

Receiving the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

By Bill Subritzky

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Dedication

To my dear wife Pat,
who has been such a faithful helpmate
over many years.

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Foreword

Bill Subritzky is a layman, in the language of the Church. He was senior partner in a large legal firm and founder and governing director of one of the largest homebuilding companies in New Zealand. But he is no ordinary layman. In fact, he ministers in a realm and with a sense of authority totally foreign to many clergymen.

The fact that he has held every position open to a lay member of the Anglican Church is not what makes him unusual. Rather it is his discovery of the New Testament doctrine of the priesthood of believers and the appropriation of this truth to a degree that many have missed. Bill Subritzky's story is much more than that of a capable churchman transformed into a Spirit-filled servant of God. It is the account of a man in whom the risen Christ dwells and through whom the Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts. This book reveals the burden of a man who has a burning desire to share the spiritual discoveries that have revolutionised his life. The messages in this book were delivered at a World Convention of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA; the transcription has been edited with every effort to preserve the style and spirit which so profoundly stirred thousands. God has opened doors for the author to minister in places far from his native New Zealand, including the Philippines, Singapore, Canada and the United States. Wherever he ministers, the experience is as though he were delivering and unwrapping beautiful spiritual gifts from God, to be used and enjoyed by ordinary people.

The Christian community needs this book. Someone has seen the church today as analogous to a football stadium in which overworked pastors are like twenty-two exhausted players desperately needing rest, viewed by fifty thousand spectators badly in need of exercise. Receiving the Gifts of the Holy Spirit is a call to all Spirit-filled believers to get out of the bleachers and to assume their responsibilities and privileges as the kings and priests God intended them to be.

Nelson B. Melvin, DD
Senior Editor
Voice Magazine

Preface

Since that time when I was baptised in the Holy Spirit, I have felt that many people greatly desire to operate fully in the gifts of the Holy Spirit as set forth in 1 Corinthians 12 (the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, the gifts of healing, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues and interpretation of tongues).

I fervently believe that God has placed these gifts within the body of Christ for the purpose of edification, especially during these last days. Wherever I find churches operating in these gifts I see there is a refreshing spiritual life.

Sensing a yearning for this on the part of many believers, I have endeavoured to explain how I began to move in the gifts. Led by the Holy Spirit, I have tried to do this in a way which is easily understandable. I trust that as you read these pages God will richly bless you and give you a deeper understanding of His blessings.

Since the earlier editions were published, I believe the Lord has led me into an even deeper understanding of the gifts, and further ways in which to encourage Christians to move in them.

He has also further clarified for me the nature of some of the gifts. Accordingly I have expanded on the anointing of God in Chapter 5, and changed the order of gifts so that the chapter on prophecy comes first.

In addition I have explained in greater detail how to encourage people into prophecy. I have expanded on the chapter dealing with the word of wisdom, giving examples of its operation.

In the case of the word of knowledge, I have added practical examples of how to minister. I have also added testimonies to the chapters dealing with word of knowledge and miracles. In the chapter dealing with the gift of tongues, I have added instructions on receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

I have changed the chapter 'Learning in Groups' to 'How to Receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit'. As a result of conducting many seminars, I have been able to explain with greater clarity and detail how to encourage people to receive the gifts.

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Chapter 1

Belief Required

As God has poured out His Holy Spirit around the world, there have been many revivals, renewals and awakenings. In the course of these there has been a resurgence of interest in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Described in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, they are the gifts of the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, different kinds of tongues and interpretations of tongues.

I believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are available to and are to be exercised by all members of the body of Christ who are prepared to reach out to God and believe for them. I have been privileged on numerous occasions to stand, before a congregation and pray for the sick by the word of knowledge, or to pray for deliverance and cast out demons, or to operate in various areas of faith, and I have sensed in my spirit a deep yearning on the part of many people to be involved in this area of ministry. Over the years the Lord has told me that whatever I have learned I should share with others, encouraging them to enter into these gifts. After twenty years of church attendance I came to know Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour. At that point in time, I was also baptised in the Holy Spirit. The experience transformed my total thinking as a lawyer and businessman. Once I opened the Word of God and began to understand it, for the first time in my life, I became so hungry for it that I wanted to move quickly into the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It was at this time that the Lord placed on my heart the calling of an evangelist. Since then I have been privileged to conduct hundreds of crusades in many countries around the world.

