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***The Crippling Power of Unbelief
From Unbelief to Faith
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As I prayed about this visit God has given me a very specific purpose. I will begin a series of messages today. I will be gone for one week and then complete the series when I return. I want to tell you what my objective is during these messages. The purpose is that God brings us to the place where we are moving in the miraculous.

Equipping for the Miraculous

How many of you believe that I have an apostolic calling upon my life? If that is true then equipping people for service is what apostles do. This comes from Ephesians 4:11ff,

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service...”

The purpose of apostolic ministry is to equip the saints for service. My job is not to bless you, but to equip you to do the work of the ministry. The purpose is to bring you to the place where Christ's word will be fulfilled when he said, “These signs will follow those who believe” I believe God wants to break forth in Europe with a mighty flow of signs, wonders, and miracles. I believe this will break things open in Austria and the Balkans quicker than any other thing. You do not advance the kingdom by superior arguments. You advance the kingdom by signs and wonders.

God has a passion to equip you for these works. Do not disqualify yourself. You will be a channel for God to do powerful signs and wonders bringing glory to his name.

I was in India in January 2005. I have never seen such amazing miracles happening in India as I see now. God is doing something absolutely new. Before my visit in 2005 I was in India exactly one year before in January 2004. I prayed over sick people and some wonderful things happened. I prayed over clothes and they were taken away with wonderful miracles being reported. Even more important I was empowered by God to impart to other people the power to move in the miraculous.

For example, the youth pastor in Hyderabad experienced something incredible. He is a young man not yet 30 years old. I laid hands on this young man and imparted something to him. That is how we are going to finish these series of meetings. When I come back on Monday, June 5th, I will explain how the mystery of impartation takes place. I will also explain how the mystery of anointing comes upon people. Then I have authority from God to give you something. However, I want you to understand certain things so that you will go out from here to begin moving in all these fantastic ways.

When I was in India in January 2004 I prayed for the youth pastor in Hyderabad and he received an impartation. He went out from that meeting to put into practice what he had received. He started

visiting the local hospital to pray for the sick. He went into all the wards offering to pray for anyone who wanted prayer for their sickness. The vast majority of patients were Hinduø. In fact, there were almost no Christians there at all.

Here are some of the things that happened. He went into the surgery ward and found a man waiting to have both legs amputated. He had gang-green in both legs because of diabetes. He laid there in the hospital waiting for the following day when they would cut off both legs. He was clutching the Batawagites which is the holy book of the Hinduø. He was praying to the Hindu gods for their help.

The youth pastor came to this man and said, øThat book cannot help and those gods cannot heal you. But I serve a mighty God who is Jesus Christ. If you will make a decision right now to put your trust in him I will pray for you and you will be healed.ö That is bold talk. He said, øThrow away the Batawagita because it cannot help you. Put your trust in Jesus Christ.ö The man obeyed him. Consequently, the youth pastor took a cloth that was given to him and laid it on the manø legs. He prayed in the name of Jesus for healing. Within three hours the circulation in his legs became normal. The man was eventually discharged from the hospital having been completely healed.

This healed man ran quickly to find his friend. These two men met each other in the hospital. His friend was scheduled to have his legs cut off the following week. He was in the same condition. The healed man said to his friend, øCome and receive prayer in Jesusøname.ö They prayed for the manø friend. He was gloriously healed!

Let me tell you one more story. This man runs the youth program for the large church in Hyderabad. The church is several thousand. They meet separately in ten different congregations across the city. It is one church under one leadership. This man has the responsibility for all the youth in the different congregations. He was in contact with a young teenage Hindu girl who had attended some church meetings. However, she was not yet converted.

This girl was living with her aunt because her parents had already passed away. This aunt was also the mother of four other children all under the age of ten. She was in her thirties. She had a very malignant brain tumor. Doctors had already operated twice unsuccessfully. She was now in the hospital for the third time.

They tried a third time to operate but this time she was completely finished. She was ruined by the three operations and was lying in a coma about to die. This teenage niece was desperately sad about this situation and decided to call the youth pastor, Robin. She asked, øCould you please come immediately to the hospital?ö The hour was 3:35 a.m. She continued, øThey just removed all life-support equipment from my aunt saying that in one or two hours she will die. There is nothing more they can do. All life-support systems are shut off.ö She then said, øPlease come and pray in the name of Jesus!ö

The youth pastor immediately left at 4:00 a.m. for the hospital. He talked with the doctor who gave a very pessimistic report, øWe already removed all life-support. There is no hope for her. She will be dead within two or three hours.ö

Robin walked into the room where this woman was lying. There is a scripture that comes again and again. I will repeat it next week, but I want to say something about it now. I don't know how the German, Slovene, and other languages read, but in the English bible there is a frequent commandment. Several times Jesus said, "Follow me!" Several times the apostle Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ."

Almost without exception the Greek word for follow is *mimetes*. We derive the English word mimic from this root. It means to exactly imitate or copy someone else. Paul was saying, "Copy me as I copy Christ." This is a tremendous key for moving in the power of God. We are literally called to do things they way Jesus did them.

If you are a man of God like the apostle Paul then you can say, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ." You must be worth imitating! It is very important to be worthy of imitation before we make such claims to those coming behind us. The apostle also said, "Whatever you see in me, you do it, and the God of peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:9ff). He was saying, "I am modeling something that I want you to copy."

Robin was in the hospital room with this woman who was about to die. He was thinking, "I don't have the faith for this." He said, "What would Alan do?" He determined, "I will do it just like Alan would do it. He would certainly pray." Robin went to his knees and prayed. He said, "God, I don't have the faith, but I want you to give it to me right now! I am trying to be like Alan but I don't feel like I have that level of faith. Please God! Don't let this woman die. She has four children who desperately need her. Don't let her die."

He took a piece of clothe and laid it over her head. She didn't even seem to be breathing at the time. Then he walked out of the room. He said, "I wasn't sure. I didn't know that any miracle took place." He switched off his mobile phone because he didn't want the young Hindu girl calling him. He could not handle the distress that the woman in the hospital died leaving this desperate family behind. Robin left the hospital. He forgot to turn on his phone until 4:00 p.m.

After turning his phone on within minutes this young Hindu called. She said, "I've been trying to reach you all day." He said, "I am so sorry. I forgot to turn my phone on." She said, "Let me tell you what happened. Three hours after you left my aunt sat up in bed. She was totally healed. Her first words were, 'I am hungry.' She ate a large meal. I am on my way back to the hospital to take her home because there is nothing more wrong with her!"

This happened January 12, 2004. On January 12, 2005 this woman was in the church meeting with her children. The two men who should have had their legs cut off were also there. They were all there together. These were converted Hindus now on fire for Jesus. There were a number of other miracles that I don't have time to explain. This was the fruit of one man who decided to step out and do something with the anointing he received.

This is where I want to bring you by next Tuesday night. This man sent me an email just two weeks ago. I put these testimonies onto our website. If you can read English then you can read about these events in more detail on the Internet. You can find these testimonies under the title *India Report*.

This youth pastor read our reports and confirmed that the facts are accurate. In his email he sent me twenty new testimonies of people's lives that have been transformed through the miraculous. I want to begin receiving these kinds of emails from Austria, Slovenia, and every other nation in the Balkans.

The Crippling Power of Unbelief

My purpose is to build toward this climax of supernatural manifestations of the Spirit's power in miracles and healing. Let's move into the word of God now. I want to deal with something in this first session that is absolutely necessary. I call this session the *crippling power of unbelief*. If you have unbelief in your heart then it cripples you. Unbelief makes you powerless to move in faith. Many Christians do not realize that they have chronic unbelief in their heart. I want to explain how it got there and how we get rid of it. That is our purpose in this session.

Turn to Mark 16. Mark's gospel was the first piece of scripture to be written in the New Testament. It was written in approximately 52 A.D. Shortly after the gospel was completed it began to be attacked. Certain heretics in the church began to attack and discredit Mark's gospel.

False teachings were already present in the church within the first twenty years. They began to attack Mark's gospel particularly the end of his writing. In certain copies of Mark's gospel they left off the last few verses because they thought it was not really the scripture. Even to this day the battle continues in theological circles regarding the authenticity of these last few verses. Many bibles have a footnote that says something like this, "Mark 16:9-20 is not contained in the best manuscripts."

I will not debate with you about the arguments in current scholarship. Simply trust me when I make the following statement. I can prove it to you but I don't want to waste your time. *The end of Mark's gospel is absolutely trustworthy*. It is the word of God! Despite what some modern scholars say they are not telling the truth.

The Authenticity of Mark 16:9-20

It is very important that we retain Mark 16:9-20 as part of our bibles. I want to show you why this portion of scripture is under such violent attack. I want you to see why it is important for us to retain and proclaim this portion of scripture.

Imagine what would happen if Mark's gospel finished at Mark 16:8. This is what certain heretics want us to believe but this is not the truth. Notice what it says in verse 8,

"Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid."

If we stopped here then we would be left without the certainty, power, and glory of the resurrection.

This is one of the problems I have with the film, *The Passion*, from Mel Gibson. He is a Catholic. He was trained in Catholic theology. The Catholics have a scary weird idea about the resurrection.

They continually concentrate on the suffering of Christ. The film accurately depicts this overemphasis. It spends hours on the suffering of Christ. Finally, there is a 20 second glimpse of the resurrection and the film is over. We are not left with the glory of the resurrection but with the agony and pain of the cross.

Of course, there is a place for appreciating the price Jesus paid atoning for our sins. But the story must not end there! That is not where it finished. Instead, the story finished with the glory of the resurrection. The risen Christ was a million times more powerful than the crucified Christ.

If you still believe only in a Jesus that died for you then you have missed the power of the resurrection. Every Catholic cross has Jesus still hanging there. He is not there! Instead, he is on a throne! He is not a pathetic figure on a cross. That was a momentary, temporary humiliation in order to achieve a more glorious end. He is the risen Lord, conqueror, mighty God, ruler of heaven and earth, King of kings, Lord of lords, and highly exalted upon his throne!

I want us to see what it says in Mark 16:9ff. We must see the important things over which there has been so much debate and strife. We will understand why the devil longed to remove these verses from scripture. Let's begin in verse 9ff,

*“When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, **they did not believe it.**”*

Notice that the people were weeping and mourning. When Mary Magdalene said, “I’ve seen him. He is alive.” They said, “We do not believe.” Come to verse 12ff,

*“Afterward Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. These returned and reported it to the rest; **but they did not believe them either.**”*

Unbelief is a Spirit

I want you to see the unbelief that is obviously being emphasized in these verses. The first thing you must understand is that unbelief is a spirit. It is a spirit that comes from the devil. It is not natural. It is not reasonable. It works the same way as faith but in the completely opposite direction. You must see this.

When we have unbelief in our heart we will not believe even when reasonable evidence is presented to us. Why should they think this woman was a liar? Why did they think she would come back and tell them such stories and lies? That is not even reasonable. Why should these two come and say, “He has appeared to us!” without it actually happening? Instead, they said, “We don’t believe you.”

Were these the kind of people who told lies? No, these were people who told the truth. It was not even reasonable for them to react this way. The facts alone should have caused them to believe.

But they couldn't believe even with reasonable facts. The reason they could not believe was because a spirit was working in them which did not allow them to believe even with reasonable evidence before their eyes.

Unbelief is much worse than not having faith. The absence of faith is bad, but unbelief is much worse. Faith is a spirit that comes from God. I will talk more about that later. In this session I want to talk about the spirit of unbelief, how to get rid of it, and how to replace it with the spirit of faith that comes from God. While you have the unbelief you cannot have the faith that comes from God. You either have the one spirit or the other. Many Christian believers are still full of unbelief although they are not aware of it.

The disciples were in this category of Christian unbelievers. They walked with Jesus for 3½ years. Many of you reading this message have been attending church for four or five years. You've heard fantastic preaching. The disciples were with Jesus when he performed many miracles. They saw him raise Lazarus from the dead. Yet, because of the unbelief they would not believe in the resurrection of the Lord.

Hate Unbelief like God Hates It

I want you to see how serious this is. I want you to come to hate unbelief the way God hates it so that you will come violently against it. This unbelief must be removed from your heart so that you move from a person of doubt and unbelief to a person of faith.

Come to Matthew 16 where Jesus asked Peter and others, "Who do men say that I am?" They gave various opinions. Then in verse 15 Jesus said,

"But what about you? Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered him in verse 16,

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus then says to Peter,

"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven" (v. 17).

At this stage in relationship with Jesus Peter began to receive supernatural revelation from God. As his teacher Peter had Jesus for 3 ½ years. But Jesus knew it was not enough for Peter to hear his teaching with his mind. Instead, he had to hear with his spirit before he could really understand. Then Jesus said, "I will build a church out of people like you Peter. You are receiving revelation from God's Spirit. You are beginning to understand who I am. The gates of hell cannot withstand such a church. I will give you authority to bind on earth anything you want."

Now come down to verse 21 and notice what he says,

*“From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that **he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.**”*

Had Jesus ever lied to them? Was it not reasonable for them to believe what he said? If Jesus says something once then isn't that enough? It clearly tells us, "Listen men, this is what is going to happen. This is the purpose of my coming. It is all in God's plan. This is the power by which I will build my church. It is not the power of me teaching you mind to mind. That will not do it. We must go beyond that to something in the spirit realm. Spirit to spirit I will show you the power of the resurrection. I must die for the purpose of defeating every demon and destroying every power. There is nothing sad about the cross. Instead, it is a glorious victory from start to finish! See it!"

