

Gifts of Healings and Works of Powers

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Preacher: Bill Story

[0 : 00] Well, how are we doing? Yeah. James is back. Good to see you, brother. Somewhere way out east.

Yeah. Everything going all right? Glad you're back. Good. Good to see Heidi back. Sir William, good to see you.

He's grown two inches? I hold shoe size. Wow. I don't know. Out there in Iowa. What's going on out there? There are a little thing up there. Iowa. My sister told me what Iowa stands for, but I won't say it up here.

Yeah, I know. She lives in Iowa. Yeah. Yeah. We won't go there. Anyway, glad you're back. Glad you're here. Take your Bibles with me, please, and turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 12.

We continue our study in understanding spiritual gifts. We spent four weeks in Romans 12 looking at the seven gifts that are mentioned there.

[1 : 05] Those clearly seem to be gifts that are given and remain with those that are given the gift, whether it's a gift of teaching, gift of serving, prophecy, or mercy-leading exhortation, I think, are the seven.

Those all seem to be gifts that God gives, and you continue to use them. Because if your gift is service, then you apply it in the serving and teaching in the teaching, et cetera, et cetera.

We come now in 1 Corinthians 12 to a different category, I believe, of gifts. In fact, they're not called gifts. They're called manifestations of the Spirit.

So that gives a different nuance to what they are. I just think they're still gifts. But today, especially as we come to two of the more phenomenal types of gifts, gifts of healings and works of powers, we see ones that are probably not permanent at will kind of gifts.

In fact, I believe I can prove that. So we'll see. So we want to read the text, and we'll pray, and then we'll dig in. So if you're able, please stand. As I read from 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we'll read from verse 4 through 11.

[2 : 30] 1 Corinthians 12, beginning of verse 4. Now, there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of service, but the same Lord.

And there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom or the word of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit. To another, faith by the same Spirit.

To another, gifts of healings by the one Spirit. To another, works of powers. To another, prophecy. To another, distinguishings of spirits.

To another, kinds of tongues. And to another, the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as He wills, or when He wills.

[3 : 48] So reads the Word. Let us pray. Father, as John prayed, feed us today. Feed us, Lord, from heaven. Feed us from Your Word. As Jesus said, we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

And so feed us today that which gives us spiritual strength and nurture. Build us up. As we talk about gifts of healings and works of powers, Lord, do that even among us today.

We pray that You would give healing, both physical and spiritual healing today. We pray that You would work powerfully among us and in us, as You promise.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. Amen. Amen. So let me ask you, take a little poll here, a little informal pop quiz poll.

Does God still heal today? You think so? Yeah? Absolutely. Absolutely. Waiver?

[5 : 02] Unsure? What about miracles? Does He do miracles? I used to wear a shirt just to annoy my friends. When I was in high school, I'd wear shirts that, expect a miracle. Every day. They'd be like, what are you?

You weirdo. I just like to push people a little bit. I do believe God does miracles. I do believe God heals.

And I'm not talking about just spiritual healing. I'm not talking about, which is a true healing. I'm not talking about the miracle of the new birth. That is truly a miracle, right?

To make us from dead to alive. To change us radically in our inner nature. To make us what we were not before. I'm talking about things like blind seeing, lame walking, cancer gone.

So, let me ask you another question. What do you think about healing services? Service just for healing. Slippery.

[6 : 05] Why? Is there a lot of water in there? Slippery, shaky kind of thing, you think? Yeah. I think they're real.

What about people that claim to have the gift of healing and they can heal at any time? And they have those services to do that. What do you think about that? Is that real?

Huh? Those are pretty skeptical. You think some of those are pretty skeptical? Well, here's one of the reasons we wonder about those kind of things, especially if you come from a more conservative background.

Because what are these gifts called here? What are these called here in 1 Corinthians 12? They're called manifestations of the Spirit. Right? A manifestation means they're evidence, clear evidence that the Spirit is at work.

So when you see those healings, quote unquote, on TV or whatever, is it clearly evident that the Spirit has healed someone?

[7 : 11] You might see someone get out of a wheelchair and walk. Okay, that could be, but I don't know that person. Do you ever see an arm restored? You know, like Jesus did?

You ever see leprosy removed? You ever see a paralyzed person? Stand up and walk? I'm not saying they don't happen.

I'm just saying we often wonder at those kind of things. Because these works are called manifestations. It should be clearly evident. When they happened in the gospel, no one questioned whether that was real.

A blind man that they knew was blind from birth now sees. Okay, can't explain that one. A lame man who was paralyzed. And the people knew him.

Right? So, how does the Bible instruct us to seek healing? When I said, does God still heal today?

[8 : 11] Most of you said, yeah, absolutely. I think so. So, how do we seek that healing? In the gospels, people, you know, there's Jesus. So, you come to Jesus, right? That's kind of a no-brainer.

