Where is the proof? There is not a single shred of evidence in this entire world that they can heal anybody.

When I was living in Redding, California, I was at a Subway restaurant with my developmentally disabled client, Jumbo. Jumbo cannot walk not can he talk. He has, unfortunately spent his life in a wheel chair. Some Bethel healers approached me and Jumbo and asked if they could heal Jumbo. They asked if they could pray for this man, if they could put their hands on him, if they could make him walk and make him talk. I said, 'Oh, okay. Go ahead. I don't mean to be rude or anything like that, but if you think you can heal him, go ahead.' They prayed for Jumbo, they put their hands on Jumbo, and guess what? Jumbo was not healed. He couldn't talk and he couldn't walk after that. So, they could not heal Jumbo. NO matter what they claimed. They claimed that they could heal him. They said they have the gift of healing, that they can to miracles. And, they were trained at Bethel to go out and do as such. They could go out and heal people, do miracles, raise the dead, caste out devils, and they couldn't do any of it. They could not heal Jumbo. That is one sign right there. They cannot heal people. They may claim they can do it, but they can't do it. A lot is staged.

This leads to my next listed argument as to why the gift of healing and miracles have ceased. I have six arguments:

- 1) The apostle healed with a word or touch. Peter and Paul both healed with a touch. Now, why can't a charismatic, a 'signs of wonders' type do the same? Why can't they? Peter and Paul could heal instantly and they could heal at will.
- 2) The apostles could heal instantly and they could heal totally. When they healed somebody, they healed the whole person. In Acts 3: 2-8, we read of a beggar who was instantly healed by Peter and John. It was done in public and even the enemies of the apostles could not deny the miracle. Modern day charismatic healers all lack evidence of being able to heal people. Pastor Bill Johnson of Bethel Church in Redding, California, in his book, 'Release the Power of Jesus' claims of witnessing the performing of many miracles, but does not have any evidence to substantiate anything. On page 32 in his book, he claims that true Christians will perform miracles, signs and wonders. The heresy behind such a statement really sickens me, and it should of any true Christian. Johnson, by his statement, and by his book 'Release the Power of Jesus' is claiming that you are not a true Christian if you can't do signs and wonders. It is complete absurdity. Where in the bible does it say you have to a miracle or do signs and wonders to be a true Christian? It doesn't say that. Once again, the Third Wave faith healers are wrong.
- 3) The apostles were able to heal anyone. In Acts 5:12-16 we learn that the apostles could heal anyone. They could do it instantly and totally at will. The apostles never did say that one needed faith to be healed. They did not discriminate, as what modern charismatics and faith healers do. They say you need faith for me to heal you, or in order for you to get a miracle you need to have enough faith. Also, in Acts 28:9, the text says

that Paul was able to heal anyone on the island of Malta that came to him. Check it out; Acts 28:9 and Acts