In order to move in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, it is essential that we be born again and baptised with the Holy Spirit. When praying for people to be baptised in the Holy Spirit, I always encourage them to repent of their sins before God, and confess that Jesus has risen from the dead and is at the right hand of God and that He is their Lord and Saviour. I always tell people that if they wish for the gifts of 1 Corinthians 12, they should be prepared to go to the full extent of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to move in God's full power.

In Luke's gospel we find the risen Jesus telling His disciples:

'Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.' (Luke 24:49)

Again in Acts, we find these words which He spoke to the disciples after His resurrection:

'But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.' (Acts 1:8)

As we know, this power came upon them on the day of Pentecost. We find it described in the book of Acts:

'When the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.'

(Acts 2:1-4)

Anyone who has given his life to Jesus Christ and who acknowledges Him as Lord and Saviour can easily come into this experience if he seeks it with all his heart.

I have been privileged to pray for many thousands of people to be baptised in the Holy Spirit.

It is my experience that if people are properly taught and their hearts are really open to the Lord, then only a small percentage fail to come immediately into the gift of tongues. Putting all fear and prejudice aside, we need to become as little children.

Jesus affirms: ' . . . unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.'

(Matthew 18:3)

When praying for people to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, I encourage them to renounce all unbelief, doubt, fear and any involvement in the occult. I tell them to wait quietly before the Lord, fixing their hearts and minds on the risen Jesus Christ. At this point, they should be standing with their hands raised towards God, and the warm presence of the Lord falls upon them.

I have found it helpful at this moment to cite examples of how as little children they made sounds their parents taught them in their native language, whether it was English or any other language. I then encourage them to start saying the word `Abba' which is the very personal Hebrew word for 'Father'. This is a good word to start with because it is a word of adoration for God and also because it is unfamiliar to their ears. Having prayed for Jesus to baptise them with the Holy Spirit, I then ask them to speak out in their new language, commencing with the word `Abba'. Syllables begin to come out of their mouths and as they are further encouraged, a new language flows forth.

We are all different in the way we react, but we all need encouragement and love to come into these experiences. God Himself plants the seed of faith in our hearts. However, He asks us to exercise it. As we do so, He is able to bless.

A total and complete belief in the Word of God is essential. This was difficult for me as a lawyer, before I was saved and baptised in the Holy Ghost. When I was attending church without a Christ-centred commitment, I had a belief in the Word of God that was intellectual and not from my heart. One of the wonderful things that happened to me when I was baptised in the Holy Spirit was that belief in the Word of God was transferred from my mind to my heart. This totally transformed my understanding of the Word. I then had absolute belief in the Word of God.

What actually brought me to the point of faith? It was a complete and childlike acceptance of the Bible as the Word of God. I was convinced in myself, without any question, without any doubts, without any fear that this is the Word of God!

The significance of this firm faith in God's Word was strongly

brought to my attention not long after I began to operate in the gifts. When I began to quote scriptures to people with demonic problems, the demons would begin to scream out of them. When the demons know that you mean and believe what you say (and I believe in some circumstances demons can sense your feelings and thoughts), they will move, but not before. When I speak the Word of God with total belief, then the demons begin to scream, particularly if I quote such verses as: ' . . . Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire' (Revelation 20:14). I also tell the demons that their final destination will be the lake of fire. They begin to scream: `No, no, no, we don't want to hear those words!'

Total belief in the authenticity of the Word of God is essential in the operation of any gift of the Spirit. When you are walking close to the Lord and you believe you are getting something from God, then He gives you that additional faith to move ahead. You cannot, for example, operate in the gift of healing without a full certainty that by the stripes of Jesus we were healed. People endeavour to operate at a shallow level in the gifts and therefore never get very far with them.

Not too long after I came into the baptism in the Spirit I was confronted with an emergency situation while driving in my car. I realised I was out of fuel. The logical thing was for me to stop the car and try to obtain some. But in this new experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and with a sudden faith in the Word of God, believing at that moment that this was the will of God for me, I prayed that my tank would be filled.

Although I had travelled many miles, up hill and down, the gas indicator had remained firmly pointed to the `empty' position during the last few miles. There was no mistake about the position of the needle. As I prayed, to my utter astonishment the needle began to rise! Now, that astonished my natural mind, but not my spirit. The Lord provided sufficient gasoline for me to complete the emergency job I had to accomplish at that time. Beyond that, He enabled me to travel a considerable distance until I finally realised it was time I went off the Lord's fuel supply and back to filling up my car tank on regular gasoline.

