

Spiritual Gifts Series

Key verse:
1 Corinthians 12:9-10

1st June 2006

Session 4: Healing &
Miracles

Speaker: Adam Voke

1 Cor 12:1-11 – Focus verse: vs9

1. There are differences between them

a. Healing

‘Healing’ = Greek: ‘Iama’. Refers to physical and spiritual healing in scripture and is used here in the plural form to demonstrate the variety of healing that can come in these areas.

Mark Stibbe: ‘the healing gifts are best understood as the special, charismatic ability to heal illness in the power of the Holy Spirit, and through faith in Jesus Christ. This ability is given to some people in the Body of Christ, and they are expected to use this faithfully and continuously until the Lord Jesus returns and does away with sickness forever’

b. Miraculous Powers

‘miraculous powers’ = Greek: ‘*energemata (workings) dunameon (mighty acts)*’

Literally means ‘Workings of powers’ – both words are plural displaying the variation of in works that are done.

Wayne Grudem (in writing about any differences between miracles and healing) ‘Although many of the miracles seen in the New Testament were specifically miracles of healing, Paul here lists healing as a separate gift. Therefore in this context he must have something other than physical healing in view’

Mark Stibbe ‘the special ability to perform acts of extraordinary supernatural power. These actions are performed through the power of the Holy Spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ, and they evoke wonder in many, and faith in some.’

Examples:

1. Prayer for deliverance from prison – Acts 5:19-20
2. Judgement on enemies of the gospel or even in the church– Acts 5:1-11, Acts 13:9-12
3. Miraculous deliverance from injury – Acts 28:3-6 (Paul is bitten by a snake)
4. Overcoming demonic powers – Acts 16:18 (Paul commands a spirit troubling a girl)
5. Resurrection of the dead – John 11:1-44 (Lazarus)
6. Power over nature – Matt 8:23-27 (Calms the storm), Matt 14:15-21 (Feeding of 5000)
7. Healing of sicknesses – Acts 19:11-12 (Handkerchieves used for healing), Acts 5:15-16 (Peters shadow passing over)

2 They are to be used in the Church

a. context of using gifts

Ch 11:17 ‘for your meetings do more harm than good’ Ch 14:26 ‘When you come together’

Ch 12:7 'Given for the **common good**' – the common good of our community. We pool our resources for all to use!

David Pytches 'The meeting place is the learning place for the market place'.

b. Correction on use of gifts

Ch 11:17 'In the following directives I have no praise for you for your meetings do more harm than good. Ch 12:1 'now about Spiritual Gifts'

Addresses understanding

Vs 1 'I do not want you to be ignorant'

Addresses attitude

He is addressing pride and selfishness throughout these passages – 'for the common good' – vs 7.

Addresses practice

In love Ch 13. and in specific instruction on meetings on Chapter 14:26-39

3. They demonstrate the loving character of God

Ken Blue (American Pastor and author) 'If Jesus truly reveals the character of God to us, then we may cease speculating about and arguing over God's will in sickness and healing. Jesus healed them because he loved them. Very simply, he had compassion for them; he was on their side; he wanted to solve their problems'

Isa 53:4-5 – Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows.....the punishment that brought us peace was upon him and by his wounds we are healed'

-Refers above verses to salvation – 1 Peter 2:24 – relating it to salvation and righteousness
-Refers above verses to healing – Matt 8:16-17 – relating it to infirmities and sickness

Ch 12:27 'you are the body of Christ and each one of you is a part of it' Vs 18 'God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be'
Vs 26 'if one part suffers, every part suffers with it'

4. They are supernatural and continual

a. Supernatural

Medicines can be considered as part of the earth that God considered 'very good'.

Not using medicine could be argued to be forcing God to a test (Luke 4:12) which is not good, Jesus would have ignored the natural means of walking down the steps to throw himself off the temple. God has given us everything to be enjoyed in the earth which is his (Ps 24:1).

Medicine can be used in connection with prayer – i.e. 2 Kings 20:7 where Hezekiah has a cake of figs (a medical remedy) applied as per God's instructions and he was healed.

Paul told Timothy to use wine for his health – 1 Tim 5:23

b. Continual

Wayne Grudem 'Those with gifts of healings will be those people who find that their prayers for healing are answered more frequently and more thoroughly than others. When that become evident, a church would be wise to encourage them in this ministry and give them more opportunities to pray for others who are ill.'

There is no such thing as a Christian 'Healer'.

5. They combine in use with other gifts

Particularly: Discerning of Spirits, Faith, Prophecy, Healing, Miracles.

Acts 13:9-12, where Paul confronts a sorcerer who opposes him – Exercises: discernment of spirits, prophecy, faith, miracle.

6. There are a variety of possible causes of sickness

a. Lack of faith

Jesus diagnoses in disciples (Matt 17:16)

Jesus unable to perform miracles (Mark 6:1-4)

Telling people this is why they are not healed is not helpful! But each of us should be encouraged to be expectant.

John Wimber: 'no one was healed by Jesus with the words 'your scepticism has made you well'

b. Hidden sin

James 5:14-16 – confessing sins in context of receiving healing

1 Cor 11:30 'that is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep'

c. Refusing natural help.

Example of Hezekiah receiving healing in 2 Kings 20 with a poultice of figs applied to a boil. Isaiah was instructed to do this. There was not a prayer of faith.

Paul's advice to Timothy to take wine for his bad stomach. – 1 Tim 5:23

d. God's sovereignty.

God may decide not to heal for some reason known only to him! He has ways and plans that we cannot understand and may not know in those moments.

Some were ill in the ministry of the disciples and apostles – 2 Tim 4:20, Phil 2:27.

Paul's advice to Timothy to take wine.

e. God's plan for suffering.

It maybe that God has a particular plan in order to teach and achieve a particular purpose of his. Suffering can be redemptive.

Rom 5:3-5 'we rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character hope.'

Mark Stibbe: 'Catholics argue that any suffering which prevents a believer from living a fully human Christian life can and should be healed – that is negative, destructive suffering. On the other hand suffering which develops character (particularly sensitivity towards others), which enables people to love and to grow may remain in a believers life.'

f. The Kingdom of God – here but not fully.

We live in between the times. Death and sickness still occur and will do until Christ comes again.

Mark Stibbe: 'God allows us to borrow from tomorrow.....he allows us to experience today what we are in any case going to experience in the eschatological tomorrow.'

You will be healed one day!