- 4) The apostles could heal organic diseases. Modern day charismatics may be able to heal someone with a psychological issue because the person who is going to be healed may think that he or she is sick when he is really not. There is a term out there called 'psychosomatic', to which I have had. I remember one time that I can think of where I had a problem where I thought I had a major throat issue. But, I really didn't have a throat issue. I just thought I did. Nothing was wrong with my throat. It was all psychosomatics. But, I thought I was going to choke to death. A charismatic could heal that. He could talk to me and pat me on the back and give me a big hug. Then, I can think, 'Oh, I've been healed. He healed me.' But, really, he did not heal me, because I never had anything wrong with me in the first place. So, once again, the apostles could heal organic diseases, and modern day word of faith, signs and wonders faiths healers cannot.
- 5) The apostles could raise the dead. Modern day faith healers cannot. In Acts 9:36-42, we read of Peter bringing back a man named Dorcus to life. After Peter did the miracle, people all over Jopa believed in the Lord. The Lord uses miracles, and all miracles done by the apostles, to bring people to faith. Today we do not need miracle workers as we, and I'll say it again, have the written Word of God, which is good enough for me. We don't need for people to do miracles for people to come to faith. We just need to preach the gospel. Preach the Word. Preach in-season, preach out-of-season. The Word of God is powerful and effective. The Word of God converts the soul, and lines the eyes, makes life simple and the joys of the heart. Psalms 19:7-9, Hebrews 4:12. "The Word of God, thy Word, is like a fire and like a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces". Jeremiah 23:9, and also Isaiah 55:11. "Thy Word shall not return to me void. It shall accomplish that which I please; it shall prosper in the things wherefore I sent it." When we preach the word, it will not return unto the Lord void. We need to preach the word, preach the word, and preach the word! That is how people come to faith; it's by 'preach the Word'.
- 6) The apostles could heal at will. They could heal anyone. They could heal totally. They could heal organic diseases. They could heal at will. I have challenged some modern day charismatic faith healers who say they could walk into a hospital and heal people. Watch you walk into a hospital and raise the dead. Maybe not in a hospital, but, walk into a hospital and heal people and turn a hospital into a...get the sick people out of there. But, not a single one of these charismatic faith healers has taken my challenge. Why not? Why can't they go into a hospital and heal people? If they had the gift of miracles and healing, they could do that. But, they can't, because they don't have the gift of healings and they don't have the gift of miracles. We do not need miracle workers; we have the written word of God.

So you know, the gifts of miracles have ceased. Now, how then shall you reach your friends, your family, and other people you may know who are deceived and caught up in the lies and deceptions of the signs and wonders movement? Ultimately, you need to try to win them over with gentleness and with respect. As it says in I Peter 3:15; "If this fails, they need to continue to pray." Be like the persistent widow in Luke 18 who always prayed and never gave up. Jesus gave us that parable to teach us something. We need to always pray and never give up. Likewise, we need to do the same. We must pray. And, we must never give up.

But, for those who are teaching and propagating these lies (not those who are deceived), that the gift of miracles and the gift of healing are for today, and those who are claiming that they can do signs and wonders; we must practice what we call ‘biblical separation’, or better known as ‘ecclesiastical separation’. This will involve distancing ourselves from these faith healers. We must not have any fellowship with them. In II Thessalonians 3:6, 14, 15, it speaks of this kind of separation.

⁶ But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. (NKJV)

In I Thess. 3:14, 15;

¹⁴ And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. ¹⁵ Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother. (NKJV)

In other words, to put in layman’s language, we must have no fellowship with false teachers, with word of faith, signs and wonders ‘types’. We must definitely love those we know and we must pray for them, we must talk to them and persuade them out of the respect and pray that the Holy Spirit will open their eyes to the truth. But, we must not go to their church service. We must have no fellowship with these people. They are false teachers. God gave us the doctrine of separation that we stay away from them. We separate, not because we hate them, but because we love them. We want them to repent and turn from their wicked ways and turn back to the truth. We don’t want to be mean-spirited in how we separate. We don’t want to be silent about it. A lot of Christians these days, when they practice separation, will separate from someone, but they won’t tell them why they are separating from them. I’ve had people separate from me, and they don’t ever tell me why they are separating from me. We must not do that. We must tell them why we are not going to have no fellowship with them; not because we hate them, but because we love them. We want them to come back to the truth. We want them to see the error of their ways

This make is very difficult to bring them to the seed of the truth. If someone in the Faith Movement is deceived, it is very difficult to persuade them. A lot of times, in my own experience, they will not see the error of their ways. They will not see that what they are following is false. Or, that the teaching is false. It does make it very difficult to bring them back to the truth.

But, know first, that with God, all things are possible. God can bring to the deceived; He can bring the false teachers to the truth. With man, things are not always possible. With God all things are possible. We must do whatever we can to please God. And, here I conclude with a great passage of scripture: I Cor. 10:31;

³¹ Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (KJV)

So, everything we do must be done to the glory of God. How we speak to the deceived, how we separate from them, how we speak to the false teachers, how we separate from them, all must be done to the Glory of God. Amen.