Just find out where Jesus is. Get there. And that's what people did, right? They would... Jesus never held a healing service. Never broadcast one. Never said, I'm going to be in such and such a place.

And if you want to be healed, come over there. It was the other way around. Wherever Jesus went, people would find out, oh, where is he now? I'm going there because I hear that people get healed by this man.

Right? So, how does the Bible... But does the Bible instruct us? Well, yes, it does. How does the Bible instruct us to pursue healing now, today?

Huh? Are we told to hold healing services? No? Well, sort of, I guess. Huh?

[9 : 10] James 5. James 5.13. Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Anyone sick?

Physical weakness? Let him call for the elders of the church. And let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

And the prayer of faith will save or heal the one who is sick. And the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another.

Pray for one another. That you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

Working of power. That's one of these manifestations. Works of powers. And when you call the elder, when you are sick or you have cancer or you have whatever, you call the elders to pray and anoint you with oil.

[10:14] Right? God says that's a means through which he works. Not guaranteed. It's not a, you know. But it is a means you have not because you ask not. Right? So if you do it, please ask that.

Pursue that. That's how we're to pursue it. The prayer of a righteous person. Who's the righteous person? We got anybody righteous enough that, you know. A righteous person is a justified person. Right? A Christian. And in that context, it's people who are not coming haughty. It's people who have already confessed their sins to each other. Right? And they're praying for one another. And that's how healing comes.

It comes in that context of openness. Right? 1 John, walking in the light. Right? Being in the light. Anyway.

Okay. So that's how you do it. So if you need it, call the elders. elders, we're on call. Okay. So, Paul here in 1 Corinthians 12 makes a list of unique manifestations.

[11:17] And you'll have to admit as we read through these, they're a little bit different class, aren't they? An utterance of wisdom, an utterance or a word of knowledge, faith.

Not the normal kind of faith that every believer obviously has. We're talking about some other kind of man, a faith that shows clearly that the Spirit is working.

And then we get to the ones we're getting to today, gifts of healings and works of powers. Right? So, what are these?

First, I want you to note the context again. In 1 Corinthians 12, he doesn't just talk about spiritual gifts out of the blue. He's talking about them once again in the context of the body, the church body. Gifts are part of how we minister to one another. Gifts are part of how God works among us. So, we see these gifts talking about effects within the body.

[12:19] In verses 4 through 6, he talks about there's a variety of them, right? Verse 4, there's a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are varieties of service, ministry, but the same Lord.

And there are varieties of activities. But it is the same God who empowers them all and everyone. So, the point is there's a variety and a diversity. We are a body with many members.

We don't all do the same thing. We don't all look the same. We are like that wall, right, with all the different stones. I love the picture of the wall being the church. God builds us as a holy temple and he adds the stones.

And, you know, they're different. They're small stones, big stones, crooked stones, jaggedy stones. You know, they're all kind of like us, right? They're not all like square bricks. They're all different.

And so, when God distributes his gifts, that's the same. It's different. And whether you're a hand or a foot or an appendix or whatever, you're adding to the growth of the body.

[13:20] So, that's what he talks about. But it's God empowering them. And then notice in verse 7, they're not only called manifestations, as I mentioned. There are things that evidence clearly show that the Holy Spirit is at work.

But notice their purpose. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for what? For the common good. Not just for yourself, but for the common good. For the profit of all.

For the benefit of the body. And so, gifts are, by their nature, they're serving other people. They're ministering to other people.

And these manifestations are particularly unique because they're like you're the channel that God's working through for them.

And they have powerful effects that are for our benefit. Okay? So, let's look at them.

[14:19] What are these manifestations? We looked at the first three already last time. A message of wisdom. Word of wisdom means a message which we define. Here's the correct definition.

Okay? Because it's mine. So, no, I'm sorry. Trying to joke. A message of wisdom. We're trying to describe it as the ability to receive or speak. So, this message of wisdom might come through you or might come to you.

To receive or speak spontaneous practical insights to or from others in the application of the gospel of Christ by the leading of the Spirit.

So, wisdom is about application. Wisdom is about the how-to of life. And then a message of knowledge is a little different. It's more about understanding, not so much applying.

Message of wisdom is the ability to receive or give spontaneous personal insight into the understanding and grasp of gospel truth. See?

[15:17] So, the word of wisdom is more about how I live this out. And the word of knowledge is more about getting a better grasp and understanding of truth.

So, we talked about that. I mentioned last time that those can come. I think they have come at times for me when someone comes up to me after a sermon and said they got a lot out of it or they got this out of it.

And they will tell me, what'd you get? Well, they got this. And I know I didn't say that. They got something. But I know I didn't. Oh, yeah, when you said this and this.

I don't tell them I didn't say it because I want to take the credit. Well, no. But they've got something because we're in the word, because we're teaching.