That experience gave me a quality of faith in the Word of God which has never left me. Inside the front cover of my Bible I have inscribed these words which describe both my understanding of and belief in God's Word:

This is the Word of God.
It is supernatural in origin,
eternal in duration,
inexpressible in value,
infinite in scope,
regenerative in power,
infallible in authority,
universal in interest,
personal in application,
inspired in totality.
Read it through,
write it down,
pray it in,
work it out,
then pass it on.

And that has been my testimony, as I have believed implicitly in His Word.

Chapter 2

Distinguishing Between Gifts and Fruit of the Spirit

It is important to distinguish between the gifts of the Holy Spirit as set out in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit referred to in Galatians 5:22-23. In the Galatians passage we find that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

I was rather stunned in the early years of my Christian walk when I found men moving in great gifts of the Holy Spirit who considered themselves to be remarkable, anointed men of God, but whose personal lives left much to be desired. As I came close to those men, such experiences almost shattered me as a young Christian. I recognised that there was great sin in their lives. Then as I searched the Scriptures I began to realise that the gifts of God are in fact given irrevocably. Concerning this, the book of Romans declares: '... the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable' (Romans 11:29).

Thus when God gives something He gives it fully and does not recall it. We ourselves can abandon it or stray from God, not properly functioning in the gifts and thereby losing the power of the Holy Spirit.

I also began to comprehend the meaning of what Jesus said in the gospel of Matthew: 'Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.'

Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Matthew 7:19-23) Thus, only those who have done the will of the Father will enter the kingdom, even though such persons may have prophesied and cast out devils. Therefore, if we are to enter the kingdom of God we must be obedient to the Word of God and follow His commandments. Above all, we must obey the new commandment of loving one another as He loved us. God does not wait until we are perfect before He gives us gifts. He offers us the gifts of the Holy Spirit when we turn to Him in faith and believe His Word. The first gift referred to in the New Testament is the gift of righteousness. God offers this to us even while we are in sin. It is Christ's righteousness that we receive as part of our salvation, when we turn to Him in true repentance. He does not wait until we are holy and perfect before He offers us this gift. Likewise, He does not wait until we are perfect before offering us the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in Matthew's gospel:

'Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!' (Matthew 7:7-11)

It is very important for us to understand the difference between the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. We read in Galatians: 'And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires' (Galatians 5:24). The fruit of the Spirit belongs to the Spirit, and as we walk close to the Lord these are evidenced in our lives. They - not the gifts of the Spirit - will be the basis for our judgement by the Lord. Incidentally, I have noticed one interesting point in connection with spiritual purity. The gift of discernment, extremely beneficial in casting out devils, requires that one's life be

reasonably clean. If sin reigns in some area of your life and you begin to cast a devil out of another person, Satan will repeatedly accuse you, and you will become an ineffective instrument. One reason, I believe, that these particular gifts are not greatly exercised is that the 'accuser of the brethren' begins to express his true nature. If there is sin in your life and you are trying to cast out a demon based on sin in another person's life, you will find that sooner or later you will begin to lose certainty in what you are trying to do.

Having sounded the above words of caution, it is important that we should keep a balance. Some people have majored in the fruit of the Spirit; some have specialised in the gifts of the Spirit; but I believe we should be aware of the spiritual balance... God wants the gifts of the Spirit to flow in the body of Christ in order to edify, exhort, comfort and build us up. That is why the gifts of the Spirit should be exercised in our churches, along with the fruit of the Spirit blossoming in our lives.

A real surge of spiritual life begins to manifest itself in a fresh way in the local church as encouragement is given through the exercise of the gifts.

Chapter 3

Finding Our Place in the Body of Christ

The next requirement for moving in the gifts is to find our place in the body of Christ. This is defined very clearly in Romans 12:1-6 in a clear statement of certain principles. Paul says:

'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' (Romans 12:1)

So the first step, if we are going to move in the gifts of God, including the other gifts in 1 Corinthians 12, is to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. We must yield our bodies as well as our minds to God. It is a yielding of ourselves to Him. We find the second step in the next verse:

'And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind . . . '

(Romans 12:2)

If we come to Jesus Christ as a little child and receive Him as Saviour, we begin to receive a spiritual mind.

'For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.'