If you have seen the power of the resurrection then you cannot be sad on Good Friday. That is total religious hypocrisy. People cry and mourn on Good Friday. I want to shout, "Stop it! He is risen from the dead! We know the end of the story!"

If you read the story more carefully then you will notice that Peter did not like this message. He said, "Far be it from you Lord. I don't like this business about you dying." When Peter spoke this way what did Jesus call it? What did Jesus say? He said, "Get behind me Satan!" (Matt. 16:23). Can you see that this unbelief is the work of Satan?

Peter receives revelation from God, but when it comes to believing in the resurrection he would rather listen to Satan than to Jesus. That is how horrible unbelief really is. That is how evil it is.

On the Third Day!

If you read through the New Testament then you will find Jesus coming back to this message again and again. In fact, I have counted all together in the New Testament that these same words are repeated no less than 17 times. We can't look at all the references but I want you to see a few of them. Turn to Matthew 17:3ff,

“Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters--one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.’ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!’”

If you read Luke's version then you understand that the content of their conversation concerned Jesus' departure and his resurrection (Luke 9:31). These disciples were having incredible supernatural revelation given to them. They saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus about his departure including his resurrection. Yet, when they said, "He is risen," they said "We don't believe it!" What is the matter with them? It is not even reasonable that they would behave this way. Was Moses a liar? Was Elijah a liar? Is Jesus a liar? Of course they are not.

It is interesting to note how important it was for the disciples to listen to what Jesus was saying. Although he spoke to them they didn't hear him. What a warning for us! In this context even the

Father gets involved in shaking these disciples so that they would listen to what was being said. Peter was too busy speaking in order to hear. While Peter was expressing his good idea he is totally interrupted with a bright cloud surrounding him and a clear voice that says, "This is my Son! Listen to him!"

Why didn't the disciples sit by the tomb on resurrection morning in anticipation for the Lord to come out? What was the matter with them? Why couldn't they believe?

Turn to Matthew 17:22-23,

*"When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and **on the third day he will be raised to life.**' And the disciples were filled with grief."*

What will happen to the Son of Man? First, he will be betrayed. What will happen next? Next, he will be killed. What happens after he is killed? It says that on the third day he will be raised to life. Which day? The third day he will be raised. Every time in the scripture it says that on the third day Jesus will rise! The third day Jesus will rise! Here it says in verse 23 that they were filled with grief.

Here are a few other references for your study:

*"For as Jonah was **three days and three nights** in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be **three days and three nights** in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40).*

*"Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, 'We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. **On the third day he will be raised to life!**'" (Matt. 20:17-19).*

*"Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb. The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. 'Sir,' they said, '**we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.**' So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the **third day.** Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first'" (Matt. 27:61-64).*

*"They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, **and after three days he will rise**'" (Mark 9:30-31).*

"Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. 'We are going up to Jerusalem,' he said, 'and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over

*to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. **Three days later he will rise***” (Mark 10:32-34).

*“And he said, ‘The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and **on the third day be raised to life**’” (Luke 9:22).*

*“Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, ‘We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. **On the third day he will rise again**’” (Luke 18:31-33).*

*“Then the Jews demanded of him, ‘What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and **I will raise it again in three days.**’ The Jews replied, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?’ But the temple he had spoken of was his body. **After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said**” (John 2:18-22).*

I hope you would agree with me that even if Jesus only said something once then you should believe it. If Jesus said something 17 times then what should we believe? Jesus knew they were going to have a problem, but why did he repeat it so many times? He repeated it so often so that they might believe. He said it so plainly, “This is what is going to happen: I will be betrayed. The Scribes and the Pharisees will have me killed. I will be killed, **but on the third day I will rise again!** Do you have it? Do you understand me?”

I want to look at something else in more detail. Come to Luke 24. In Mark two men are mentioned that walk on the road to Emmaus. In Luke’s gospel we have more details about this encounter. Let’s begin in Luke 24:13ff,

“Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, ‘What are you discussing together as you walk along?’ They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, ‘Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?’ ‘What things?’ he asked.”

I want you to notice what these men say to Jesus whom they could not recognize. This is most amazing. Jesus said to his disciples 17 times, “I will be betrayed. The Scribes and Pharisees will crucify me. I will be killed, but on the third day I will rise!” Please read this carefully,

*“‘About Jesus of Nazareth,’ they replied. ‘He **was** a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.’”*

What tense are these men speaking in? They are speaking in the past tense. Jesus of Nazareth *was* a prophet, powerful in word and deed.

What they say next is amazing. If it was not so serious then we would all laugh. But in reality this is worth weeping over because they repeat word for word what Jesus had said 17 times,

“The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him.”

They are saying back to him what Jesus has said to them 17 times. However, it still has not made its proper impact upon them. It did not click in their hearts. Come to verse 21,

“But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.”

Notice again that they are speaking in the past tense. Now comes the most amazing statement,

*“And what is more, **it is the third day** since all this took place.”*

These men have repeated to Jesus exactly what he told them was going to happen. Yet, no one believed him. Despite all his teaching, preaching, and private conversations to this fact everyone was still walking around in unbelief. These men, along with the disciples, should have been at the tomb just waiting for him to come out. They should have been at the tomb through the night waiting for the first glimmerings of this new day saying, “I want to be the first one to see him come out.” This would have been the reasonable thing to do. Their behavior was not reasonable because a spirit had its hold on them, the spirit of unbelief. This spirit Jesus called Satan himself. Satan was successful in causing them to believe a lie rather than the truth.

The disciples, along with many others, walked away from Jerusalem in total defeat and discouragement. They were crying and mourning. All of their hopes and dreams were dashed to the ground. Everyone was talking in the past tense, “We had hoped” “We thought” “We once believed” but not anymore. It is all over. Everyone was broken hearted.

This is the third day now. The story continues in verse 22,

“In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive.”

What’s the matter with these men? They would rather believe the lie than all the evidence that is before their very eyes. They would rather walk depressed on the road to Emmaus than to believe silly women with their story about angels saying he is alive. This is totally unacceptable. They couldn’t believe the story of these women so they sent some reliable men to the tomb,

“Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.”

What more did these men need? They have an empty tomb. They have testifying angels. A company of people have testified that is it true, he is not in the tomb. But they still didn't believe, "We can't believe it." I am surprised that Jesus did not beat them!

Jesus gets into the conversation in verse 25. Now you can see the reasonableness of his rebuke,

*“**How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe** all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory? And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, ‘Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over.’ So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight.*

They asked each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?’ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, ‘It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.’ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread. While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost.”

Many Christians are in the terrible deception that if something is supernatural then it is from the devil. They believe in a supernatural devil, but not a supernatural Christ. When Jesus came walking on the water what was the disciples' response? They were afraid, "It's a ghost." In other words, "It's a demon." Why do we have such readiness to believe in a supernatural devil and such difficulty believing in a supernatural Christ?

*“He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled, and **why do doubts rise in your minds?** Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.’ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.”*

Notice that Jesus addresses the doubts that were still occupying their minds. Something was terribly wrong with the disciples' ability to believe. Despite all the evidence and the Lord himself standing before them they still could not believe. Verse 41ff is the climax,

*“**And while they still did not believe it** because of joy and amazement, he asked them, ‘Do you have anything here to eat?’ They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, ‘This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.’”*

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, 'This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God" (v. 41-53).

While they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, what can this possibly mean? How you can still not believe and at the same time be joyful?

Let me tell you a quick story of how God dealt with unbelief in my life. We will look at Mark and see what happens when you get rid of this terrible and evil unbelief.

First Category of Unbelief: Religious

There are two kinds of unbelief. One form of unbelief comes to us from our religious training. It is religious unbelief. The Jews were bound by religious unbelief. It tells us in 2 Corinthians 3 speaking of those who were raised under Moses' law, "Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts." This veil is not natural, but supernatural. The god of religion has blinded their minds so that when they read the scriptures they cannot see Jesus in them.

A day is coming very soon when this veil will suddenly be removed. The Jews will suddenly see what they ought to have been seeing centuries ago. There is something about the Jews being soaked in Moses' law along with the religious rules that they created that makes it impossible for them to believe in Jesus. Something puzzled me for years about this because the best form of religion ever created was the Jewish religion. It was given by God and it was the best religion given to man. If religion had the power to save then the Jewish religion would be it. If there was a religion that could save then it would be the Jewish religion.

God gave this religion for two purposes. First of all, it was given to show that religion cannot save no matter how good it is. Secondly, it was given to prepare people for Christ when he came that they would be equipped to easily recognize him. Instead, the devil took the Jewish religion and wove a thick veil of unbelief making it impossible for them to believe until the veil is taken away. One of the most powerful prayers we can pray is, "Lord, let that veil be taken away!"

Here are a few interesting facts. I cannot go into all the scriptures, but at the height of the Davidic kingdom under the first years of King Solomon (1 Kings 10) the Jews went out everywhere in trading. People also came to this fantastic kingdom since the word of it went out everywhere as people gave testimony of its greatness. The Queen of Sheba came, for example. She was astonished at what she saw. As a result she took Judaism back to Ethiopia. They became proselytes. As a result, many Jews went to there to settle creating many Jewish communities. These are historic facts.

The Jews also sent trading ships around the world. They went as far as India. They would come back after two or three years rich with the treasures of India (1 Kings 10). They brought back ivory and peacocks. In the Hebrew scripture the word for ivory is the Indian Tamale word. The word literally means, "The tooth of an elephant". The word for peacock in Hebrew is actually the Tamale word from South India. The Hebrews did not have their own word for these things so they adopted the Indian words into their language.

As a result of this trading Jews went to India and settled there creating Jewish settlements. These became permanent trading posts. When the people saw the superiority of Judaism many of them converted to Judaism. These are historic facts.

Here is an interesting fact. During the days of the book of Acts a high official comes from Ethiopia toward Jerusalem. He is the secretary of Queen Candisses of Ethiopia. He is a Jewish believer. He was coming up to celebrate the feast of Passover. This man was reading the book of Isaiah during his travels but could not understand what it said. This Ethiopian was reverently reading the scriptures as a Jewish proselyte.

But notice what happens, the moment Phillip preaches Jesus there is a connection. In a moment this Ethiopian sees the truth. The veil of Moses was not over his eyes because this Ethiopian was not brought up under the teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees. All he had was the scriptures and the Holy Spirit. Immediately, when he hears Phillip he sees it, "This is the fulfillment of scripture! Why can't I be baptized?" Why didn't the Scribes and Pharisees behave this way? The reason is that the spirit from Satan, the spirit of unbelief, had blinded their minds.

Matthew went to Ethiopia and a powerful move of the Holy Spirit takes place there with thousands becoming believers. They had no problem seeing Jesus as the fulfillment of the religion and scriptures of which they had already read.

The apostle Thomas went to India. He went to the Jewish communities around the Tamal-Nadu area where they had been trading with Israel for approximately 1,000 years. The moment Thomas comes to preach Jesus everyone believes. There was a powerful move of God in India. Thomas was martyred by militant Hindus in A.D. 72 but not before a powerful church was established.

Once again, these people had the scriptures and the Jewish religion, which was far superior to anything else, so that when Jesus was preached it was the obvious fulfillment of what they had already been reading and anticipating.

I want you to see that the behavior of the Jews in Israel is not natural or reasonable. There is a supernatural, devilish, demonic veil over their minds so that they cannot believe. If that veil is taken away then there will be a revolution. When God commands light to shine then watch out. I am excited about what is going to happen.

In a similar way the Catholic Church has produced a religious blindness. Many evangelical churches have done the same thing. If it is law and legalism then this spirit comes and occupies such religious activities and communities. The Baptist denomination in America, along with many

Pentecostals, is absolutely bound with this religious spirit. A veil has been sown by the devil so that it becomes an exercise of obeying rules and regulations. It is not the true gospel that brings freedom and empowerment.

When I was gloriously saved I came out of scientific atheism to meet Jesus. I never went to church. The day I was saved we decided to simply believe the bible. On day one of our new life in Christ miracles began to happen in our lives. The mistake I made was to go to a good old Baptist church. I was taught many good things, but within four years a veil of unbelief was sown over my mind. I could no longer do the things I was doing when I was freshly saved and introduced to Christ. It is amazing how fast that spirit wants to take control. It is amazing how strongly he grabs hold of people.

I went to India as a missionary. I was an evangelical with no miraculous power working through my life. That was killed by attending the Baptist church. I knew the scriptures, but there was so much legalism and law. There was no life.

Amazingly, God visited us in India and I was baptized in the Holy Spirit. I was freshly baptized in the Holy Spirit and returned to England. I was there for nine months before returning again to India. During these nine months God broke the power of unbelief in my life. This is what happened.

“I Can’t Believe This Has Happened...”

Upon returning to England I was asked to pastor a small Baptist church. Very soon after I began nurturing this community a member of the church, a woman in her late 30s, became seriously ill. This was 1969. She called me on the phone and said, “Alan, I have received some terrible news. Could you come and pray for me?” I went immediately to her house. I was freshly baptized in the Holy Spirit but I had never moved in the miraculous. The unbelief in my heart was never adequately removed. I was not even aware it was there.

As I drove to this woman’s house I could feel a strange sensation in my arms. I could feel heaviness and tingling in my arms and I said, “What’s wrong with me?” When I arrived at the door she stood in her hallway in complete distress. She didn’t even invite me in for a cup of tea and invited me to sit down. She simply began to blurt out her story. She told me that the previous year something had begun to change in her body. At 37 years of age she had found herself mysteriously growing in size. She had increased in height more than three centimeters. Her hands became larger and her feet also began to grow larger. She had to buy shoes and gloves several sizes larger. Then she began to feel unsteady on her legs. Her eyesight was also affected. As we stood there she went on to explain that she had just returned from London where she consulted with some expert doctors regarding her condition.