And what they got is not something weird. It's like, ooh, I missed that insight, but I'm glad you got it. I think it's that kind of thing. So, whether it's coming through the teacher or the person ministering, whether you're giving it or receiving it.

[16:24] And then faith. Faith is the ability at times to trust God for the extraordinary, even amidst overwhelming odds, by means of the Holy Spirit's direction.

So, that mountain-moving kind of faith, that kind of faith that like, whoa, wow, you believe God's going to do that. He's going to save that person. He's going to work through that person.

He's going to move in our body in this kind of way or whatever. Those are at times kind of manifestations of God. So, now we come to two more fun ones.

Gifts of healings and works of powers. So, gifts of healings. Now, I'm saying it as Paul wrote it, okay? Let me do a little aside because we did this.

Steve helped me realize that we need to talk about this. We have different translations. In our church, we're using the English Standard Version, right? Does everybody have that?

[17:22] Does somebody have anything different? What do you got? Holman's Christian Standard. Holman Christian Standard? Yeah. Okay. New King James.

What else we got? Anybody have the NIV? Yes. New International Version? NASB. NASB? I love NASB. New American Standard. 1977 edition.

Because 1995 edition, they updated it, which means they start taking words out. I was preaching a sermon. Never mind. I won't tell you that sermon. Okay. So, I've made comments.

I want to say this because I've made a few comments about the ESB and how they're translating words. Now, translations, each translation, whether it's King James. So, let's say on this side are the stricter translations, which means they're more word for word.

Okay? So, you have the King James, and you have the New American Standard, and you have the American Standard, which is even more wooden. Okay? They're more word for word. On this side, way over here, what do we got?

[18:25] The really, really loose translations. Paraphrases. You got the Message. You got Living Bible. Phillips. What else? Good News for Modern Man.

That was one I read because it was limited vocabulary for dummies. And then in the middle, you have something like the NIV. Okay? So, way over here, you have the word for word translations. Over here, you have very loose translations. Okay? Kind of paraphrasing, not really translating. In the middle, you have... So, the purpose of the New King James...

Well, New King James was translated back in the day when Americans hadn't messed up the English language yet. Right? So, English was an understood language. They all used the same words. The words had meanings.

They didn't change the meanings until they came to America. Okay, never mind. Right? So, that was just a good translation for the people of the day. Right? From the Latin, not from the Greek.

[19:22] Then you have... Then New American Standard came along later in the 1900s because Americans needed their own translation. And they wanted something translated from the Greek instead of from the Latin.

So, you got New American Standard. And they are word for word. Those are great works. If you're doing deeper study, if you want to know... You know, you want to dig into a verse. Those are the translations that you want.

If you're doing study. If you're doing reading. If you want to read through the Bible, NIV. NIV is kind of more smooth. It's not a word for word translation. It's more of an idea translation.

Is that the word that... You can read at the beginning of your Bible. The committee that did the translation of the text will tell you this was our goal.

So, NIV tells you right up front. We're not a word for word. We're trying to translate a text so that people could just read a longer and read smoother. Right?

[20 : 18] Not get bogged down in the words. Thought for thought. Thought for thought. Oh, thought for thought. Thank you. Yeah. So, idea, thought. And then your paraphrases obviously are, you know, further over.

They're trying to give maybe a bigger, bigger picture than even... Anyway, so does that make sense? So, where's the ESV? So, you got the NAS and you have the RSV.

The ESV is the old RSV updated and moved over from word for word translation over toward... Kind of in between NIV and here. So, what the ESV is doing is trying to do a little bit closer to what the NIV does but still trying to be more word for word.

My argument with them is which words they choose not to translate. I would not have lasted on that committee. Because some of the words they're taking out and changing or adding...

[21 : 27] In my mind, when you're doing verse by verse study of the text like we're doing, what they have translated makes it more confusing. Okay? If you just read through the text, you're not going to stop there and think about...

Just read through the text. It's fine. But for doing what we're doing, we really need the words Paul actually used. Because Paul... I am convinced after however many years I've been studying the New Testament, Paul is very deliberate.

Very intentional. He chooses words for the purpose of communicating a certain message. And so, when he talks about...

So, here we go. We're in the end of verse 9. Okay? To another faith by the same... To another gifts of... My ESV says, to another gifts, plural, of healing, singular, by the same spirit.

Well, that's not what Paul wrote. Paul wrote to another gifts, plural, of healings, plural. But the ESV committee said, well, that doesn't sound right.

[22 : 34] That's not smooth reading. That's kind of weird. So, we're just going to take that S off. We're going to take the plural out. Does plural matter in the translation of Scripture?

Paul made a whole argument about justification by faith based on singular and plural. Right? In Galatians. Paul said, it did not say to sons.

It said to son. Speaking of that son, Christ. Okay? So, it matters. It matters. Even singular plural matters.