(Romans 8:6-7)

Our natural mind will never understand the things of God. Paul vividly explains this:

'But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' (1 Corinthians 2:14)

While I was a church attendee but not a committed Christian, I was chairman of a group of representatives drawn from a number of Christian congregations. We met together frequently in my home, and I was always impressed by the quiet demeanour of one man. He said very little, but when he did speak, it was well worth giving our attention. I sensed in him a deep understanding of the Word of God.

One night after one of the meetings he said, 'Bill, you will never understand the Bible until you are really born again. The things of God are spiritually discerned, and until you are born again you lack insight into biblical truth.'

I protested vigorously that I could read the Bible as well as he could, but I knew deep in my heart that this was not true. Many times I would open my Bible but I failed to understand what it meant. It was only when I became as a little child, humbled myself before God, asked Him to forgive me of my sins and invited Jesus to be Lord of my life, that suddenly I was transformed in my mind and the Word of God opened up to me.

Having been transformed in our mind we find the following: 'that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God' (Romans 12:2). This is the next step. Notice that it is in an ascending order, beginning first at good, going on to acceptable, and finally to perfect. I found that in order to move in the gifts of God I had to have my mind transformed, so I might find what is the good, then the acceptable, then the perfect will of God. This came as the result of obedience to the Word of God.

God has given each of us a measure of faith.

'For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.' (Romans 12:3)

Everyone has a measure of faith which God has given. As we begin to find our place in the body of Christ that faith increases. Paul says,

'For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.'

(Romans 12:4-5)

It is imperative for us to find our place in the body of Christ. We cannot be loners; we must be a member of some part of the body of Christ. Attendance at a local church where Jesus Christ is Lord and where He is worshipped as such is an essential ingredient in moving in the gifts of God. If we are prepared to find our place in a local body of believers in Christ, submitting to the authority structure of that group, then God is able to bless us abundantly. We need to be encouraged by one another; hence the need to be members of a part of the body of Christ where we can receive that encouragement. When I began to move in the gifts of the Spirit, I was encouraged by a local body of believers who shared with me and said, 'We want to encourage you into these gifts.' It was in that way that I began to move in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

One of the weapons Satan uses against the children of God is pride. Once we begin to move in the gifts of God, temptation enters our minds in an attempt to deceive us into thinking that we are in some measure better than the next person. In this way, Satan attacks us in our ministry, our natural mind comes into play, and we may begin to hear from ourselves rather than from God. It is necessary for that part of the body of Christ of which we are members to be able to discern that we are really operating in the gifts of God under the anointing of the Holy Spirit and not under some other spirit. This is why Jesus said, 'And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted' (Matthew 23:12).

We must humble ourselves before the body of Christ as we use the gifts so that there may be real discernment and love in testing those gifts. If we are not prepared to submit to the authority in a local part of the body, we are in very real danger of possible misuse of the gifts and spiritual fruitlessness.

Now we come to the last step:

'Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.'

(Romans 12:6-8)

It is only then that we have the gifts.

So possessing spiritual gifts and properly exercising them is the culmination of adhering to God's established pattern for your life.

Chapter 4

Receiving the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

There has been an emphasis in the last chapter on the need to be part of the body of Christ. As a part of the body we can receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a scriptural way by the laying on of hands.

Paul says, in the Epistle to the Romans,

'For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established — that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.' (Romans 1:11-12)

Here Paul is clearly showing a desire to impart gifts to others and a belief that he can do so under the anointing of the Spirit of God. Thus, it is no surprise to read in his letter to the young disciple Timothy,

'Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.' (2 Timothy 1:6)

It is clear that Paul laid hands on Timothy to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Again, we find him saying,

'Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.'
(1 Timothy 4:14)

It is obvious that the elders gathered together for the laying on of hands, including Paul's, and that prophecy was given at this time. Paul also says,

'This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare.' (1 Timothy 1:18)

I have found that this is an excellent way to encourage people to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

For a number of years I have gone to a certain church and prayed with the elders for the impartation of the gifts of the Spirit upon them. At first I prayed with the elders, laying hands on each of them. I find that if I wait upon the Lord, He begins to quicken to me the various gifts which He desires to impart to a person at that time, and by faith I speak them out. My wife Pat, who operates in the gift of prophecy, then brings a prophecy for that person which further builds them up. It is a privilege to return to that church each year and to see these gifts being more deeply ministered, as the elders themselves lay hands on other members of the congregation.