They had diagnosed a malignant cancerous tumor in her brain that was pressing upon her pituitary gland. As a result, the complex hormone chemistry of her body had gone completely crazy. She was behaving like a 13 year old teenager and was having something like a teenage growth spurt at 37.

They told her that the tumor was in a position that made it impossible to operate. They said they could try radiation therapy that could slow the growth down, but they told her she probably only had a few months to live. She had several teenage children of her own and she was understandably very distressed at receiving this news and wanted me to pray for her.

I knew nothing about moving in the power of God. I could pray prayers of earnest sympathy but I did not know how to pray prayers of faith. As we stood in the hall I laid my hands on her primarily to comfort her in her distress. Then something happened that I had never seen or experienced before in my life. The power of God went through me, down my arms, hit her, knocked her over and she landed with a loud thump on the floor. I was totally shocked. I said, "What happened?" As she lay on the floor she said, "I felt myself shrink."

After a few minutes she was able to get up off the floor. She said, "My legs feel perfect. My eyesight is perfect." She went into her room and picked out one of her old pair of shoes that she could no longer wear due to her growing feet. She slipped them on to her feet with no problems. She had shrunk back to her original size in a fraction of a second. Every trace of this condition had disappeared from her body. This fact was subsequently confirmed by medical experts and she is still a physically fit woman in her 70s today.

Now this is the point of my story. I saw this miracle with my own eyes and I felt the power of God go through me. When this happened I was stunned and I sat down weakly upon a chair. I put my hands upon my head and I heard myself say the following words, "This is wonderful, but I can't believe this has happened." As I heard myself say that. I thought, "Why did I say that? What is the matter with me?"

I suddenly understood what this Scripture means in Luke 24:41, "They still did not believe it because of joy and amazement." I now know exactly what this means. I was in exactly the same condition as these disciples. I said, "God, what is the matter with me?" "Why can't I believe?" He said, "Unbelief!"

A Sinful Unbelieving Heart

God took me to Hebrews 3:12. In this passage God is not talking to unbelievers, but to "brethren." Who is this talking to? It is talking to brethren. Notice what it says.

"Beware brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God."

That morning God said to me, "Alan, this is you. You are one of these "brethren." If you don't deal with this then you will die in the wilderness and you will never come into your inheritance." That morning I began to hate unbelief the way God hates it. I cried out to God to be delivered from that spirit. I didn't feel a demon leave me. I didn't have any demonic manifestations, but the power of unbelief in my life was broken.

I also made a decision with my will. I will not permit these devilish thoughts to ever occupy my mind again. The devil will always try to invade your thoughts with rational reason. But this is even worse than that.

The Second Category of Unbelief: Secular Rational Reason

Next, I want to deal with the second kind of unbelief which is the unbelief of secular rational reason. This comes to us through the way we have been educated. I cannot develop this further but there are two major principalities that rule these two streams of unbelief. One principality is the prince of false religion, otherwise known as the prince of Persia. This spirit is at the root and source of every false religion. When we are captured in any way by false religion this spirit weaves unbelief over our minds so that we cannot believe.

The second spirit is the prince of Greece. This is the natural logic and reason of the secular mind. I was trained as a scientist in this way. When I became a Christian and was developed in religion the devil added the religious unbelief to my secular unbelief. I was unbelieving in both ways. But one morning I was delivered. I made a decision, "I will never permit my mind to be persuaded by the devil to think his way again." I would rather step out in faith, even if I make a mistake, than be paralyzed by unbelief.

Until Jesus dealt with the unbelief in his disciples they could never be used to advance the Kingdom in power. It says that He strongly and powerfully rebuked them for their unbelief. He brought them to repentance. Then He had to bring them into a place where faith could replace the unbelief. Faith is also a spirit. It is of the Spirit of God and it comes from God. It works the same way in that it defies and will be not affected by reason. This faith produces the works of God. We will look at this more closely in our next session.

I want to get you out of unbelief and into faith. Afterwards we can impart something that you can go and use. I hope this makes sense to you. I hope it gets into your hearts. I trust you will be honest with God. Say,

"God, if there is unbelief in me then get it out. If I am receiving revelation by God yet I am still captured by the devil then I want this devilish way of thinking to be cast out of me. I want to hate unbelief the way you hate it. I ask you to deliver me. Release me from unbelief that I might be filled with the true faith of God. May I be empowered to do exploits in your name. Just like those first disciples, when this transformation has taken place, first in our hearts and lives, then we will see transformation in our cities. We want our cities to be transformed. They will not be transformed until we are transformed. Please do this miracle for the glory of your mighty name. In Jesus name! Amen!"

The Crippling Power of Unbelief, Part II

In our first session we looked at the spirit of unbelief. This must be put out. We are warned in Hebrews with the following exhortation,

“See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.”

This was written to believers. This warning is for us, not for the world. The writer calls it a sinful *unbelieving* heart.

We looked closely at Mark 16 and the importance of this passage of scripture. We must understand that verses 15-20 will not function until verses 9-14 have taken place. Many Christians try to get to the end too quickly.

For example, in Ephesians 6 we receive instruction on how to wage successful warfare. Many Christians try to start at Ephesians 6:12. But I have some important news for you. Before you get to Ephesians 6:12 there are 5 ½ chapters you must work through to get there. If you have not obtained all the promises in those first five chapters then you will not make chapter six work. When everything from Ephesians 1-5 is fulfilled then you can go and wage an effective warfare against the devil. Then you will destroy him every time, even in Austria, Slovenia, or Croatia. It works if we do it the right way.

Jesus was about to leave earth and he wanted to get these disciples into the power of the kingdom. The disciples had already moved in healing miracles. They had already cast out some demons. They had seen some success, but they had also seen some failures. They were working as the delegates of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is one thing to move under delegated authority, but it is another thing to have authority of your own. Jesus is not content to have delegates working for him. It was absolutely necessary that these disciples came into their own power.

Tonight I want to begin that process and finish it next Tuesday night. I intend to send you out with power of your own.

I want to share a true story that happened to me a few years ago. In 1989 I was in Hungary when communism suddenly fell. I was in a town called Bakesh. I had been traveling to Hungary for years working with the underground church. In those days we had to have secret meetings. Nothing could be done openly. In every city a lecture hall had been built for communist indoctrination. The citizens were required to attend compulsory lectures several times a month. They were taught the glories of communism. They had to be there otherwise they would be in trouble with the police.

I was in this city when communism suddenly collapsed. These lecture halls were ideal for conducting evangelistic meetings. Suddenly, overnight these lecture halls became redundant. I said to some of the leaders, “Come on! Let’s grab those lecture halls and conduct some evangelistic meetings.” These said, “What are evangelistic meetings?” I said, “Get the hall and I will show you.”

Then I received an amazing invitation. The principle of the high school invited me to come and lecture students one full afternoon. They were approximately 1,500 students in this high school. They all had to attend including the staff. My subject was the principles of Christianity. This was a God given opportunity. I was not allowed to give an open invitation to receive Christ but I was allowed to teach the basics and core of Christianity. I used those two hours as wisely as I could. Then I invited them to come to the evangelistic meetings we were conducting in the evening.

At least half of the student body came to our evening meeting. We had a packed hall on the first night. As far as I can tell, everyone in that meeting gave their life to Jesus on that first night. On the second night, the baptism in the Holy Spirit fell on just about everyone. By that time the news was going out into the city and miracles began to happen.

On the third night there was a large crowd with many sick people present. There were many people wanting prayer. I could not handle the crowd. Therefore, I called about twenty young people forward who had given their lives to Jesus on Tuesday night. They were baptized in the Spirit on Wednesday night. I said to them on Thursday night, "Line up here." I prayed for each one and said, "You are now anointed. Stand in a line with me. When people come forward to be prayed for, lay your hands on them, and give them healing in Jesus name."

I remember one young man, Andreas, he was 17 years old. He put his hands on people and after they fell down he looked at his hands with amazement. Miracles were happening through these young people. We saw incredible things happen. However, when I left town these things stopped. Please receive this in the right way, it was not their anointing working these miracles, but it was the anointing on me. I paid a price for it. They can't get it without paying the same price.

Today, some of these men in those meetings have their own anointing and they are doing great things with God. This is how it was with Jesus. Jesus received the power of the Spirit. The reason he became anointed was because he knew how to pray. Before the Spirit came upon him Jesus was a man who spent hours in prayer. As he prayed heaven opened and the Spirit came down upon him.

If you read through the New Testament then you will find Jesus continually at prayer. It was his prayer life that was driving the power of the kingdom. There is no power without prayer. That was true of Jesus and it will be true for you. When Jesus prayed all night the power of the Lord came down to heal. At that time his disciples were totally incapable of praying. When they tried to pray they fell asleep. Peter in particular was useless at prayer. But God was going to change that.

The miraculous power working through Jesus was the result of his prayer life, faith working in him, and the anointing upon him. They were all his. However, temporarily he could delegate these things to other people. The disciples then moved under the power of his prayer life. They moved under the power of his anointing. It was his faith that made these miraculous things happen.

Some of you might be in this same situation today. You are in a church where some miracles happen. But it is more hit-and-miss. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't work. This is a good start but God does not want us to remain there. He wants to bring us to the place where

everyone has their own anointing. They have their own prayer life. They have their own faith. Each one has paid the price to move in the power of God. That is where God wants to bring us.

I have already described to you how God dealt with my unbelief. It is amazing to think that these disciples were healing the sick and casting out demons, and yet they were still full of unbelief. This shows that it was the power of his faith flowing through them in spite of their unbelief.

I will show you later the necessary conditions in order to see a regular flow of miraculous activity. Later we will have a time of impartation. I will also instruct you how to use that impartation to become a man or woman who works the miracles of God.

Kingdom Power in Corporeity

The second thing I want to mention now is that Jesus could demonstrate the kingdom as an individual, but he was never able to demonstrate the power of the kingdom in corporeity. In his day no one else actually came into the functional reality of the kingdom and moved in the power of the kingdom. He was on his own.

For Jesus, the days we read about in the gospels were days of frustration. These were not the days of the full power of the kingdom. People often say, "I wish I were alive in the days of Jesus." But if you read Jesus carefully these were his days of frustration. Several times he said, "I cannot wait to get to the cross. I cannot wait to deal with the devil once-and-for-all and powerfully at the cross. I cannot wait to be raised from the dead. Then you will really see the kingdom!"

His days on earth were the days of his restriction. Jesus could not fully manifest the kingdom. These were the two major reasons: first, the disciples could only move in the power of delegated authority. This was good, but it is not as good as having your own authority. Secondly, Jesus could not move in the power of corporeity because he was only one person.

The church must learn the power of the kingdom in corporeity. I cannot have time to teach this properly but I want to give you some insight into this important truth. When I talk about unity or corporeity I am not talking about the lowest common denominator of unity. It is not getting all the pastors in a city to come together at the lowest level of unity for 20 minutes of prayer. This is not the unity I am talking about. We must be one-heart and one-spirit.

Jesus taught on prayer and said that the bottom line is the necessity of your own personal prayer life. There is no substitute for that. You will not get in prayer meetings what you fail to get on your own with God. You must have one great ambition: I want to learn to pray effectively on my own. This is the most important thing that can happen to you. God the Spirit is longing to teach you. The Risen Christ is longing to teach you. The Father longs to teach you. They want time of intimacy with you and no one else but you.

It is not enough to pray as husband and wife. That is right and proper, but that is not the foundation. The bottom line is YOU alone with GOD. You must learn to know your Father. You will learn how to become intimate with him learning to practice the same life that Jesus himself lived. He will teach you. Everything else flows from this relationship. You cannot get faith any other way.

You cannot receive anointing any other way. You cannot move in power without this. This is where our spiritual life must begin.

On your own you must learn how to chase a thousand. You must become a demon conqueror on your own. God wants to teach you how to become a terror to the devil on your own. So, on your own you become a chaser of a thousand.

This is beautifully pictured in the Old Testament with the mighty men that David had. David's team was incredibly powerful. But on their own each one was a terror for himself. What made them strong together was their strength on their own. We all like the following verse, "One will chase a thousand, two shall chase ten thousand" (Deut. 32:30). If you do the mathematics then ten can chase a trillion. Ten people, on their own, can chase ten thousand. So there is tremendous power in the right kind of working together.

But if you are not chasing anything, if you don't have power and authority of your own and then come together with other people who also have no power on their own then the mathematics are simple. If one is chasing zero and he comes together with someone else chasing zero then what is ten times zero? The answer is zero. If one hundred believers come together but none of them are chasing anything then what do they chase together? Together, they chase nothing. One hundred times zero is still zero.

This is why so many church prayer meetings have no power. The people have no power. You don't get power by coming together. Instead, you receive power by learning from God how to be a warrior on your own just like Jesus. Once you have this in your life, then when you come together there is great power in corporeity.

We have massive prayer meetings and they look spectacular, but if you have 20,000 who can't pray then how much prayer do they accomplish? Can you hear what I am saying? We are people of the bible, right? One will chase a thousand. When that one has learned to chase a thousand then you can come together with someone else. You can pray the prayer of agreement which is mentioned in Matthew 18. Now you can multiply your individuality by a factor of ten.

Two people, who know how to pray, forming a prayer of agreement, can smash ten times more together than they can on their own.