And so, each of these from verse... So, verse 10 is the same thing. You got working of miracles. No. What Paul wrote was to another works, plural, of miracles or powers.

Okay? To another... Now, look what they did. I know they have a reason to try to do this, make it easier to read, but it really is confusing. The end of verse 10.

[23 : 31] To another, the ability to distinguish between spirits. No, that's not what Paul wrote at all. He wrote, to another, distinguishings, plural, of spirits.

Not the permanent ability to always distinguish between. See, what they're writing, what they translated sounds more like a permanent gift. And that's not what Paul wrote at all. He's writing for a reason.

Same with kinds of tongues. Right? So, when we're looking at this, I think it's quite important.

And I just wanted you to understand... I'm kind of complaining about our translation. And our translation is a good translation. Okay?

Its purpose is not for what we're doing today. And that's why I'm struggling with it. I want you to know... I wish, if you're digging deeper, that you could know this.

[24 : 33] And the way you know it is... How? Get another translation. Get a more literal translation. If you really want to dig in, get an interlinear English-Greek New Testament.

And that will give you the Greek, whether you read it or not, it will give you the English translation. And the word order in the exact translation of every word. If you want to dig in. If you're kind of like me and you're weird, you know, and you want to know precisely what Paul said.

How Paul wrote. And even the word order. Because that even makes a difference. Okay. Enough of that. We stopped the timer, right? Because that's not the link.

Okay. I'm going to read a text that proves I should preach a long time. I'm going to read later today. It's easy. Okay. So, gifts of healing.

Not the gift of healing, but gifts of healings. So, I want to first ask, why even the need for a gift like this? Why is there sickness? Why is there sickness?

[25 : 32] Even among believers, why is there sickness? Why did Jesus experience so many sick people? I mean, they came in droves to Jesus, right? And it never ended.

[31 : 11] Okay? I believe that. That they have experienced God healing through their ministry. They had the thought that it was a permanent gift that could heal at will. And so, what happens when God does it?

What's happening to them? Because they're like, what happened? Did I lose the gift? So, I imagine out of human, there might be some manipulations to make it.

Because they know they have the gift, right? But this explains to me, oh, if you have that gift or God uses that through you, it happens from time to time.

It's not something you have as a permanent at will kind of thing. But God genuinely heals through you. Anybody experience that? Anybody experience healings through your prayers and laying on hands of people?

Yeah. Does it always happen? No. Sometimes? Yeah. That's what I think is going on here. So, let's look at a couple of examples over in Acts.

[32 : 15] We've got to go to Acts for examples of this kind of gift. And there's not many. The main, when you trace the words for healing, most of them are in the Gospels.

Okay? That's a huge amount of healings are in the Gospels done by Jesus. When you get to Acts, it really tapers off. There's just a few. Same with miracles.

There are there in Acts, but it really tapers off. So, Acts 3, we have an example of one. It's helpful to look at the examples of these healings that are used in the followers of Christ.

So, Acts 3, now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a lame man from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the beautiful gate, excuse me, to ask alms of those entering the temple.

Excuse me. Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. He's just asking for some help. And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, look at us.

[33 : 34] Okay? Okay. And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, I have no silver or gold.

But what I do have, I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand and raised him up. And immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.

This is a man lame from birth. How did he, how did he, how did he said? And there's no rehab. Okay. Instantaneous strength. What happened?

Verse nine. Oh, verse eight. And leaping up, he stood and began to walk and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God and recognized him as the one who sat at the beautiful gate of the temple, asking for alms because he was there every day.

Every day they walked by him. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. So, there's an example of healing, right?

[34 : 52] What's interesting is here's a man who sat there daily. So, Peter and John must have walked by him multiple times.

I'm wondering if Jesus even walked by him multiple times. Because this is our prayer coming to the temple every day he was there. Why wait till now to heal him? Because a gift of healing is according to the spirit and it's when he decides to do it.

So, all of a sudden, Peter walks by and now he looks at him. Something's happening there by the work of the spirit, I think. Let's look at another example over Acts 9.

Peter is involved in a couple other healings. Acts 9.32. Acts 9.32.

Now, as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydah. And he found a man named Anais, bedridden for eight years, who was paralyzed.

[36 : 02] And Peter said to him, Anais, Jesus Christ heals you. Rise up and make your bed. See, you should make your bed, children. Sorry. Rise up and make your bed.

And immediately he rose and all the residents of Lydah and Sharon saw him and they turned to the Lord. There's a reason for healings, isn't there?

And they saw and turned to the Lord. It attests to that. Going on, verse 36, Acts 9. And there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which translated means Dorcas.

That helps, right? Right? Got that? What's Dorcas mean? Gazelle. Okay. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she became ill and died.

And when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydah was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, please come to us without delay.

[37 : 08] So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them.

She was a dearly loved person. But Peter put them all outside. Remember, that's how Jesus used to do it. It's not a show, people, outside. Go on, go on.