Some years ago, teaching along these lines at a conference in Melbourne, Australia, I invited a number of clergy to come forward. After I prayed for the first person, laid hands upon him, and spoke out those gifts which I believed the Holy Spirit was bringing to mind, Pat gave a prophecy; I immediately encouraged that person to lay hands on the next in line. As he did so, the Lord began to bring to his mind the gifts which He desired to impart upon that person. As these were spoken out I myself witnessed to each one of them. Then each of those two people laid hands on the next person, and again the same procedure occurred - and so on, until we had prayed for all the clergy. Before we had gone very far down the line the power of God had fallen upon us, and a number of the clergy were slain in the Spirit as the power of God touched them.

When I pray, I usually use such words as, 'I ask you, Lord Jesus, to impart these and such other gifts as you would upon our brother (or sister).' We cannot limit God, and it may well be that there are gifts for that person to receive other than those which are quickened to us at that moment.

As hands have been laid on persons to receive gifts in this way, I have seen mighty things happen: people healed at that moment; people receiving a public tongue; interpretation and prophesying.

I would therefore encourage you to remember this scriptural basis for receiving the gifts; namely by the laying on of hands.

I do not believe God is limited to that method, but it is wonderful, if you are moving in the love of the body of Christ in your church, to ask the elders to lay hands upon you for the gifts of the Spirit. This is very important, since it is in the body of Christ that the gifts begin to be discerned. People begin to say, 'I believe, brother (or sister) you have the gift of prophecy' (or it may be the discernment of spirits or the gift of faith or the gift of healing). You become encouraged in the body of Christ by those who love you in Jesus.

Most of what I have learned concerning the gifts of the Spirit has been at small prayer meetings where the love of Jesus was present. It was then that I began to hear His voice, of which I will have more to say later.

Chapter 5

The Anointing of God

Before we look finally at the gifts referred to in 1 Corinthians 12, I would refer to the anointing of God:

'But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.'

(1 John 2:27)

The anointing is also referred to in 1 John 2:20: 'But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.'

It is clear therefore that we have within us an anointing. How does this come into us?

The anointing is part of the operation of the Holy Spirit within us, Jesus said in John 16:13: 'However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.'

The Holy Spirit has come into the world to speak to us the things He hears from God.

In the Old Testament we have a clear indication that an anointing oil, consisting of myrrh, sweet cinnamon, calamus, cassia and olive oil was used to anoint kings and prophets. This is set out in Exodus 30:23-30:

'Also take for yourself quality spices — five hundred shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much sweet-smelling cinnamon (two hundred and fifty shekels), two hundred and fifty shekels of

sweet-smelling cane, five hundred shekels of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil. And you shall make from these a holy anointing oil, an ointment compounded according to the art of the perfumer. It shall be a holy anointing oil. With it you shall anoint the tabernacle of meeting and the ark of the Testimony; the table and all its utensils, the lamp-stand and its utensils, and the altar of incense; the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base. You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them must be holy. And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister to Me as priests.'

We find that Moses subsequently poured the anointing oil on Aaron's head as he was instructed in order to anoint him and sanctify him, i.e. set him apart. Thus we find in Leviticus the following quotation: 'And he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him' (Leviticus 8:12). Thus it is clear from the Old Testament that the anointing oil, consisting of the ingredients set out above, was made up and poured on the head of the prophet or priest. It was also poured on the kings when they were anointed and appointed as kings. We find this is the case with both King David and King Saul.

Thus we find the psalmist expressing this experience in the following psalm:

'It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron,
Running down on the edge of his garments.

It is like the dew of Hermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the LORD commanded the blessing —
Life forevermore.' (Psalm 133:2-3)

In that psalm we have a clear picture of the anointing oil being poured on Aaron's head and spreading down through his beard. It is easy to visualise this oil as a warm oil being poured down over Aaron's head so that he had a physical feeling of the oil as it spread over his body. The oil had a clear fragrance arising from the ingredients and this fragrance was expressed as being on the garments of Jesus who is our High Priest:

'All Your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia,
Out of the ivory palaces, by which they have made You glad.'
(Psalm 45:8)

I find that in many meetings where there is a real anointing of the Holy Spirit, one can smell the fragrance of the Holy Spirit. It is a clearly distinguishable and beautiful perfume, quite the opposite of the horrible smell that is associated with Satan and his demons. Many people are able to physically smell the presence of the Lord as they smell this perfume at meetings. At the same time many are immediately healed as the anointing falls upon them.