I have become very fascinated with the Moravian 100 year prayer movement and what it accomplished. It is staggering what God did through that prayer meeting. However, I did not realize until quite recently how small were the numbers in that prayer meeting.

The community of the Moravians eventually became 600 people. But the prayer meeting was always two people together praying every hour of every day without stop for 102 years. Some people came and others went. There were various prayer meetings that brought 100 people together. But day and night, every day of every week of every year for 102 years it was two people. Before they had finished the whole of Europe was liberated from the power of the devil. Mighty revivals broke out all over the world and the modern missionary movement was launched.

I have stopped worrying about the numbers who gather in prayer. Today, I am far more interested in the quality of the people who are praying. Praise God for numbers, but the power and quality of what people can do individually is much more important.

When Prayer is a Waste of Time

Jesus does one last thing in Mark 16. He had rebuked them for their unbelief. They saw and understood their unbelief. They came to hate it as God hates it. God broke the power of unbelief in their lives. The following thing that Jesus did is found in John 20:22,

“And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

The other thing that is strongly emphasized in every scripture on prayer is this: every time you read about prayer Jesus always raises the subject of forgiving people for the wrong they have done against you. This comes again and again. If you do not forgive then your prayers are a waste of time. This is particularly true with husband and wife. It says this in 1 Peter 3. If you do not live in an understanding way with your spouse then your prayers will be useless (1 Pet. 3:7).

Here in John 20:22-23 Jesus says,

“Receive the Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

What does this mean? This does not mean you have the authority to forgive sins. That has already been dealt with on the cross. When someone has wronged you two people must agree to forgive their sins. God has to forgive them for the legal offense of their sin. But you also must forgive them for the pain it caused you. God is a righteous God. If you say, “Make them pay for what they did,” then this puts God in a difficult position. God wants to forgive them. But you won’t permit him to do so.

When Jesus hung on the cross his last prayer was, “Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing.” One of the thieves, along with the centurion in charge of his execution, was converted on the spot. This is fantastic.

When Stephen was being stoned to death in Acts 7 the demonized Pharisee named Saul was enthralled by the torture of this man. Stephen could have said, “Father, make them pay for this.” If he had said that then I believe it would have been impossible for God to forgive Saul. Instead, Stephen said, “Don’t lay this sin to their charge” (Acts 7:60). These two prayers: Jesus on the cross, and Stephen when he was being stoned, were like arrows that went into this demonized Pharisee Saul. He could not get away from the power of forgiveness. As a result, he was powerfully converted. Jesus prayed for him. Stephen prayed for him, but they also forgave him.

If you keep resentments in your heart and will not forgive the offenses done to you then your prayers are a total waste of time. I am telling you from the bible. You must go through this process before becoming an effective prayer. There is a price to be paid. Sometimes the price is forgiveness.

There are so many family relationships with deep hurts and wounds because of horrible things that have been done. If you do not forgive then the power of that sin will keep you in prison for the rest of your life. Some people are angry with God because they think God has not treated them right. They have resentment against God. They pray for this and for that and, of course, God cannot answer them until they deal with the sin. God cannot heal them. He cannot answer their prayers until that sin of unforgiveness is dealt with. When forgiveness comes then it releases the power of God to begin doing miracles in their lives.

Praying in One Accord

I have seen this happen many times. The word of God is absolutely true. That night in the upper room after Jesus dealt with their unbelief John mentions something very important. Mark does not mention this, but John does. Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." From this day forward the disciples are able to pray. Even Peter learns to pray. This is long before Pentecost. As they received this ability to pray then things began to change. You find a new word is used to describe their prayer life.

We find this word used for the first time in Acts 1. This is before the day of Pentecost. Pentecost only came because they had already learned how to pray. If they had not already been a praying community then there would have been no Pentecost. It was their prayer life that made Pentecost happen. Only the people who were there praying experienced the power of Pentecost.

Turn to Acts 1:9,

"After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight."

Jesus is now gone. They no longer have him present in body. They were told to wait in Jerusalem. But their waiting was not an exercise in passive anxiousness. Instead, they were aggressively ruling in prayer before the Spirit came upon them. Then in Acts 1:14,

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," (KJV)

This is a particular group of disciples. We know that there were at least 500 disciples. It says that Jesus appeared to them following his resurrection (1 Cor. 15:6). Listen to me, less than 25% were obedient to Jesus' command. There were 120 gathered on the day of Pentecost, but there were more than 500 disciples. Therefore, less than 25% were there on the day of Pentecost.

Less than 25% formed the upper room community that shook the world. There is enough power in the average church to shake the whole world let alone Europe. If we will fulfil the conditions then we will see the power.

The bible also talks about the importance of being in one-heart. It also talks about being in one-mind. It stresses the importance of unity. But the word used here is a particular word in Greek that I want you to understand. The word for "constantly" or "one accord" in the KJV is the Greek word

homothumadon. This word comes again and again in the early chapters of Acts. It was never used before. But it forms a new kind of community that did not exist before.

This community would show for the first time the power of the kingdom in community. Even though people went out individually, they went out with the power of the community driving and empowering them to do what they did. Peter suddenly began to do great miracles. But it was the power of the community which enabled him to behave in this way. This community became an atomic power station. The power was in the community. Peter was connected with the community spirit even when he went away on various trips around the world. The corporate prayer empowered him to be the apostle that he became.

We are finding the same situation appearing all over the world right now. It is also developing here in Graz. The more we develop our individual power the more the corporate power will increase. When apostles go out from this place then they will move out to do miracles even greater than Peter did.

However, it was not simply the apostles moving in power in the early church, but it was also the deacons. Stephen and Philip were given the responsibility to make sure there was enough food to feed the poor and needy people. But there was such power in the house that when they went out the power went with them. Signs, wonders, and miracles began to happen all over the place.

This is beginning to happen in San Antonio as well. There are other places where the conditions are fulfilled and this is the result. God gave Franz a vision several years ago where he saw five atomic power stations. He saw one in Graz and four others in the Balkans. I won't say where they are but I know where they are. They will come forth and the power will be fantastic. This is all rooted in the prayer life.

What does the word *homothumadon* mean? This word is actually made from two words. First is the word *homo* which means "another of the same kind." For example, the word homosexual means two persons of the same sex. *Hetero* means "another of a different kind." *Homo* means another of the same kind.

Homothumadon means a fiery passion with persistent fury, physical violence, and heavy breathing. In other words, you feel something so strongly that it comes out in your body, in your soul, and in every other part of you. You are really feeling something. It is also persistent. You don't care what it looks like. You don't care what it sounds like. You will fulfil your passion.

If you look through the New Testament you will find the words "one accord" coming again and again. It says the same thing in Acts 2:1,

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord (homothumadon) in one place."

It was the passion of their prayers that brought the day of Pentecost. Continue in Acts 2:46,

“And they, continuing daily with one accord (homothumadon) in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.”

Come to Acts 4. After the apostles were threatened not to speak any more in the name of Jesus they came together and began a prayer meeting. Notice verse 24,

“And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord (homothumadon), and said, Lord...”

They basically asked for two things: boldness to speak the word, and for miracles to be done in the name of Jesus. Their prayers were answered the same day and not 15 years later. The place shook where they prayed.

Just last Tuesday, a vital situation took place in the United States of America. President Bush nominated a whole row of government appointed judges to sit on the Supreme Court. However, there is much opposition to him. The congress is using a technique called the filibuster to stop his nomination. President Bush gave them an ultimatum. He was risking his career and Presidency to get this log-jam removed. President Bush did not have a majority in the Senate to guarantee a victory. He was taking a risk.

We went to prayer on Tuesday in San Antonio and we said, “We are going to break this thing in Jesus name!” I said, “God, give our President a great victory. These godly judges will be appointed and no one is going to stop them, in Jesus name!” The log-jam broke that very day. The opponents backed off. The first nomination, a godly judge by the name of Priscilla Owen, was brought on to the Supreme Court by a majority of 80 to 18 votes. This is unbelievable. All the other appointees will soon be in position to change the way America judges law.

We woke at 6:30 a.m. to pray about this. We said, “We are not letting go until we get the answer.” We received the answer. The Senate of the United States of America had to obey the prayers of a little community that knows how to pray.

There are many political issues in Europe that must be prayed through until they begin harmonizing with God’s will, purpose, and standards. Little prayers will not do it. We must become serious about these things. We must become passionate about prayer and about the issues over which we pray. Liturgical prayers accomplish nothing. *Homothumadon* prayers can accomplish anything.

Turn to Acts 5:12,

“And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord (homothumadon) in Solomon's porch).”

This comes again and again in scripture. The power of New Testament praying is not in numbers, but in passion. It is not prayer itself, but heated prayer that makes a difference. *Homothumadon* means a burning fiery passion that never ceases. It keeps going, going, and going. It includes heavy

breathing and the entire person involved in the action. This is fiery passion directed to accomplish something that will not let go until it happens.

The Devilish Counterfeit for *Homothumadon* Praying

Let me give you a negative example of this. This same word is used but in the totally opposite way. In the spirit-realm there is a demonic counterfeit that works exactly the opposite way of God's reality. The devil is not a creator. Instead, he is an imitator.

We have talked about the spirit of unbelief that enables a person to believe something which is contrary to the evidence of the circumstances. This works in the spirit and not in the mind. People can be convinced so strongly by the spirit of unbelief that they will not believe the evidence of their natural senses. Unbelief becomes more powerful than the evidence of the natural senses. You will not believe things that you ought to believe due to the overwhelming evidence before you.

Faith works in the same way but in the totally opposite direction. With faith you can absolutely believe things that your senses tell you are ridiculous or impossible. However, you still believe despite the circumstances because the power of God's Spirit enables you to believe without having to be convinced in your mind. These principles are working in the same way but in totally different directions.

This is true of *homothumadon* praying. The devil can get *homothumadon* communities to do his work of destruction and oppose God's kingdom. However, God wants to get *homothumadon* communities to do his work by the same means. A spirit can grab hold of a mob and they can be *homothumadon* about what they are doing. This happens quite frequently in Islam especially in Iraq and Iran. People are ready to throw their lives away with a passion that is absolutely inspired by the devil. But they are passionate about it. This is the devilish counterfeit for *homothumadon* praying!

If we get the real thing in motion then it is far more powerful than the counterfeit. I hope this makes sense to you.

Come to Acts 7. Stephen was given a powerful message that shook people to the core of their being. He brought deep conviction by the Holy Spirit about the reality of Christ. He convincingly proclaimed the power of the resurrection. He accurately described the rebellious history of the Jews. He brought his hearers to deep conviction. His message was irresistible in its power.

However, another spirit was working in the same crowd. It was the spirit of *homothumadon* working in demonized people in the opposite direction. Here is what it says in Acts 7:54ff,

*“When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with **one accord (homothumadon)**, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him...”*

Now you can see the power of *homothumadon* working in a devilish way to attack and destroy the kingdom. They rushed at Stephen as an angry mob and beat him to a pulp. The passion that was driving them had a demonic source. But it is the same kind of passion working in the wrong direction. This passion brought death and destruction. It hindered the kingdom and sought to stop any advance of the kingdom.

The same word comes again in Acts 18 when God haters wanted to lynch the Christians before Gallio. It says in verse 12ff,

*“And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, **the Jews made insurrection with one accord (homothumadon) against Paul**, and brought him to the judgment seat, Saying, This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.”*

The word comes again in Acts 19 when Paul was in Ephesus as an angry mob rushes at the Christians with one accord. It says this in verse 28ff,

*“And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, **they rushed with one accord (homothumadon) into the theatre.**”*

There was such passion and fire in this crowd that they were prepared to tear these believers apart. They were in total agreement about their action. They would have given their lives, their entire passion, to accomplish this purpose.

However, the same passion from the Spirit of God in the believers' prayer meetings had the same power in the heavenlies to forcefully advance the kingdom against any opposition. It didn't take a large number. In fact, in the beginning there were only 120 gathered together. The Moravians prayer meeting were never more than 100. Most of the time, it was only two who gathered together. They kept beating demonic strongholds until they broke to pieces and collapsed one after the other. Nothing could stop the *homothumadon* community in prayer.

God is longing to raise up these atomic power stations all over Austria and the Balkans. These are spiritual atomic power stations. These are *homothumadon* communities. The Spirit of God can use their passionate praying to break every stronghold and smash any obstacle that stands in the way of the kingdom.

Homothumadon and the Supernatural

From such a community a power is generated that releases a healing anointing that will do mighty miracles to forcefully advance the kingdom. Peter could only do what he did because he came out from such a community in Acts 2. Peter was part of that community. What Peter was able to do was simply the result of the power of their corporate prayer life.

The same is true in Acts 19. Here, the number was much smaller. There were only 12 twelve in Ephesus when this powerful church began. However, they came to *homothumadon* power in their prayer life. The great goddess Diana that ruled the whole Roman Empire was thrown off her throne by the power of that prayer meeting. Mighty miracles were done by the hand of the apostle Paul. This was the first time when clothes and handkerchiefs were taken and laid on sick people. Demons came rushing out and people were healed.

About two years ago God spoke to me and said, "I want you to mimic and imitate the apostle Paul." So I began to mimic him. You will find the same thing with Peter. He mimicked Christ. We will look at this more closely on Monday night. Peter mimicked exactly what Jesus did and he saw exactly the same results. Even to the point of seeing people raised from the dead. Peter did it the exact same way Jesus did it.