Tabitha, Peter put them all outside, knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise.

And she opened her eyes. And when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

And it became known throughout all Joppa. And many believed in the Lord. Why healings? Glorifies the Lord.

[38 : 12] It turns people to the Lord. People say, well, there's something powerful in there. So, in the Gospels, healings included things like diseases, physical affliction, even demons.

So, the casting out of demons was considered a healing. Because you read in the Gospels, it lists the different healings that Jesus did, right? He did this and this. He came to towns and he regularly did, you know, healed those who were sick, dealt with those who had afflictions, and healed them from demons.

So, interesting. I think demons would be a different category. But it was considered a healing, a making well kind of thing. So, what's the purpose of these healings?

As we've already been noticing, listen to how it's written in Hebrews 2. He says, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

If we neglect salvation, how will we escape? What about this salvation? This great salvation was declared at first by the Lord Jesus. And it was attested to us by those who heard, the apostles, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit.

[39 : 36] So, the purpose of healings and miracles is to attest. God bearing witness that this message is true.

So, let me give you a definition of gifts of healings. It's my definition. It's the right one, of course. I worked hard on this one because I'm trying to be faithful to the Scripture and faithful to what it means and how it could be used today.

So, gifts of healings are the empowerments of the Spirit, obviously, work of the Spirit, at times to directly restore wholeness. So, that would include demon issues.

Restore wholeness, including physical, emotional, and spiritual affliction. Now, how is it done? It's done by a chosen believer's prayers, which are answered more frequently and more thoroughly than others in order to give confirming witness to the power of Christ's gospel and glorify God.

So, there are acts in which, at times, God restores wholeness, and He does it primarily, in my seeing this, primarily through prayers.

[40 : 58] So, if this is a gift that God manifests through you, it'll be because you're praying for healing for somebody. And you have found from time to time that God answers those prayers when you're involved.

Does that make sense? And He answers your prayers more often and more thoroughly than He does others. So, when someone requests the elders to pray for someone who is sick, I want to know people in the congregation that might have this gift, because I want them with us.

Okay? We've done that before. Why not bring somebody who God uses, right? Not a guarantee, but we have the odds.

Not the odds, but how God works. How God works. Get in the path where God works. And if God is working through this person more often than others, let's make sure that person's with us when we're doing that.

Okay? Make sense? All right. So, what about, so, does He heal everybody? Did He heal everyone for the apostles? Were the apostles always able to heal?

[42 : 21] Did they do some extraordinary miracles? Yes. Very big time. But historically, and even as we look at historically, so, when are these different books written?

By what date, right? So, we have to think of that. So, 1 Corinthians was written by 55 A.D., about 25 years after Jesus died and rose. Right? Jesus died in 30 A.D., so 55 A.D., about 25 years later, Paul pens the 1 Corinthians.

It was one of the first books written of the New Testament. Okay? One of the earliest ones. So, in 55, Paul's talking about signs and miracles and gifts, and it's all going on.

Now, 10 years later, he writes to Timothy in 1 Timothy chapter 5, and he says to Timothy, you know, you have a lot of frequent ailments.

Your tummy gets upset a lot. Drink a little wine. Now, why doesn't Paul say, go get healed? He says, drink a little wine.

[43 : 28] Why? Because by 10 years later, the miracles and the healings aren't as frequent. Okay? 2 Timothy, one of Paul's companions is ill, and time goes on.

He's not directed to get healing. They're just worried about him. In Philippians 2, Epaphroditus, Paul talks about, Epaphroditus was sick and then drew near death, and Paul was worried to death about him.

Paul never said something about, take him to the healer. But after time went by, God had mercy on him and upon Paul because Epaphroditus survived. Where's the gifts of healing there?

And then the capstone, 2 Corinthians 12, Paul talks about the thorn in the flesh. And I prayed to God. Now, remember what that thorn was.

It was a messenger of Satan sent by God. So, God worked through Satan to pierce Paul somehow, a thorn in the flesh.

[44 : 37] And of this thorn, Paul says, I sought the Lord three times. And what did the Lord say about that? Would the Lord heal him of that?

The Lord said, no. I want you to have that thorn. Why? Keep him humble. Absolutely. Because, you know, he's getting a big head because he had all the visions.

He saw stuff about God that nobody else saw. So, it's like, okay, boop, boop, boop, boop. Let's look at that. Shrink that down. And he said, my power is perfected in your weakness.

And when Paul got that, Paul said, I'm on board. I'm good with that. I'm fine with that. If God's glorified in my weakness, bring it on.

It's like, okay. I'm happy to be humbled. I'm happy to be weak. Because all I care about is God getting his message out and God being glorified anyway.

[45 : 38] So, if that works, that's what God wants to do, I'm good. I'm good. Okay. So, that's gifts of healings. Right? So, our next one, next manifestation is called works of powers.