Turning to the New Testament we find that believers are kings and priests. For example:
'But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.' (1 Peter 2:9)

Thus we see we are a royal priesthood. Again we find further reference in the book of Revelation:

'and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.'
(Revelation 1:6)

The believer is described as being a king and priest and as such God would want to anoint the believer and set him aside for His glory.

We find confirmation of this in Paul's letter to the Corinthians:

'Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God.' (2 Corinthians 1:21)

When I first came into the things of the Holy Spirit, I initiated a prayer meeting in our home. As the weeks went by and the meetings continued week after week, brethren from other churches (including the Pentecostal churches) came along to help us operate in the gifts of the Spirit.

I am always grateful for the man who came for thirty-six meetings (that is, one each week for a period of nine months).

He would stand with me as I prayed for other people, because I was believing in the Word of God for healing. He went around the meeting praying for the sick.

As I was praying he would ask, 'Brother Bill, do you sense the anointing of the Holy Spirit?' I would say, 'I don't sense a thing.' He would say, 'Well the Holy Spirit is here, I sense His presence.' Every week this would take place - but I did not sense the presence of the Holy Spirit. However, when God puts the spirit of faith into your heart you hang in there, and for those thirty- six meetings I persevered, believing for the anointing of God.

Then one night we were standing with an elderly lady, and this brother asked, 'Do you sense the anointing of the Holy Spirit?' At that very moment I felt the heavens open and I sensed the anointing, that beautiful warmth, like soothing oil from God, falling upon me. I have known this anointing ever since as I have turned my face, my faith and my heart towards Jesus in every circumstance, putting my natural mind aside. It had been my mind - even though I was baptised in the Holy Spirit - which had blocked me from knowing that anointing of God.

We do not always come immediately into the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I was in Singapore some years ago at the invitation of the Anglican Bishop Chui, a man of God who has moved in things of the Spirit for a number of years. We were together at the Singapore Cathedral when he expressed interest in the experience of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This man came into the anointing simply by a demonstration of the Spirit of God releasing him in that circumstance, and ever since he has moved mightily under that anointing.

I believe that the secret of knowing the anointing of God is complete obedience to His will. Jesus said,

'And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.' (John 8:29)

Jesus Christ always knew the anointing of God because He always did the things that pleased God. We find that complete obedience to the will of God is the hallmark of His ministry.

You may be saying as you read this, 'I would love to know the anointing of God.' Let me explain two ways in which I have seen it happen to others.

Unbelief or wrong theology can block God's power. On one occasion I was ministering with a well-known churchman when he remarked that he had never sensed the anointing of God. I suggested that he might have a mind block, which can arise as a result of training which questions the credibility of the Bible. A very humble man, he readily agreed to my suggestion that he renounce this spirit of blockage of mind. As he did so in the name of Jesus, the anointing of God came upon him and he gently fell to the floor, slain under the power of the Holy Spirit. He has known the reality of the anointing ever since then.

A spirit of unbelief can attach itself to our lives as a result of past experiences, even though we have turned our hearts to Jesus Christ. We may need to turn away from something inherited. In New Zealand we have a lodge called the Masons. I find that if a person's father belonged to that lodge, or if he himself is a member, he is in spiritual bondage. The lodge worships the spirit of Baal and the spirit of Ashtaroth, both of which are forbidden in the Scriptures. Unless one renounces those links, very frequently there is a spiritual blindness, which prevents understanding and moving in the Word of God. In this context, with the person's approval, and after his due repentance, I have often commanded that the spirit of unbelief depart from him — and we have seen wonderful things happen.

As I was participating in a seminar in the Fiji Islands with a professor from a theological college, this dear man, filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues, said to me, 'Bill I have never known the anointing of the Spirit of God. I really cannot understand how people get slain in the Spirit.' So at one point when I was praying for a person and sensed there was a strong anointing presence, I called this professor and asked, 'Brother can't you sense the anointing? It is tremendous at this moment.'

He replied, 'I don't sense a thing.'

I said, 'Brother you must sense this anointing. Just renounce all unbelief.'

He said, 'In the name of Jesus I renounce all unbelief!'

Then I went on to say, 'Surely brother, you feel this anointing!' There was no response. I repeated it — still no response.

I looked over and there he was, flat on his back, resting in the Spirit.

