The Ministry Week 6

Faith, Healing and Miracles.

The Ministry

We believe in the ministries that Christ has set in His Church, namely, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and in the present operation of the manifold Gifts of the Holy Spirit according to the New Testament.

There are different types of faith.

Natural Faith – A trust and confidence in something – eg "When I turn the tap on, water will come out."

Saving Faith - It is the kind of faith expressed by the Philippian jailer. It is the kind of faith expressed by the thief on the cross.

> *'Don't you fear God,' he said, 'since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.'*
>
> *Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. LUKE 23:34-43*

Paul reminds us that this kind of faith has not come from ourselves.

> *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith— and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. EPHESIANS 2: 8-9*

Growing Faith

The growing quantity and overcoming quality of being able to live by God's Word and direction rather than by what we already see and know.

As our walk with the Lord develops, and as our relationship with Him draws closer, so our faith grows.

> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, **faith**. GALATIANS 5:22*

It's that faith that grows on the inside of us as we hear the word of God. It's believing what God says.

> *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. ROMANS 10:17*

But then there is the Holy Spirit Gift of Faith.

The Gift of Faith Defined.

The gift of faith is the ability to see God's purpose in a situation and to trust His wisdom and power to accomplish

that purpose. Essentially it is the gift which enables one to believe God for what seems impossible.

It's the kind of faith that when you tell people what you have faith for, they think you are crazy.

So when the young David was taking cheese and pickle sandwiches to his brothers on the front line with the Philistines and heard Goliath taunting the Israelites, whilst everyone else trembled with fear, David said

> "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God? 1 SAMUEL 17:26

God gave David that supernatural faith that he was to be the one to defeat Goliath. They all thought he was crazy but God had given him the faith.

Then there is the example of the 12 spies who went to spy out the land. 10 came back and gave the report the land is full of giants and we are like grasshoppers in their eyes, we are doomed if we attempt to take the land. Joshua and Caleb are given supernatural faith. "God's on our side, let's go for it." (NUMBERS 13 & 14) They all thought they were crazy, but God had given them the faith.

Then let's look at a New Testament example.

Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias."
And he said, "Here I am, Lord."
So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."
But the Lord said to him, "Go…. And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ACTS 9:10-15

In the natural it's impossible, in the natural it's illogical. But God gives you the supernatural faith to believe.

Modern day examples.

I know of a pastor this side of Leeds who told him that God was going to give the church a building that Asda was vacating. The church didn't have any money, but because God had given the pastor faith, they offered them what little they had. Asda let them have it, even though someone had offered them 3 times what the church was offering! The Lord gave it to them. Crazy faith.

When is God going to give you that crazy faith? When it is needed. When God wants you to do something, when God wants to use you in a certain situation.

And that is very similar to how the Gifts of Healings works.

The Gift of Healings Defined

The spiritual gift of healing is the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit of God that miraculously brings healing and deliverance from disease and/or infirmity.

There are different ways you can receive healing.

There's **the laying on of hands**, and James 5, we are told of another way to receive healing through the **anointing with oil**. Other people receive healing **standing upon and resting in God's goodness.**

The Gifts of Healings is something different. It is the gift that is given you to impart God's healing at a specific time on a specific occasion.

Here's an example from scripture.

> As Peter travelled about the country, he went to visit the saints in Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years. "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. ACTS 9:32-34

Peter didn't lay hands on him. Peter didn't anoint him with oil. There's no indication that this man was a believer expecting to be healed. There was no interview – when Peter found the man he didn't even give him the gospel – Jesus died for your sin and rose again on the third day – are you ready to repent? No there was none of that.

The anointing for that mans healing came upon in for that moment; *"Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat."*

It's very similar to Peter and John when they are going to the temple in Acts 3. They see the lame man, they had passed him hundreds if not thousands of times before. But that morning

the Holy Spirit Gift of Healing flowed through Peter. *"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. "*

The chap wasn't waiting on the Lord to be healed. The chap didn't have hands laid upon him. He was not anointed with oil. The Holy Spirit Gift of Healing was released, and healing was manifest immediately.

George Jeffreys the founder of Elim was a man through whom this gift was manifest. Wynne Lewis, Colin Dye more recently at Kensington Temple. Maryln Harry would be another name. Many Elim churches have relics of wheelchairs and crutches that have been left behind when people have been instantaneously healed.

So can you see a common factor. The gift of faith is released at a specific time for a specific occasion. The gift of healing is released at a specific time for a specific occasion, and the gift of miracles is, or miraculous powers are released at a specific time for a specific occasion.

Miracles: The Theologian's definition:

The temporary suspension of the usual laws of nature and the intervention of supernatural and divine power.

Miracles are a demonstration of God's mightiness. They are signs that point to him.

The Greek word for power (dunamis) is often translated miracles, mighty works, cf. MARK 6:2

> *"When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a miracle,' then say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh,' and it will become a snake." EXODUS 7:9*
>
> *Then the LORD said: "I am making a covenant with you. Before all your people I will do wonders never before done in any nation in all the world. The people you live among will see how awesome is the work that I, the LORD, will do for you. EXODUS 34:10*

Miracles are seen throughout the bible.

117 Miracles and Wonders in the Old Testament
32 miracles by Moses

23 miracles by Elisha

72 Miracles and Wonders in the New Testament

46 Miracles of Jesus

26 miracles of the Disciples of Jesus

What's the difference between a healing and a miracle?

A healing is the repair of something that is unhealthy.

So say you had an eye infection and you couldn't see. And I was quickened by the Holy Spirit to pray for you, I pray for you

and God instantaneously restores your vision. That's a healing.

But then say you couldn't see because you didn't have an eye ball. All you had was a glass eye. And I was quickened by the Holy Spirit, and the anointing was upon me, and I prayed that you could see, and your glass eye popped out, and an new eye ball grew in its place and you could see again. That's a miracle.

GK Chesterton made this observation. *"Men will believe anything so long as it is not in the bible."*

Where are all the miracles?

a) Is it that the Lord has changed?

Absolutely not! - Malachi 3:6 for I am the LORD, I change not…

b) Is it the wicked society that we live in?

Elijah experienced God's power during the reign of Ahab. So what is stopping us?

c) Is it government oppression?

Peter, James & John had to deal with persecution from the Religious & Governmental leaders of their day and we read that "The Lord added unto the church daily"

Maybe it's because we believe we are not good enough.

> *"Does God give you His spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law or because you believe what you have heard?" GALATIANS 3:5*

Let us remind ourselves who God is.

Nothing is too hard for Him.

He is smarter than me!

He is greater than me!

He has been around longer than me!

Let's not limit God by looking at ourselves, but let's make ourselves available to be used by God, but looking at Him.