And I'll give you the Greek because you can find the English out of it. So, energeia. Energia.

Hear an English word out there? Energy. Right? So, works. And then powers is the word dunamis. Dunamis. Dynamis. You hear any word out of that?

Dynamite. Right? Power. Power. So, right? Energy of dunamis or dynamis. Works of power. Works of powers.

Again, it's plural, plural, which lays stress on separate acts. It occurs at times. Different works of powers. Different powers. Right?

[46 : 38] So, the word dunamis, the word miracle or power here, after acts, if we trace the word dunamis, after acts, it is primarily and mostly used to describe God's power at work within the believer.

It's used a lot about power working within us. That's the dunamis. It doesn't show up a lot in terms of physical outward power, but it does show up.

So, how is it used with the followers of Christ? So, I did a little tracing. The word power is used nine times from acts on in its relation to physical miracles.

It's used a whole bunch in relation to working within us, but in terms of what we're calling miracles, what we're talking physical manifestations. Right? Nine times from acts on.

That's it. Nine times. So, six of those times through the apostles, through Peter, Paul, et cetera. Two times through Philip.

[47 : 44] Remember Philip? One of the deacons? Philip. Works of power came through Philip. Philip was powerful. Right? Two times. Talks about the power that came through Philip. At least one time, and that's 1 Corinthians.

So, not much. Not many. It doesn't prove that it's not used today. It just seems not as evident. So, let's look at some examples again.

Acts. Back to Acts. Acts 5. We see one of the miracles happening. Extraordinary miracle through Peter. 1 Acts 5.12.

It says, now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. So, we're seeing signs and wonders happening all over the place. Okay? And they were all together in Solomon's portico.

None of the... It's still in Jerusalem. None of the rest dared join them. Oh, this is after the Ananias and Sapphira thing. Remember? Remember Ananias and Sapphira lied about, right?

[48 : 43] And then God struck them dead. So, everyone's afraid to join the church because people die in church. So, that's that.

So, verse 13. None of the rest dared to join them. Because they're liars and they don't want to be caught. But the people held them in high esteem. And in spite of that, more than ever, believers were added to the Lord.

Multiples of both men and women. So that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats. That, as Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits. And they were all healed. Unprompted.

I think the difference between works of... Healings are... We would all say they're miracles too, right? Works of powers are healings.

[49 : 51] I would say the distinction between what we call works of miracles through healings and what he's just calling works of power are that the works of power are sudden and unprompted.

They just... Boom. They just happen. Okay? So, like, Peter's walking by the shadow kind of thing, right? It's just kind of sudden. It just happens.

Wasn't prompted. Nobody asked. Okay? So, 512. So, then we come to verse 17. Acts 5:17. The high priest rose up, and all who were with him...

That is the party of the Sadducees. You remember why they're sad, right? Because they don't believe in resurrection. That's why they're sad, you see? And filled with jealousy, they arrested the apostles, and they put them in public prison.

And during the night, suddenly, unprompted, during the night, an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, Get with it, boys. Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.

[50 : 50] But that's how we got arrested. Go and do what you're supposed to do. And they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach. So, it doesn't say that's a miracle, but I would say it's a miracle, wouldn't you?

Sudden, unprompted, they're arrested. God sends an angel, lets them out. By the way, there was more than one prison escape, wasn't there, in Acts, I think? Not escape, just release.

Miraculous. Chapter... Over in Acts 19. We have another one. Oh, this is the good one. I love this one. This tells you that preachers should preach a long time.

I love this text. Acts 19, beginning verse 10. This continued for two years, so that the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul. So that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them.

[51 : 55] Okay, that's kind of bizarre. That's kind of bizarre. Right? By the way, I've seen modern day, quote-unquote, healers have a prayer cloth that they pray over, and if you send in money, they'll send it to you, and you'll be healed.

Trying to copy what, you know, that doesn't work when you try to copy. Because it's unprompted. Miracles are unprompted, and they're sudden, and they're inexplicable.

How do you take an apron or something that had just touched the skin of Paul and lay it on somebody, and they're healed? It's like, what? There you go.

In chapter... Oh, chapter 20. No, this is the one. Okay, sorry. Got your hopes up about the long sermons. Here it is. Chapter 20, verse 7. Oh, you'll love this.

So, on the first day of the week, when they were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day. And he, watch this, he prolonged his speech until midnight.

[52 : 59] Oh, my gosh. There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered, and a young man named Eutychus sitting at the window for some reason sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer.

I'm underlining the talking longer part, see? Understand that. But he sank into a deep sleep, and being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story.

He was taken up dead. Now, there's a bad, you know, there's a downside to long preaching, especially if you're on the third floor. But if you're Paul, it's okay.

Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, don't be alarmed, for his life is in him. And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them.