A little while later I saw him with a very large Fijian lady, praying, as was his custom, very quietly. But now, having been loosed from the area of unbelief, he was free, and as the Spirit of God moved through him I saw the inevitable begin to happen. The large Fijian lady began to sway. This brother's head was lowered as he continued his earnest prayer, and before I could reach the lady, she crashed like a giant tree to the floor (fortunately, it was a wooden floor). From then on I saw many people slain in the Spirit under that man's ministry. If you have not known the anointing of God, I'm not saying you're possessed of demons. Please don't hear me saying that! I'm saying that there can be something attached to our minds as a result of our upbringing and circumstances before we come to Jesus that blocks our belief. If we simply repent of it and say, 'Jesus I turn from any unbelief that is in me. Help me, Lord,' then as we yield ourselves to Him the anointing of God will begin to flow and we will sense His presence.

We need to know this if we are to pray with faith for others.

When I pray for people to know the anointing of God, I encourage them to stand quietly before the Lord, raise their hands and wait for the Spirit of God to fall upon them. If we have total belief that God will do this, then it happens. We can sense the warm presence of the Holy Spirit in the room, and the power of God falling upon people. As we lay hands upon them, then the anointing flows over them.

If you want to sense the anointing now, I encourage you to go on your knees, repent of any sin, especially unbelief, doubt and fear as well as any involvement in the occult and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour. Then as you stand up and raise your hands before the Lord, I would encourage you to say the following prayer:

'Dear Heavenly Father, as I come now before Your Throne of Grace, in the mighty name of Jesus Christ, I pray that I may know Your anointing from the top of my head to the soles of my feet. Thank you Lord for Your love and presence upon me now.'

It is my prayer that, as you do this, you will sense the wonderful presence of the Holy Spirit throughout your whole body.

Chapter 6

Love

'And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.'
(1 Corinthians 13:13)

Before we examine the gifts of the Holy Spirit in detail, it is important that we spend a little time on the question of love. The love we are talking about is the agape love shown to us in 1 Corinthians 13 which comes from God Himself and which we may experience only as we move in obedience to Him.

I am always intrigued by the way in which the Holy Spirit led Paul to describe the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12. In Chapter 13 we find Paul speaking under the anointing of the Holy Spirit about love, before he speaks in Chapter 14 of the exercise of the gifts in the church.

In this way he makes love central to the exercise of the gifts.

I find that the first requirement when I pray for the sick is to show love. For there may be faith, there may be hope; but if there is no love, God is not really able to minister in His fullness through me to the person for whom I am praying. I must remember that I am a member of the body of Christ and that I must treat every other member on the same basis; namely, of laying down my life for that other member.

As people sense that I am endeavouring to show agape love through Jesus, then the compassion of God begins to flow in that situation. They do not feel that they are being judged, and the Spirit of God is able to come in and heal in a dramatic way.

During the last few years God has given me the ability to tell people I love them in Jesus Christ. As I begin to speak out these words with my mouth and hear them with my ears, it does

something for me. I find that it releases in those listening a sense of God's presence, power, and anointing.

Everything else is going to fail - but love will remain. Of faith, hope and love, the greatest is love.

I remember attending a Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship meeting a few years ago when Johnnie Johnson, a black American and assistant secretary to the United States Navy, spoke about love. He spoke about it in a way I had never heard before. He simply oozed God's love!

I observed that after the meeting he did not walk out. He stayed there and practised what he preached, still praying for the sick into the early hours of the morning. This man taught me an immense amount about the need to express love. As we love, God's Holy Spirit is able to move through us.

When we come together to worship Jesus Christ each of us must be open to let His love flow through us. We must be able to express it to each other, and particularly to the person to whom we are ministering. Often folk tell me that when they come to one of our meetings and sense the Spirit of God's love, pain leaves their bodies.

I believe that all demon power becomes subject to the power of God through His love, and as love is manifested at a public meeting, healings begin to take place and people are delivered. I remember a man telling how, when he entered our home where a prayer meeting was in progress, he immediately sensed love. Till that time he had not been a believer, but he walked out of our house a true believer, having given his heart to Jesus Christ.

Do not be afraid to express the love of Jesus Christ to others. We all yearn for love. Let us express it and be free. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are wonderful - they are there to build up the body of Christ - and the fruit of the Spirit is even better. But remember that the greatest of all is God's love, manifested through each one of us.

Chapter 7

Prophecy

... to another prophecy,'
(1 Corinthians 12:10)

I propose to deal with the gift of prophecy first because I believe it is the starting point for other gifts, especially the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, and interpretation of tongues. All of these gifts including prophecy come as an impression on our mind, or a vision, or the audible voice of the Holy Spirit, or as a thought from God.