There was a time when Peter couldn't even pray. He couldn't even cast out a demon from a demonized boy. He didn't have the faith for it. He had not yet received his own anointing. He did a few things as a delegate of Jesus. They were not even recorded in scripture because they were not that fantastic. But when Jesus breathed on him and obeyed the word by staying in the upper room until he was clothed upon with power then something happened. He went through the process that brought him to faith.

When Jesus cursed the fig tree it says in Mark 11:21 that Peter reminded him "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!" Then Jesus answered him. He says, "Peter, you must receive the faith that comes from God." Real faith comes as a gift from God. All we can do is learn how to receive it. I cannot teach this now because I have taught it at length in other series. But let's recognize that if we learn how to receive God's faith then the faith of God can control our lives the way unbelief used to control our lives. Spiritually, they are the same, but they work in totally opposite directions.

By faith you can make anything happen that is God's will even though your senses say it is ridiculous. It does not matter what your eyes say. It does not matter what circumstances say. It does not matter what expert opinion says. It does not matter what doctors say. If you have heard from God and you have the faith then it ignores all the pressures of natural circumstances and believes anyway.

God must take you through a process to bring you to this place. There is a price you must pay. God will use his own way to train you. I cannot tell you how he will train you. I know how he has trained me.

Lessons of Faith

When I went to India at the beginning of 1963 I was suffering from a serious medical condition from which I nearly died several times. The doctors said I must not leave emergency hospital help because I would need it at any time. No mission would send us. They thought I was crazy. They said we should stay home with my condition. However, God was speaking to Eileen and me. I had to leave.

The first experience I had after obeying the Lord's command was to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Then I had the experience with the woman described in our previous session where God dealt with my unbelief. But I did not automatically become a man of faith. God used my physical condition to train me in the ways of faith. He dealt with my rational scientific mind until I stopped thinking like a scientist and began thinking like him. I was a prisoner of intellectual rationalism. I was a prisoner of the prince of Greece. God violated my mind and took me through a process that brought me to faith.

The whole time I had this dreadful physical condition. I almost died on several occasions. I was getting worse and worse and there seemed to be no answer to my prayers. Finally, after seven years I came to the place where in my spirit I knew that I was already healed in the spirit-realm. However, there was nothing in my body that could prove it. I was still the same physically. This is so hard to explain to people unless you have been through this process. However, I knew my healing was complete and I could not pray anymore to be healed. I came to this place after seven years.

I began to understand things that men like Smith Wigglesworth were talking about. Previously, I could not understand their writings and revelations. I was not praying to be healed because I already was healed. It was an accomplished fact in the spirit-realm but there was no sign of it in my body. God said, "I will allow the symptoms to continue for a while in order to teach you the ways of faith. You are to always confess that you have already been healed. Don't try and hide the symptoms that make it seem that you have not been healed."

I lived in this contradiction for five years. Altogether, it took twelve years until there was a physical manifestation of my healing. I had some Hindu friends that were very concerned about my condition. Physically, my condition was worsening. I was skin and bones until my weight dropped to 60 kg. I had no energy and no life. I could hardly stand up or do anything. Yet, I knew I had been healed. I could not even explain it to myself.

These Hindu friends said, "We are very concerned about you. We have some powerful healing medicine in ardiovedic medicine (this is a mixture of homeopathy and the occult). We know a man who is very powerful. He will definitely heal you. Please, can we take you to him? Your Jesus does not seem to be helping you, but this man can." That is what they said to me.

Then I replied to them, "I appreciate your loving concern. I don't want to offend you. However, I must tell you something. You won't understand this but I must tell you anyway. Jesus has already healed me. I don't need your ardiovedic healer. I can't explain this even to myself, but I have already been healed. If I were to die tomorrow then I would die as someone who has already been healed even though my healing had not yet manifested in this life."

God brought me to a place where that made perfect sense to me. I did not need circumstances. All I needed was God's clear word to me. Then I said this to them, "I would rather die having believed in Jesus than live having been healed by the devil." On that very day I was suddenly and instantly healed. That was 1974. I was then 44 years old. Now you can see this incredible physical specimen still going strong. I am 75 and more physically fit now than I was in my 40's.

I learned some valuable lessons in those difficult years. The training God gave me in that situation I have used again and again. I understand the ways of faith much more clearly now. I know how to get things by faith in spite of what the evidence seems to say. God may use a physical healing to teach this lesson. He may use a financial situation. He has many ways that he uses. Situations are made deliberately difficult. Therefore, we don't receive an immediate answer to our prayers.

The most important thing for you is to never give up on your faith. If you keep your faith then the devil must pay you back with heavy compensation. There will come a day when you will cash the check of faith. There will be incredible interest. Even if you don't cash-in in this life it does not matter.

My grandmother received my salvation by faith long before I left my scientific atheism. She told me with total confidence, "You will be converted and you will serve Jesus." I was a rugged anti-Christian atheist at the time. But my grandmother was not shaken. She said, "God will save you. You will serve him." She died in faith without receiving the promise. But she cashed the check in heaven! I was gloriously saved through the faith of her prayers.

God wants to bring us to this place of faith. I will teach more of this in our next session. Right now I will pray for anyone who needs prayer. We can give you your healing through the faith that God has given us. There are several in ministry here and we will work as a team to give you the healing you need. I want to give opportunity to anyone who has come with the expectation that God will meet them in this place.

When I come back in one week I will teach more. We will also have time of impartation. I will teach you principles on how to develop the ministry of impartation. However, I want us to focus on the prayer life we need to become men and women of faith, men and women of the miraculous. Say,

"Lord, I want a personal prayer life like Jesus by the power of the Spirit. I will obey your word. I will shut the door and in my own secret place I will learn to pray to the Father in secret. Thank you Holy Spirit that you are willing to teach me. Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you are the great intercessor. You still live to make intercession for us. Let your Spirit come into me.

Thank you, Father, that you want me to be a praying son. You are willing to teach me how. I will shut the door alone with you and I will pay the price to become a man or woman that can pray on their own. I will also come to the place where I am empowered by your Spirit to chase 1,000 demons. I can do many things that you will teach me on my own. I will protect my family and in many other ways you will train me in the power of my prayers.

This is what I want to receive right now. This is the most important thing. Everything else flows from this one thing. I want this one thing to powerfully come upon me more than anything else. If I seek you first of all then all these other things will be mine as well.

Lord, I want to learn how to pray the prayer of agreement. Make us a real homothumaden community. But it all begins with what you can do with me and what power I receive from you. Lord, I open my heart to you. I open up my spirit. As Alan breathes it will be like Jesus breathing all those years ago. As Alan says, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' I will open up my spirit and I will receive.

Receive the Holy Spirit! Receive the Holy Spirit as an individual. He will change your prayer life. You will learn to pray. Activate your spirit to receive. Receive! It does not matter how old you are or how young you are. There is no age barrier with the Holy Spirit. Receive the Holy Spirit. Receive the Holy Spirit."

Make this following commitment,

"Everyday, I will give you one hour of that day as a first priority. I will find a secret place where you and I can meet. I will pray and learn to pray to my Father in the secret place. You will reward me openly according to your word. Amen!"

The Crippling Power of Unbelief, Part III

Our objective in this series is to move the people of God from unbelief to faith. We should see a flow of miraculous power flowing out of this church. The result will be the reaping of a mighty harvest.

I want to continue on where we have dealt with the hindrance of unbelief. Then we need to receive the spirit of faith that comes to us from God. Unbelief and faith are both spirits. They work against the mind in both cases. The spirit from God brings us to the ability to believe for things we cannot sense with our natural senses.

A Few Definitions: *semeion*, *teras*, *iaomai*, *therapeuo*, and *sozo*

I want us to look at a few definitions. I want to talk about these words found in the scripture. Three things are spoken about: miracles, wonders, and healings. There are three separate Greek words for these things. The first word is the Greek word *semeion*. This is an attesting sign that declares the glory and power of God. The word *teras* is a wonder that makes everyone stand in awe. These things are beyond the ability to heal at the natural level. This is where God wants to take us.

In Acts 4:29-30 the believers prayed for these two things:

- Give us boldness to speak your word!
- May signs and wonders be done in the name of Jesus.

They were not content with healings alone. Instead, they wanted signs and wonders. There are three different words used for healing in the New Testament. We could turn to many verses to highlight the difference but we do not have time for such a detailed study. These words are used interchangeably in the different gospels. The same incident may have a different name describing it in the different gospels.

The first Greek word for healing is *iaomai*. This word is always translated healing. It means to be cured or healed. The second Greek word is *therapeuo*. We receive the English word therapy and therapeutic from this Greek root. This word is interesting because it carries the idea of being healed as a result of adoration and worship.

As the presence of God increases many people will be spontaneously healed of their sicknesses simply through worshipping and adoring Jesus. I have seen this happen many times. As the intensity of worship increases these kinds of healings happen more frequently. No one lays hands on anyone. Instead, God's presence itself is healing to those who worship him. I dare not tell you too many stories because it would take too long. Only one!

There was one lady who had a terribly arthritic back. She came into the meetings completely bent over. While we were worshipping God we heard this loud sound or cracking and popping. This woman stood straight up and began running around the meeting absolutely healed. No one touched her. She was spontaneously healed.

Sozo: Healing, Deliverance, to Make Well

The final word for healing comes all over the New Testament. The Greek word is *sozo*. I could take you through many scriptures but we do not have the time. This word is used in the sense of casting out demons as in the case of the man with a legion of demons. When Jesus commanded the demons to leave the bible says he was *sozoed*, he was delivered. The same is true for the woman with the issue of blood in Luke 8. When she touched Jesus the bleeding stopped and she was *sozoed*, she was healed.

Also, the woman who was a prostitute had many demons cast out of her. She was also saved from her sins. The bible says she was *sozoed*. This word is used to save from sins, to deliver from demons, and to heal from sicknesses. In other words, *there is power to undo anything that the devil has done to destroy a person's life*. It says in Hebrews 7:25 that Jesus is able to *sozo* to the uttermost those who come to God through him. It does not matter what it is, there is a power in God to deal effectively with everything!

Now, I want to define miracles and signs. First of all, these are not confined to the physical healing of bodies. There are many events in the gospels and in the book of Acts including the Old Testament where God overruled the normal physical laws doing something supernatural. The bible is full of such examples.

We are beginning to see these in and through our ministry in San Antonio. We did not get there immediately. Miracles come at a higher level of faith and working together with God. I want you to be ambitious for the miracles and signs and not just for healings. This is what convinces the world more than anything else.

For example, Jesus rebuked the storm and it stopped immediately. He turned water into wine which is my favorite miracle. The feeding of the five thousand is another miracle and sign. Walking on water was not an everyday occurrence either.

We have learned from our prayer center in San Antonio that no hurricane is going to damage the coast of Texas. Certain kinds of weather patterns are demonic and Jesus rebuked those weather patterns. They are not from God but they are the result of the devil's interference with what God intended to be a blessing, namely, good weather. We have learned to rule our coastline so that good weather is the only alternative.

When we have droughts we break them in the power of Jesus name. When hurricanes come we stop them before they come and damage our coast causing millions of dollars in damage. I could spend all evening on this alone. These are important things to learn how to do.

Western Texas suffered four years of drought and the farms were seriously affected along with livestock. It was the result of allowing Buddhists to come and establish a temple in their region. It was not a freak weather pattern. Instead, it was spiritual demonic activity causing destruction and loss for thousands upon thousands. We went to war and broke that attack completely. The rains are now just perfect and the crops are the largest they have ever been.

We did the same thing in Andhra Pradesh stopping years of drought. It is now one of the most prosperous areas of that region. It is good to be able to do these things telling the world you are doing them in the name of Jesus. This convinces them that this is real. It is good to heal back aches, but it is also good to control the weather.

Sickness and Disease: The Activity of Demons

If we are willing God can teach us these things. According to scripture all sicknesses and all diseases are directly attributed to the activity of demons. Did you read that carefully? Try it again. According to scripture all sickness and all disease are directly attributed to demons. There may be a demon in the person. There may be a demon attacking the person. You will find that Jesus continually rebuked sicknesses. The same Greek word is used when he rebuked sicknesses, when he rebuked the demonized, and when he rebuked the demonically attributed storms.

Let me also say that Jesus did not pray for people. Instead, he spoke a word of commandment into their situation. Frequently, he rebuked a demon. He also rebuked a sickness. He also rebuked adverse demonically caused physical weather patterns. It is the same word. It was a word of authority. The authority came out of the prayer life he nurtured.

When Simon's mother-in-law became ill he rebuked the demon. A few verses later Jesus is on the Sea of Galilee and there is a demonic storm. The exact same word is used when he rebuked the storm. The storms immediately stopped.

We find that demons are resident within people and they need casting out. If they are attacking people then they need to be rebuked and sent away. Certain high ranking demons are stubborn and require a greater authority to cast them out. Authority and faith only come through a life of prayer and fasting.

Tomorrow night we will have a time of impartation. I am absolutely confident that if you are willing to receive then God is willing to give you something. But you must go into a school of faith and be trained to move from one degree to another. The bible tells me that I can do the works that Jesus did. I have not come there yet, but I will not be satisfied until I have achieved this. It is clear in the bible that I can live this way. He cast out demons with a word. He healed everyone who came to him. I know I have not come that far yet. However, I am much closer to it now than I was twenty years ago.

I have also made more progress in the last two years than in the previous thirty years. I am learning something new every few weeks because I am learning to learn. I am willing to be trained. I am willing to step out. I am willing to do things I have never done before. I am willing to make mistakes and learn from them. But I have seen some of the most fantastic miracles in my life in the last few months.