Oh, he didn't learn his lesson. He conversed with them a long while until daybreak, and so departed. And they took the youth away alive and were not a little comforted. Not a little comforted, so it means they were big-time comforted.

[54 : 04] See, so the sermon should be long. Is that what you get out of that? No, another miracle, right? Another miracle is just sudden. No. Thank you, Representative. I appreciate that.

I'm teasing, of course. So, I think, so let's define miracles this way. So, there are works of powers. Works of powers are sudden, free, in other words, unprompted, empowerments of the Spirit by extraordinary interventions to deliver others from suffering.

They could be from being in prison. They could be from falling dead on the street. Sufferings. Attesting to the witness of the gospel by the church in order to advance God's purposes.

Then I want you to know, so that's physical miracles. I believe this still may happen at times. They're sudden.

They're free. But I want you to note, too, that most references to these words, work of power, energia of dunamis. Right?

[55 : 12] I mean, trace those words. You'll find after Acts, you'll find the primary, primarily they refer to not physical works of power, but spiritual works of power.

Okay? So, for example, Ephesians 3, 7. Paul says, of this gospel, I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the work of His power.

It was a work of power by which Paul received the ministry to get. And remember how Paul was converted? Boom. Right? I saw the light. I saw the light.

Right? He was blinded by the light, and then he said, right, the whole conversion thing, and now he's set apart. He says, that's a work of power that brought me, who was anti-Christian, to be a zealot of Christianity.

Right? Then he says in Ephesians 3, 20, he says, this is a blessing to all of us. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think according to the, what?

[56 : 15] Power at work within us. Right? Colossians 1, 29. Paul talks about his preaching ministry. He says, for this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

There it is again, works of power. Even in his preaching and preparation for preaching and teaching. I wanted to read you one more. Remember the song we sing?

Shoot. I know Ron knows it. I know many of you know it. Ephesians 1, 19. Huh?

No? Close. 1, 19. The immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe according to the working of his great might that he worked in us when he raised us from the dead.

So what's that song? Same power. Same power. Same power. Same power that raised Jesus from the dead works in us. Here we go.

[57 : 20] There's works, powers. A work of power in us. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead. So same kind of miraculous dynamic power actually works in us.

That's the predominant kind of miracle that God is doing in us all the time. He's doing spiritual gifts of healings.

He's healing our souls. And he's doing works of power. As we suffer, we're enabled by his power to endure.

Right? And then as we mentioned before, Paul experienced a work of power even when he wasn't healed. So 2 Corinthians 12, 9. Right? His thorn in the flesh. God said, my grace is sufficient for you.

For my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, Paul says, therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

[58 : 23] Works of power. So let's not think in terms of works of power and gifts of healing so much as the external things. And I believe that God still gives those and God still does it.

God's still the same God. And we have not because we ask not. So we should ask. But the gifts of healings and the works of power that we ought to look for and pray for and expect are the ones mightily working within us.

That's what I think we should look for. Because that's what he talks about more than anything else. And actually, that's what he promises. One other factor I want to bring up. There's a faith movement.

The word of faith movement, right? This group of Christians who talk about if you have faith, right, you can move mountains. You know, when Jesus said that too, yeah. But they're talking, they will tell you if you're not healed, it's because you do not have enough faith.

Right? Faith will heal you. They're the faith movement. It's a word of faith. If you speak it. I listened to, what's his name? Frederick Casey Price.

[59 : 33] He was dynamic. I listened to many of his, and I listened to how he taught. Okay? And he would talk about, you know, you speak it. You speak this word.

And he would take gospel passages and twist them around. He would say, he actually told his congregation, he said, I have Rolls-Royce faith. You have Volkswagen faith.

You need more faith. I know, right? But anyway, good old Fred. So, they will claim that if you're not healed, it's because you don't have enough faith.

In other words, it's your fault. I really believe God is going to judge these people that shame people for this kind of thing that's not their fault. They believe that God intends to heal all.

In fact, in our men's group years ago, we had a guy from this background who was joining us for a while, and we came to that thorn in the flesh passage, because I asked, you know, does God always heal?

[60 : 34] Does God always intend to heal? He's like, yeah, yeah, yeah. And the rest of the men are going, no, I don't think so. No. So, I asked him, why? You know, because, well, because God promises it. I said, what about, so we went to this passage, the thorn in the flesh.

I said, what about that? Oh, well, Paul didn't have enough faith. I said, did you read the text? Paul had plenty of faith.

He went to God three times. And then he heard God's answer. No, he didn't have enough faith. So, we never saw him again, because he thought we were heretics, because we didn't believe that.

All right? So, does Scripture prove it out? Is faith always connected to whether or not you're healed or not? If you're not healed, is it really, is it legitimate from the Scripture to say, it's your fault that you don't have enough faith?

Let's see what the Scriptures say. What is the role of faith? Jesus notes that there are times he would tell people, you have great faith. Remember, the centurion had great faith. The woman coming with the daughter, she had great faith.