You can start on this road tomorrow. You don't have to stay where you are, 'I have a healing gift.' You may have a healing gift but you don't have his healing gift yet. Thank God for what you have, but don't be satisfied with what you have. If you can heal backs then praise the Lord. Press on

until you can get cripples to jump out of their wheel-chairs. Let them bring the dead corpses into our meetings and have them come alive.

I don't intend to retire. At some point I will die fighting, but I will not die in an old person's home.

The Absolute Foundation: Personal Prayer Life

I want to say something else that I cannot develop fully here. The absolute foundation for moving in ever increasing miracles, signs, and healing is an effective prayer life. This is not our subject. We have talked about this before. There is teaching you can access. My passion is that you become doers of the word and not hearers only. The absolute foundation is an effective personal prayer life where you pray alone with God. To become effective you need at least one hour a day alone with God in order to grow.

The Holy Spirit will train and teach you how to become an effective prayer. Jesus is the great intercessor. He still lives just to make intercession. He lives to make intercession for us. But he needs human beings to pray through in order to bring his will and kingdom on earth. If you are willing then he will take your humanity and use it as his prayer chamber. He will come inside you and use your humanity like his own personal prayer chamber. Through you he will pray prayers that the Father must answer.

If you read through the gospel of Luke then you find twelve occasions where Jesus is praying. This is your home work for next week (See Alan's message "A People of Prayer"). If you read through Luke then note these twelve places. I can leave these notes behind in English if you like. You can study them after I leave. The purpose for studying this material is to learn to pray like Jesus.

The Prayer of Faith

Turn to James 5:15. Here it says,

“And the prayer offered in faith will make (sozo) the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.”

Sometimes people cannot be healed until they deal with the sin that caused the sickness. There is a close connection between certain sins and certain physical conditions. Bitterness toward people and arthritis have a very close connection. This is not always the case but it is often the case. Sometimes healing is prevented because of sin. But this verse says that the prayer of faith will heal the sick. The Lord will raise them up. It does not suggest any other alternative. God will do it.

It must be a prayer of faith. It must be more than a prayer of sympathy. It cannot be a prayer of pleading desperation. It must be a prayer of faith. That faith must rest in Jesus alone. You cannot pray to God as one of many different options you are trying at the same time.

The only biblical reason for failure in prayer is unbelief. All true faith comes to us as a gift from God. We cannot create faith. We can only gratefully receive it as a gift from God. God will give faith to those who are prepared to use it.

In Romans 12:1 it says to give him your body as a living sacrifice. Verse 2 says to get your mind renewed to think like God. Then in verse 3 it says to have a sober assessment of how much faith Christ has given you. Jesus will give you faith to the degree that you move out and use it. If you don't use it then you lose it. After receiving faith then you must move quickly to go and do something with it. You must complete the purpose for which the faith was given.

Prayers of faith must be accompanied by acts of faith. You must go and do something with the faith you have received. You must believe what you have within you is Almighty God. Jesus said this. He said, "If you love me, if you keep my commandments, if you obey what I say to you then the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit will come and we will make our residence in you. We will use your humanity the way we used the humanity of Jesus. We can do through your humanity whatever we did through his humanity."

You must believe that the triune God has come to live within you. Don't play games. This is either true or it is not true. If you have died to yourself then he will come and live in you. If you are keeping yourself alive then there is no room for God to come and live in you at the same time.

Two people cannot drive a car at the same time. One must be the passenger and one must be the driver. God says, "When I get into you then you will be a passenger in your own life. Just watch me as I use your humanity to do amazing things. If you take charge of yourself then there is no room for me to do my works. It is either you or me. If you die then I can live in you. If you live then I cannot live in you. If you live then you must attempt and handle things yourself. If you die then I can come and do it myself."

This must be absolutely settled in your life. Once this has become your settled way of life then Almighty God can come through you to do his mighty works. This is the way it flows.

Factors that Produce a Flow of Miracles

I want to spend the rest of our time on the factors that produce a flow of miracles. One of the things that Jesus could not do was show the kingdom in plurality. He could not show the kingdom in the power of community because he was one person. For that reason he longed for the day of the church when he could show the power of the kingdom in community. He could not wait to go to the cross, die, and rise again because he knew the kingdom could not come in fullness until this was accomplished.

From his perspective, while he was on earth, the kingdom of God was a limited and restricted manifestation. However, once he had died upon the cross, dealt with sin, dealt with the devil, rose from the dead, was glorified and sat down on his throne, in his risen life he was a million times more powerful than he was in his earthly life. Through the church he has a corporate body to move through rather than one human body. He couldn't wait for that day to come. He knew he would be much more powerful in his risen life than in his earthly life. He would have more room to move because he could move simultaneously through a million people at the same time.

I just received an email from my wife in San Antonio saying that incredible things are happening there. I received an email from a brother in India about the breaking out of God's Spirit in areas once resistant to the gospel. I received a great email from Kenya about incredible miracles taking place. I receive emails from every part of the world.

We were just in Zagreb with wonderful things breaking out there. All over the place Jesus is moving. But he is moving through the corporate body of the church. He is no longer located in one geographical location, but his power is being expressed through a body of people who no longer live for themselves but for him.

We must come to the place where he can move in our corporeity. When you have learned to be powerful on your own then you can come together with others who are powerful on their own. That corporate praying is multiplied in power over and over again. When two people come together it is ten times as powerful. When ten people come together they are 1,000 times powerful. If one can chase a thousand then ten can chase a trillion. If one hundred come together then you can work out the power in mathematics as homework. It is a large number.

On our own we are pretty good, but together it is even better. The first thing we learn is how to be effective in our corporate prayers. We also need the leadership of those who have authority which includes the apostles. It is not limited to the apostles.

In the early church the deacons were more powerful than Reinhard Bonnke. When Philip went to Samaria he was more powerful than Benny Hinn. He was just a deacon. This was the expression of the corporate life of the body. As we are learning to increase the power of corporate prayer in San Antonio there is greater power upon me because I am moving out from that body.

The same will happen to Franz, Gerhard, and others who will move out from here. Franz might be 1,000 km away in distance, but they will still be connected in spirit and the power will continue to flow through them. The same is true of Richard. His church is behind him in prayer. They are participators in the miracles that take place through his ministry. The first dimension is the power of the corporate prayer life. We need to develop this. This produces faith and a flow of mighty miracles. On the other hand, if chronic unbelief rules even Jesus cannot do great works.

Put Unbelief Out

The next thing we read in scripture is that Jesus always removed unbelief. He always threw people out who had unbelief. When he came to Jairus's daughter who was dead Jesus said, "She is only asleep" (Mark 5:38ff; Luke 8:51ff). People were weeping and wailing. It was all over as far as they were concerned. When Jesus said, "She is only asleep", they ridiculed him. They laughed at him. Subsequently, Jesus put all the doubters out. He left only Peter, James, and John in the room with him.

After Jesus left his disciples in glory we find that Peter had learned how to imitate Jesus. There was a wonderful servant lady Dorcas who suddenly died (Acts 9:36-42). Everyone was weeping and wailing thinking it was all over for her. Peter does the same thing as Jesus. He put everyone

out of the place. He got rid of all the unbelief. Then he went to his knees and did exactly what Jesus did. The result is that Dorcas came to life.

When Jesus threw out all the money changers in the temple it suddenly became a place where people received healing (Matt. 21:12-14). It might not be unbelief but sin can also stop the flow of miracles. A lack of financial integrity can stop the flow of God's healing. If we produce the right atmosphere then people can walk into our presence and receive healing. It is not just in the meeting either. The power goes with the people who have spent time in his atmosphere.

We have a permanent prayer centre in San Antonio. We have our own facilities now. We are gradually increasing until there will be a group praying day and night every day of the week. For five years we've had an army of intercessors that pray day and night in different places of the city. They chose an hour and they pray in their own home at that particular time. This has been very good, powerful, and effective. However, when we start coming together in the same place there is something about that dynamic of corporate prayer that is even more powerful. We have a room that is a permanent place of prayer not used for anything else. When you walk into that room these days you can immediately feel the presence of God.

I am not an angel seeing person. I wish I was. Those who are angel seers tell me that angels are all over that place. I wish I could see them. Do you ever feel that way? I can sense their presence sometimes, but I haven't seen them yet. I think God likes to share his gifts among his children so that we need each other. We've had people walk into that room and the power of God hit them immediately with nothing said or done to them.

This same presence we want to develop here. We want people to walk into his presence and be immediately hit with his power. Also, when your leaders go out from here they will carry the same anointing with them in a way they never carried it before. Let's have an ambition that by this time next year we will be unrecognizable due to the power of the prayer meetings we have. May God give us a strategy by which we can develop 24 hour prayer 7 days a week.

This faith race we are running is not a 100 meter sprint. Instead, we are running a marathon. We must make it to the winning post. It is not enough to be enthusiastic for one or two months. We must run for the long haul. We must pray carefully regarding what is practical and realistic for ourselves in regards to prayer. How many hours a week can you give realistically for prayer? How many hours are you willing to give, week in week out, month in month out, without fail?

The Power of Two

There are special occasions for prayer when we can make an extra effort to be involved. But the continuous life of prayer is like a battering ram that breaks everything which stands in the way. It smashes everything. The greatest example of this in church history is the 102 year prayer meeting conducted by the Moravians. They had a community of 600 people. There were times when they came together for larger corporate prayer meetings. But the driving force was simply two people coming together every hour of every day continuously for 102 years.

When I traced the history of this I was shocked to discover how few people existed in this community. The power of this prayer movement was the power of two. That was the minimum. Sometimes there were more, but at most times there were only two. But they kept going. Before long, Europe was transformed by the power of two in agreement. This community of 600 sent out 100 missionaries and supported them to travel all over the world. This means that every sixth adult supported a missionary full time to move out and spread the gospel of the kingdom. That is amazing.

John Wesley was on a ship travelling with Moravians towards America in 1734. Wesley was a God-fearing minister but he was not yet born-again. He came back to Britain in 1738 and the Moravians were having a prayer meeting in London. Wesley visited the prayer meeting. He was so impacted by the lives of these people that he saw on the ship. He was powerfully converted in 1738. He began a holy club in Oxford University which led to the Great Wesleyan Revival that later shook the world.

In 1839 a mighty evangelical revival broke out in approximately 20 different countries simultaneously. This revival also shook the world. It produced what is now called the Great Evangelical Awakening. This awakening went all around the world but started in 20 countries simultaneously. This is when the Moravians stopped their prayer meeting. They set the world on-fire through their prayers.

Conditions for a Continuous Flow of the Miraculous

The following thing we need is an anointed person who has fulfilled the conditions to be a channel of God's power. I am inviting you to say, "Lord, I want to be one of those persons." You will be if you fulfil the conditions. I will read the conditions quickly. You can pray over these things yourself. The conditions are:

1. He has received real faith from God.

We must remember that faith comes from God. It is not something we can generate within ourselves. You must be a good receiver in order to receive ever-increasing faith. You have to use what you have in order to receive more.

2. He has experienced a definite impartation or anointing of power from God.

At the end of this series I know God has given me something to give to you. God is not a theological doctrine to believe in. Instead, he is life and the power of his life heals the sick, casts out demons, and flows with miraculous power.

3. He lives a holy life under the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

This discipline is not law but it is a discipline. I arise early every morning because the Spirit of God has trained me to do so. Just like Jesus I pray in those early hours. This has become the driving force of my life. The discipline of the Spirit is different than law. But there are many external

similarities. The driving force is God the Spirit rather than a rule book given to you by some religious organization.

The second thing is that God's discipline is designed just for you. What he tells you to do or not to do will not be the same necessarily as what he says to someone else.

I cannot move into all the detail of this teaching. This is the power of the New Covenant we have in Jesus Christ. If the Spirit says, "Don't do that" then I don't do it. Other people may be free to do it, but I am not. For them it is O.K., but for me it is disobedience. I have learned to live by what the Spirit says to me while at the same time not judging or criticizing other people. I don't judge because they are not doing it. I don't grumble to God as to why he's making me do this and not making others do it. That is not my business.

God may also change the conditions with time. He may take you to another level. My whole desire is to be obedient to the Holy Spirit.

4. He lives in intimate fellowship with the Father.

There are whole sets of tapes on this subject. If you don't know this experience then make sure you come into that experience.

5. You are able to hear his voice.

I could spend hours on this, but you must learn to hear God for yourself. The more you obey him the sharper your hearing becomes. If you disobey God then you will lose your ability to hear God. The writer to the Hebrews said that believers had lost their ability to hear through disobedience. They became dull of hearing.

Jesus' spiritual hearing was extremely accurate and totally fine tuned because of his obedience. Jesus did not hear his Father well because he was God. Instead, it was the obedience in his humanity that produced perfect hearing.

I have no problem hearing God's voice. I am careful to obey.

6. He obeys like a little child everything God tells him to do.

You don't need to understand everything God says. Instead, you simply have to do it. I have learned to do things that don't make sense to me. This is when I have seen the most amazing miracles. I just obey what seemed to me to be ridiculous. I don't have time to tell you the stories but this is the truth.

7. He is filled with the compassion of Jesus.

This can be a powerful driving force in your life. You allow God to put his feelings upon you for a lost sick people. You are no longer free to do what you want, but you are a prisoner to those

feelings of compassion. You can't become a professional healer. Instead, you must feel the way God feels about them in your ministry.

Some of the greatest miracles I have seen are when I felt the pure compassion of God flow through me to that needy person. The bible says that faith works through love. Faith works through love. The greater your love the greater your faith. The level of your compassion will be directly related to the level of power flowing through you.