[61 : 39] Right? Her faith was connected to that healing. Right? The four guys, right? That dug a hole in the ceiling because they couldn't get to Jesus. Right? Remember Jesus? It said Jesus saw their faith. Right?

And so, healing was connected to faith. Sometimes he told people, your faith has saved you or healed you. So, connection to faith. I see where they get that idea.

Okay? Well, what about the rest of Scripture? So, careful look at all instances. So, I looked at every healing in the Gospels. Okay? 51. And of those 51 times in the Gospels and six times in Acts and one time in James, so 58 times.

Out of the 58 times, faith is noted in reference to that healing 21 times. Okay? Just 21 times out of 58. Of the 21 times faith is linked to healing, five times that's after or a result of that healing.

So, it didn't have anything to do with the healing. It was a result. Two times they were told they had little faith. Okay. 14 times it was instrumental. 14 times it was connected to the healing.

[62 : 48] Of those 14 times where faith had a direct impact on the healing, half of those are the request of the sick because they believed. And half were the faith of someone else.

Like the four guys and the, you know, the centurion. So, in other words, it's not at all definitive that faith, your faith has to do with whether you're healed or not.

It's not at all definitive. In fact, it's rare. Yet, in Matthew 13, Jesus is rejected by his hometown. He did not, he did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

That's Matthew. Mark says it even more. Mark says he was not able to do many miracles there. But he said, but he did heal a few people.

Okay. So, it still raises the question. Matthew 11 says Jesus reproaches the unrepentant cities where most of his miracles were done.

[63 : 58] So, it seems like faith has some connection. So, what's our conclusion? Faith obviously has a positive impact. Yeah. Faith has an impact. But it's certainly not a condition for healing.

Because the majority of healings in the Gospels and faith is not even mentioned. God just, it's a gift. It's a gift. It's like we read in Acts 3, the lame man.

He's not even asking for healing. He's asking for some help. And he gets healed instead. Right? He's not even, there's no faith there. He's just asking. So, most healings in the Bible have no mention of faith at all.

Many are healed without even requesting it. It's just by the initiative of God working either through Jesus. Remember the demonized guy, the guy with legion?

Remember? The guy that was cutting himself and living out in the tombs and everything. He didn't ask for healing. Jesus healed him. Most of the demonized ones weren't asking.

[65 : 08] He just healed. So, that's, so when I think what Paul's describing in these manifestations here, these gifts of healings, each occurrence is a gift.

It's whenever the Holy Spirit wants to give it. Have you seen healings in your life? Have you seen people heal? By means of prayer or through, do you know people that had cancer that was verified cancer and then suddenly go to the doctor and it's clear and doctor doesn't know, I don't know how that happened.

You ever, you ever, I've, I've seen that. But, so God certainly still heals today. And the, the, the passage in James encourages us to seek healing.

If we're sick, call the elders of the church and, and, and let's, let's ask. So, big picture.

What's the, what's the purpose of all this? Why does God do miracles and healings? We saw it several times in the examples. And it's what we read earlier.

[66 : 19] How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? This great salvation was declared at first by the Lord Jesus who was attested to us by those who heard the apostles repeated the same declaration of salvation.

And God bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

In other words, on his timetable. When he decided to do it. Not when we desperately wanted it. So let me ask you.

Gifts of healings and works of powers are related to salvation. Have you received this salvation? See, if we, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

That's a, that's a huge question. How will we escape if we can neglect it? If we've heard about this salvation and we know about this salvation, it's been declared by Jesus, it's been declared by the apostles.

[67 : 27] It's been, it's been attested as God has given signs and wonders to confirm the power of this salvation. How can you neglect it?

How can you avoid it? Have you received it? Do you recognize that your soul needs healing? I think if you're living and breathing and aware of things and not suppressing everything down, you ought to be aware that your soul needs healing.

Because you can't fix this soul. I can't fix my heart that wanders. We have dirty hands and a dirty soul.

Sin brings death and judgment. Christ is the remedy for this. Why wait?

If you have not come to him, if you have not sought him out for true healing of your soul and cleansing of your heart and renewing of your mind.

[68 : 30] And to experience a true work of power in your life. Come to him. Seek him. Seek him.

Until he gives you that answer. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you that you are a God of power. You are a God of healing.

We pray, oh God, that you would work your works among us in our congregation and among those who hear our voice. We pray that you would give gifts of healing.

Particularly, Lord, those of the soul. That you would do works of power. That you would enable people to live through their suffering. To endure hardship as Jesus did.

As the apostles did. Help us, Father, to trust your word. As Paul, that even when you don't answer our prayer for healing, we will recognize that your answer is, my grace is sufficient for you. [69 : 37] That your power is perfected in our failings, our weakness, our inabilities. Help us to be sufficient with that.

This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.