8. He is willing to pay the price and the cost of carrying this anointing.

Look at Jesus for a moment. He gave himself for needy people. Jesus had no life of his own. There is a price to be paid and there is a cost to carrying this kind of anointing. I am willing to pay the price.

9. He is willing to take his share in the suffering that comes with the gospel according to power.

Paul talks about this with his spiritual son, Timothy. He says to him in 2 Timothy 1:6ff, "For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God" I will talk about this later. Timothy was not willing to stir up the gift because of the fear that was in him. Come to verse 8, "So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God."

If you move in the power of God then you will be attacked by demons. You must learn how to handle this. You will be criticized by people. You may do nothing but love people with a desire to help them. But others will hate you for what you do. They will speak against you. Your only response is to bare them without criticizing or judging. There is a price to be paid.

10. He is humble, teachable, and willing to be corrected learning from his mistakes.

I had a man come to me just recently. He said, "I felt God saying to me to go and pray for someone and I did not obey. I was disobedient. What do you think will happen?" I smiled at him and said, "You will definitely go to hell!" That is obviously not true.

I have made my mistakes. Sometimes I stepped out when I should not have. Sometimes I hesitated when I should not have. We are all learning. We are willing to make mistakes and learn from them. We are correctable so that we learn to do better next time. We are in a continuous process of growth and development.

God is not mad at you. You will never find Jesus rebuking someone for trying to be too faith-filled. He never rebuked his disciples for trying to be a miracle worker. The only thing that made him mad was unbelief. It was the people who refused to move out and do something that frustrated him.

11. He is eager to learn and be taught new things by the Spirit of God.

Until you are doing everything like Jesus you still have things to learn. There is always room for improvement. We will do the best we can. We will learn to do better next month.

Be Good Receivers!

In order to see a flow of miracles people must be taught how to receive their healing. The obstacle may be with the person seeking healing. They may not know how to receive. You must teach them how to receive. Sometimes you must break through a wall of unbelief in order to give them the healing in spite of the unbelief. I have been learning this even more strongly in the last few weeks. I realized that it is not enough to be passive when I pray for someone. Instead, I will give them something whether they are able to receive it or not.

I was in India a few weeks ago where they carried a man into the meeting. He was a Hindu lying in a stretcher in the last stage of cancer. He had a large tumour in his stomach and tumours in his bowels. He had not eaten in weeks and he was within a few days of dying. They carried him into the meeting on a stretcher. I went to pray for him. He struggled off his stretcher out of respect for me. The man had no faith at all. He was good as dead as far as he was concerned. God spoke to me and said, "I have a healing to give this man. You must push it into his spirit pass this wall of unbelief." God said, "Force it into him."

I said to the man, "Hear me! You will receive this healing whether you want it or not. I am pushing this healing past your unbelief and into your spirit. You will be healed. Be healed to glorify the name of Jesus! Don't you dare die! Be healed!"

The man stood there totally dazed. I believe I've begun to understand some of the things I have read about Smith Wigglesworth. This is exactly what he was doing. He was not simply giving them the opportunity to be healed. Instead, he was giving them healing. He was going to give it to them whether they liked or not. It was not just their need that was in play. Instead, it was the glory of the name of Jesus at stake.

I forced this healing into this man. He stood there dazed. When I finished praying he laid back down on his stretcher. They carried him off back to his house. Apparently, nothing happened to him. We drove back to Bombay, a six hour journey. After arriving we received a phone call from the pastor of the church where we were. He said, "Do you remember the man you prayed for who had cancer? His friends took him back home. He went back into bed and laid there. Three hours later he suddenly sat up in bed. He said, 'I am hungry' When they looked at him all the tumours had disappeared. They said that he has already eaten five meals since your departure."

I received another email a few days later explaining that he was completely healed confirmed by the doctors. I received another email one month later that he was back at his old profession totally fit. Even more glorious is that he is an on-fire-for-Jesus believer!

I have learned something from this experience. I will not be a passive participant in God's miraculous power. Instead, you are going to get healed!

There is a great example in scripture on how to teach people how to receive healing. It was the woman who had an issue of blood or haemorrhaging. She was going to get healed. There were all kinds of reasons why it was impossible for her. Instead, she went and grabbed her healing. She sucked the healing out of Jesus like a vacuum cleaner. I've seen people do the same thing to me.

There was a woman attending a healing seminar in Waco, Texas. She had a very bad case of advance Parkinson's disease. She came to every session of the seminar. She needed 15 minutes to get to the front of the sanctuary where she took her seat for each teaching session. When she finally sat down she felt exhausted. She listened to every session. I taught all day Friday. The final session concluded at 12:00 p.m. on Saturday. We announced a power evening of signs and wonders for Saturday night. When I finished teaching that morning session she said, "I'm ready! I want my healing now!" I said, "Let's wait for tonight. The atmosphere will be so much better." She said, "No, I want it now!"

I thought I better pray for her otherwise I would never get to lunch. I laid my hands on her, the power of God hit her, and she lay on the floor. Within seconds she leapt off the floor and began running all over the meeting room. It was a large hall. She went up 8 steps and ran around the platform crying out, "I am healed! I am healed!" We looked carefully and she still had a slight tremor in one hand. However, by the evening even the tremor had vanished! Hallelujah.

I want you to know that this healing was not about me. It was about her. She sucked the healing out of me like a vacuum cleaner. If we have all these three things together: an atmosphere of a praying believing community of God's people; people who fulfil the conditions to be a channel for God's power to flow; and people who know how to receive, then we will see miracles.

Anyone of these ingredients can work on their own, but it is more difficult. However, when all three are flowing together there will be a continuous flow of the miraculous. When a person is healed then the demonic activity of that spirit stops and does not continue. The healing brings an end to that demon's destructive influence. However, this does not always mean a restoration of the physical damage that had already been done. This may happen more slowly or may not happen at all. There are examples of this in scripture.

The miraculous occurs when there is a total restoration of all the physical damage as well as the end of the particular disease. In Jesus' own hometown he was able to heal only a few people. That is what the bible says (Matt. 13:53-58). More accurately it says he could do no miracle there, "And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith." We don't want to stay at the healing level. We want to move to the miracle level. We will learn and pay the price to get there.

Next, I want to teach on impartation and anointing. I want you to know what these are, how they work, how it is given, how you receive, and what you do with it once you have received it. My purpose is that out from you and your communities should flow continuous miracles. This is not for the leaders only, but for anyone who believes. We don't want to watch and admire a few people with the gift while we sit and watch as spectators. Instead, God wants this to become the very life of his whole body.

God has already spoken to us about the hindrance of our mind and unbelief. Now God wants us to move in the other direction. Say,

“Lord, I open my spirit. Pour out upon me your faith. When you give me faith then I will do something with it. I will step out. I will take the appropriate action in harmony with the purpose for which the faith was given. I will learn to imitate you, Lord Jesus. I will imitate the great men and women of God in scripture, and those who are modelling these things today. I will stop being a spectator. I will fulfil the conditions.

Corporately, we give ourselves to become a powerful house of prayer. Individually, I will make a serious decision about a long-term commitment to this house of prayer. I will give you so many hours a week as you decide. I will keep it up week in and week out so that this place throbs with the power of this prayer life. We will learn to become a praying community. The angels will come and work with us in a new and powerful way.

As an individual, I want to qualify to be one who is a channel of your power. As Alan went through the list I made the decision to obey every condition. I will enrol tonight in the school of faith. I will be trained by your Spirit to be a channel through whom the power of God can flow.

Finally, help us to teach people how to become great receivers. May the unbelief in them pose no obstacle. Teach us how to deal with their unbelief as well as our own unbelief. We want to see a continuous flow of miracles that the name of Jesus might be glorified. It is only your name that is of any consequence. It is only your name to whom all the glory belongs. We want your name to be known in this city in a way that it has never been known before. Your name is healing. Your name is might. Your name is power. Be forever glorified in the heavens and on earth! Amen!”

The Crippling Power of Unbelief, Part IV

Now is the time to receive the equipping that will make us the kind of people God wants us to be. I will move through a series of statements as fast as I can. I want you to be absolutely honest as to whether you are in a position where you can say, “Yes, I receive that. That has happened to me.” Some things you go on receiving and there is no end to it. However, there are certain things where there is a definite beginning.

There was a day when the Holy Spirit gave me, supernaturally, an ability to pray that I did not have before. You find the same thing is true with the early disciples. None of them could pray and they fell asleep when they tried to pray. However, when that ability came then they could pray.

If this has not happened to you then it can happen to you now. There will be a moment when I will breathe on you. That is what God told me to do. Jesus did not lay hands on everyone. Instead, he just breathed on them. He said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. In exactly the same way the Father has sent me, so now I am sending you” (John 20:21-22). When Jesus did that the disciples could suddenly pray. However, it was still necessary to cooperate with the Holy Spirit for that ability to become practical and real. The Holy Spirit has his responsibility and you have your responsibility.

It’s a Cooperation between You and God

It says in Philippians 2:12-13,

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling...”

This puts the responsibility on you to do something. Then it goes on to say,

“For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

I usually describe this like power assisted steering on a big truck. If you turn on the engine then the strength of power assisted steering is available. A small girl can get into that enormous truck and turn the steering wheel and the wheels will turn. It is not really her doing it, but it is the power of the assisted steering mechanism doing it. However, she must grab the steering wheel and make the indication of the direction she wants to go. Then the power kicks in to make it happen. She must take the initiative by indicating with the steering wheel where she wants to go. Then the power of the mechanism makes it possible.

You never see a truck driver get into his vehicle and say, “I believe for this vehicle to turn right.” They don’t say, “Dear God, give me the power to turn right now.” Instead, he grabs hold of the steering wheel and turns in the direction he wants to go. But it is not his power making the turn happen. Instead, it is his will that allows the power to be released.

If you have the will to pray then God will give you the power to pray. Some of our songs put too much responsibility upon God. Often, I want to rewrite the songs as we sing them because they are not accurate. If you want to break the idols in your life then you don’t sit there like a dummy waiting for God to do it for you. Instead, you act in faith and exercise your will and the power of

God comes in to work with you to make it happen. There must be this partnership. There is a human responsibility of our own and there is a divine equipping that comes from God. We must learn to work together with God!

Jesus is the perfect example of this. It tells us plainly that Jesus never did anything on his own initiative (John 8:28). Instead, the Father and the Spirit did everything through him (John 12:49). However, at the same time Jesus was an active partner with the Father and the Spirit to make things happen. He was the perfect worker together with God the Father. Father and Son did things together. The Son never initiated anything. But he obeyed everything the Father told him to do.

Receive the Ability to Pray

The first thing we may need is the ability to pray from the Holy Spirit. When I finish preaching we will come back into a time of worship. I will be looking for God to be doing things with you and in you while we stand and openly worship the Lord. Be ready to receive.

Receive faith from God

The second thing you need is a gift from the Holy Spirit. I have taught this carefully before so I will not repeat it now. There are two spirits. One spirit comes from the devil and produces supernatural unbelief. The other spirit comes from God and produces supernatural faith. It is not enough to get rid of the unbelief. It is now necessary to be filled with faith. This is a gift from God. I am totally confident that God will give you a gift of faith now. Are you ready to receive it?

After having received it he will almost immediately present a situation where you must move in faith. The bible says that faith without works is dead (Jam. 2:26). Faith is given to you in order to do something. God will present you with a situation that requires faith. You must then step out and use the faith that God has given you. Don't listen to reason. Don't respond to what your eyes and senses say. Listen to God and step out in faith to what he is saying in your heart. He will develop your faith and you will become more and more faith-filled.

The bible clearly teaches a progression of faith. It says in scripture that the righteous must live by their faith (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11). There is no choice in the matter. It says in Romans 1:15-17 that we move from faith to faith,

*“So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed **from faith to faith**: as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’”*

There is a progression. The more you use your faith the more God will give you. God will present you with bigger and bigger situations that require more and more faith. He will use situations like the need to be physically healed. You may have some particular need that requires fulfilment. God often uses the financial realm to train our faith. He will also tell us to step out and do something that we have never done before.

For example, how many people have you personally led to salvation in Christ in this last year? If you are barren in this area then that barrenness can be brought to an end tonight. You may say, "I am too shy. I am too embarrassed or fearful." Get out of it tonight! You may say, "I am not an extrovert. Instead, I am an introvert." By faith, become an extrovert for Jesus!

Certain characteristics in my life have completely changed which is a total violation of my original personality.

My youngest son, David, was in a large conference where I was speaking in England. I spoke on Jesus, the one-by-one fisherman. The call upon his disciples was to teach them how to become fishers of men. He said, "If you mimic me then you will become a fisher of men."

At that time in his life, my son had never led someone to Christ. He felt terribly convicted. I said, "If you want this virus of catching men then I will give it to you tonight. It is very contagious." I said, "Line up at the front. I will touch you for one second. You will receive this virus and it will be incurable."

My son was about to attend University College in London to begin his university training. He came forward with hundreds of other people. I simply touched him for one second.

When my son went to college, a very anti-Christian hostile college, he led his first person to Christ in the first week. By the end of his three years in college they saw three hundred students come to Christ. He was the leader of it all.

You can change tonight. You need a gift of faith. This will produce all kinds of various works.

Receive an Anointing

The third thing to receive is an anointing. The bible uses two words and I want to explain their differences. You receive an anointing from the Holy Spirit. This is the power of the Spirit coming upon you for a specific purpose. There is no human agency. God comes and touches you in a way so that you are anointed to do something you could not do before.

There are many examples of this in scripture. For example, Jesus himself stood in the waters of the Jordan and was baptized. The Spirit came upon him. He said of himself, "The Lord anointed me" (Luke 4:18ff; Is. 61:1ff). Jesus then lists what this anointing was for.

An anointing can come upon you to make you suddenly effective in evangelism. The same thing happened to the early church in the upper room when the Spirit fell upon them on the day of Pentecost. It was an anointing. There was no human agency and no hands were laid upon them. Instead, the Spirit came directly upon them. This happened again in Acts 4 when the church was experiencing extreme opposition. They had a powerful prayer meeting asking for two things:

- Grant us boldness to speak your word
- May signs and wonders be done in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:29-30).

As a result, the Spirit fell upon them. It was an anointing very similar to the day of Pentecost. It also had the same immediate effect. They became bold to speak about Jesus and a flow of mighty miracles began.

Paul also prayed for a group of believers in Acts 19 and the Spirit came upon them. In my own life I can remember three or four occasions when the Spirit came upon me to equip me for a particular purpose. The first time this happened I was lying in bed. The Spirit of God came upon me and anointed me. I had this incredible encounter with God that I can still remember. That was when I was baptized in the Holy Spirit. I had three subsequent anointings where no human agency was involved. They happened in meetings where we were simply praising and worshipping God. I felt the power of God come upon me in a particular way. Each of those anointings were designed to make me more effective in a developing ministry of healing.

I received an anointing to heal cancer. It is an anointing to wage war against the spirit of cancer. I received an anointing to deal with the HIV virus and Aids victims.

We had seven people come forward in a meeting in India several weeks ago. A medical doctor had just tested them and they were all HIV positive. I laid hands on them because of this anointing. When they were tested shortly thereafter they were HIV negative. I had a wonderful medical doctor working with me and he confirmed these things through medical tests.

I could tell you many stories of people who were dying of Aids that are now totally healed because I received an anointing. This is the way the Lord will transform the gay and lesbian community. It will not happen by condemning them. Instead, the Lord will save them from that which is literally killing them. He will transform them into totally new creations in Jesus Christ.

I love these anointings. God knows if he gives them to me then I will do something with them. I will not keep them in a glass case to admire. Instead, I will move out and use them.

You may receive an anointing tonight. It could be one of these anointings or anything else the Lord wants to give. It might be something personal for you, very different from what the Lord gives the person next to you.

Sometimes by an anointing you receive a spontaneous healing without anyone touching you. I have seen this happen many times.

Receive an Impartation

The second word I want to explain is impartation. This is not the same as anointing and you must not confuse the two. An anointing is something spontaneous from God the Spirit without any human agency. The anointing empowers you for a particular purpose. This is not the same as the Spirit giving you the ability to pray.

Also, an anointed man or woman can lay hands on someone else and there is an impartation of something from them to that person. The hands are laid on as an act of impartation. It can give

them an authority for their ministry function. It can bring them into a new place of effectiveness in a gift they may already possess. Something comes upon them that does not leave them.

An example of this is when Peter and John went down to the Christians in Samaria and they laid hands on them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17). Ananias laid hands on Saul just after he was converted and Saul received his sight (Acts 9:17). He was also empowered for his apostolic ministry through the laying on of hands.

We also read in 1 Timothy 4:14 that the presbytery laid hands on Timothy to impart a gift that came through a prophetic message,

“Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.”

We read in 2 Timothy 1:6 that Paul laid hands on Timothy in order to impart something to him,

“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”

In both of Paul's letters Timothy is urged to stir up the gift that was given to him through impartation.

Reinhard Bonnke's Push into Evangelism

A great powerful man of God named George Jeffries was used in Britain for the great Pentecostal revival in the early 1900s. God used him most powerfully in the 1930s. He was used to shake the nation beginning a denomination called the Elim Pentecostal Church. Tens of thousands of people were saved and healed through his ministry.

Reinhard Bonnke went to a bible school in Wales in the late 1940s following the Second World War. When Reinhard finished his bible training he had three days for a quick tour of London before returning to Germany. While he was walking the streets of London he noticed a brass plaque that said, "George Jeffries". He thought, "Could this be the same man I have read about? He must be very old now."

Reinhard went to the door of the house and cautiously knocked on the door. A formidable lady stood at the door and said, "What do you want?" Suddenly a voice from behind the woman spoke and said, "Let the young man come in. God has been speaking to me about him." Reinhard was led inside. George Jeffries prayed all over him. Jeffries laid his hands on Reinhard and imparted an anointing to young Reinhard. The next day George Jeffries died. This was the last thing George Jeffries did before he went to glory.

Reinhard Bonnke went back to Germany. He was later sent out as a missionary by the Apostolic Faith Mission. He worked in South Africa. Reinhard pastored a church of about 200 people for approximately ten years. Everyone said, "In your area the devil is very strong. You have a church

of 200? That is fantastic in your area. You are doing very well.ö For ten years Reinhard Bonnke pastored a church of 200 people. This anointing was inside him, but he never stirred it up.

Later, Reinhard prepared a series of evangelistic meetings. He hired the local soccer stadium hoping that at least 1,000 people might attend. He asked an evangelist to come in and preach those meetings because Reinhard Bonnke did not believe he could move in evangelism.

The evangelist came. As was his custom he was praying that afternoon for the evening meeting. God spoke to the evangelist and said, öGo home. Don't take these meetings. Tell Reinhard Bonnke that he must preach those meetings.ö The evangelist boarded a plane and flew back to his home. Reinhard, who had hired the stadium, did not know what to do. He was pushed into his first evangelistic meeting.

Reinhard did not believe he had certain capabilities because he was bound by his apostolic church background. He was not prepared to be what the anointing wanted to make him. His evangelistic ministry began in this clumsy way. Two thousand people was a great attendance in those days.

I could go on telling you all the details of this man's journey. I know him intimately. I have watched him develop from a pastor of 200 to preaching to 1,500,000 people at one time. The reason this happened is that every time God pushed him he was obedient to the push.

Reinhard's next step was to develop a full time prayer ministry associated with his evangelistic meetings. Some of you may have heard of Suzette Hatting. She was an evangelist in her own right in those early days, but she stopped that dimension of ministry in order to give herself to full-time prayer. The power of that prayer ministry took the Bonnke Evangelistic Association from a few thousands to ten of thousands in a very short period of time. She became a mighty warrior intercessor. It was the joining of these two ministries that caused the fantastic breakthrough Reinhard has seen throughout Africa.

Reinhard Bonnke's Push into Healing

Reinhard also had a Zulu Africa pastor who had the anointing for healing. He was a South Africa Zulu whom God had powerfully converted. Reinhard never prayed for people to be healed. Instead, he preached and this African brother prayed for people to be healed. Later, they were separated due to political circumstances. Suddenly, Reinhard lost his healer.

Once again, God pushed Reinhard into the healing ministry. He began to pray for the sick and the anointing began to work. The anointing had been there all the time. Why do you think George Jeffries was told by God to spend his last evening on earth anointing this young man? There was a powerful mysterious impartation from Jeffries to Bonnke.

If I can get near a man or woman of God then I want what they have. I've had Reinhard Bonnke lay hands on me. I've used every chance I could. When I move in evangelism in India then you will see the power of that anointing. I've had Benny Hinn lay hands on me. If there is something to get then I'm going to get it! You must develop the same hunger and courage to go after what God wants to give.

Timothy had hands laid upon him, but he was not doing anything about what he received because of fear. Therefore, Paul rebukes him. He says, "Timothy, stir up the gift that is within you through the laying on of my hands."

The anointing may come through a direct encounter with God. But it may also come through direct impartation. In either case, it will lay dormant within you until you yourself stir it up and put to work what God has put within you.

When these things happen you may have a great remarkable experience. You may feel something wonderful. But however wonderful the experience may be two or three days later you won't feel anything. You will feel absolutely normal. If you are going to step out and use the gift then it must be an act of faith believing in what you have received. This is also my experience.

When I met my first HIV person dying of AIDS I did not say, "Oh, I feel the anointing!" Instead, I moved in faith regarding what I had received weeks earlier. When I met my first person dying of cancer after receiving that anointing I did not feel something overwhelming upon me. I felt absolutely normal. I stepped out in faith to use what I believe God had given me. I cannot stress this enough.

You will make mistakes. You will not see 100% success. I have spoken with all the great healing ministries. I have read the testimonies of Katherine Kuhlman and other great healing personalities. All of them have unexplained mysteries of why healing did not work in some cases. They simply had no answer for the failure. Don't focus on the failure because as you progress you will become more and more proficient in what you possess.

The thing that challenges me about Jesus is that he healed everyone who came to him (Matt. 8:16; 12:15). Then Jesus said, "If you know the Father the way I know the Father then you will do the works that I do. You will even do greater works than these" (John 14:12). I am not there yet, but I am much nearer now than I was ten years ago. I am much nearer now than I was two years ago. I am experiencing new things that I have never experienced before in these last six months. I am determined to keep pressing on. I will not allow the explainable stop me.

I have seen the most amazing miracles. I have seen things that absolutely surprised me. The greatest surprises came when I felt the worst. I can't explain that. It is so important that you do not react to your feelings. I can't run on experience. I don't even let the environment affect me as it has in the past. I will press through and press through. I will become more and more like Jesus as much as I can in this life.

Summary

Let me summarize a few things. You can receive an anointing. You can receive an impartation. The differences between these two experiences have already been explained. This anointing or impartation can happen more than once. The important thing is to step out and begin to use by faith what God has given you. Step out and by faith use what God has given you. You will be amazed what God will do through you.

The word that is frequently translated "Follow me" is the Greek word *mimetes*. This means to imitate or more accurately to mimic. Paul said to the Thessalonians, "You became mimics of me and of the Lord. As a result you are doing the same miracles which I first did among you" (1 Thess. 1).

Paul said to the Corinthian church, "Mimic me as I mimic Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). However, they never did this. They were not obedient. They never saw the flow of the miraculous as did other churches and regions. So learn to mimic someone who is mimicking Christ! If they are further on the road toward the perfection of Christ then they can be a model for you. I don't mean you imitate their mannerisms. But imitate the Spirit, faith, and works that they do. You can do it in your way. Be yourself. Let Benny Hinn be Benny Hinn. I don't want to put on the same fancy suits that he wears. That is simply not me. Let Benny Hinn be Benny Hinn and let Alan Vincent be Alan Vincent. I won't be Reinhard Bonnke although I admire him tremendously. But I will imitate these models. As I read history I will imitate the heroes of the faith. Most of all, I will imitate the models that God has given in scripture, especially the model of the Lord Jesus.

Peter and Paul are also two great models in scripture. Notice what they did and how they did it. Listen to every instruction they gave to their disciples at the time and imitate them. That is why I started to lay hands on clothes and handkerchiefs because that is what Paul did. God told me to do it. God said, "Imitate Paul. He is an apostle. You are an apostle. Follow him." Therefore, I started to do it. We now have hundreds of miracles documented from around the world simply because I was obedient.

Therefore, you step out by faith to imitate the good models God has provided and you learn from your mistakes. This is the recipe for growth. You will find many scriptures that teach this progression. You will not immediately become like Jesus in some instantaneous miracle. But you can start on the road to get there. You will move from faith to faith. You will go from grace to grace and from glory to glory. God wants the glory of his anointing upon your life to increase.

When you make mistakes, ask the Lord what you did wrong and what was incorrect. If there is a human agent involved, then apologize to them. But don't stop. Move on and learn to do better next time. Then you will grow. You will grow in grace.

This was the last exhortation of Peter. He said, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). I want to close with this. Here is the greatest gift you can have, but it is very possessive. This gift is the zeal of the Lord. You can quench the zeal of the Lord. If you say, "The demands are too great. I won't live at that level. That is asking too much" then you will quench the zeal of the Lord in your life. If you are willing then he will put the very zeal of the Lord upon you and you will burn like fire all the time.

It says in Isaiah 9 concerning the continual advancement of the kingdom,

"Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and

righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.”

The zeal of the Lord means you are totally consumed with this increase and advancement of his kingdom and government. You simply don't have time for nice pursuits like sports or other hobbies. Instead, every time you go into your prayer closet the fire burns again. You simply cannot stop it.

I don't want to stop it. It is possible to quench the Spirit. You can deliberately say, "I don't want to live that way. That is too demanding. I want to enjoy other things as well." You can choose to quench this zeal. It will die out. You will become lethargic because you chose to quench that Spirit. I never intend to do that in my life. The zeal of the Lord keeps me going.

Struggling with All His Energy!

This is my final statement. Go to Colossians 1. Here is Paul's testimony. It says in verse 27ff,

“To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery,”

In other words, there is a great passion to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, those who do not know God. It is not just in the church, but out there in the world where they do not know anything. Here is the mystery,

“Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (v. 27).

Can you feel the passion of this?

Come now to verse 28ff,

“We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.”

Paul said, "I labor according to the supernatural energy that God keeps pouring into me." Paul was supernaturally energized by the Spirit of God. This is not human energy or strong will. This is the zeal of God.

If you read the details of the life of Jesus and what kind of days he had it would be enough to make you feel tired just reading it. He ministered to a multitude of people. Everyone he prayed for was healed. Every demon was cast out. Then he prayed all night. He came back to do the same thing the following day.

All you ever find Jesus doing in terms of rest or sabbaticals is this: he disengaged for two days of refreshment and then went back into the fight again. He never had a sabbatical. He never took

months off. Apart from the beginning of his ministry we never find him going away on 40 day fasts.