I believe that the gift of prophecy is exercised when we open our hearts and minds to God. He can give us an impression or a thought or a vision or we can hear His direct audible voice and as we trust God and believe it is Him, then others in the body of Christ will discern that indeed we are speaking a word from the Lord.

I believe every Spirit-filled believer should exercise the gift of prophecy in accordance with 1 Corinthians:

'For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.' (1 Corinthians 14:31)

When I am teaching on the gifts at a seminar, I ask the participants to break into pairs. As they sit with each other, I then ask them to say some words which they believe would be an encouragement to the other person, such as 'God loves you' or 'God is with you'. Believe it or not some people have never ever said such words to another person! However, as they now begin to do so, the anointing of the Holy Spirit starts to fall upon them.

Then I pray that God will grant every person the gift of prophecy. I encourage every person to ask the Lord to give them some words of encouragement for the other person. As they trust God to give them these thoughts, and speak them out, the Spirit of God falls upon them. With further encouragement, people begin to move out into a greater anointing under this gift. Before long, they are speaking words of encouragement which the Lord is giving them. Sometimes it is a scripture, other times it is a simple word.

Then I bring the people back into groups of six and ask each member in the group to bring a word of encouragement for the rest of the group. It is amazing to see how the Holy Spirit begins to move.

As an alternative to this method, when I am speaking to a gathering about gifts, I encourage those who have never prophesied to quietly wait upon the Lord, letting Him bring Bible verses or some other words to their mind. I then ask others to lay hands on those who wish to prophesy by the Spirit of God, because people need to practise their gift.

If you want to move in prophecy, I suggest you join a group that will love you; I'm not talking about leaving your church; I'm referring to a prayer meeting situation where people will love you and accommodate your desire to move in this dimension.

As words come into your mind, speak them out. (I mean words that are for edification, exhortation and comfort.) Frequently I ask people to quote Bible verses so that they may hear their own voice. Once you have heard your voice in an open meeting you begin to gain confidence and faith.

It is important that you make a start. You may have only a few words; reach out in faith and speak those words. Do not wait until you get the whole message. Just bring forth what is being said to you, then you may stop. You may have nothing further to say and somebody else may bring the rest of the prophecy.

You grow in faith only by speaking good words out of your mouth. We all know that. I was very shy when I first became a Christian and very impressed by the confidence of people who prophesied. Then I began to realise that all God wanted me to do was to remain as a child, relying on Him. One day I was encouraged by a brother to do just that. He encouraged those in the gathering to speak out a simple word. I spoke a few words of a psalm, and as soon as I heard my voice in the open meeting I began to gain confidence. I started to move from then on. It just flows as we stand with a person for prayer. The Lord is always willing to give a word:

'For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.' (1 Corinthians 14:31)

'But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.'
(1 Corinthians 14:3)

It is to edify and to build up the body of Christ.

The leader has a significant responsibility in leading a prayer meeting. If he is gifted in the area of prophecy, he must listen carefully to the Lord, for the Lord often wants to bring a simple word of encouragement.

Remember that the gift of prophecy is different to the ministry of a prophet. To be a prophet in accordance with Ephesians 4:11 means that we have a calling from God to a particular ministry in the same way as apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Part of this ministry is to equip the saints for the work of ministry. The true prophet may well have the gift of foretelling the future, as well as bringing correction to the body of Christ. The gift of prophecy, however, is not a calling but a gift.

When we started our prayer meetings, the Holy Spirit laid it upon my heart to encourage my wife. She would be in the meeting and I would say, 'I believe the Lord is giving you a word, Pat.' (There were people present who could prophesy very well, while she had never done so; but standing firm in the Lord and in the faith God was implanting within her heart, she began to speak out.) Then steadily, word by word, it came. I have seen my wife at a meeting with 5,000 people, and the Lord would give her a prophecy that boomed right across the gathering as she spoke out. Many times as our family prays together the Lord gives my wife a word of encouragement. It's a wonderful and positive communication between husband and wife. So I say to you, encourage your wife, your husband and your family to exercise this wonderful gift. It is a beautiful way in which God can reassure you.

My son Paul and my daughter Maria have this gift too. It is a simple but beautiful gift of God. You begin by speaking out whatever God is laying on your heart. It may be, as I say, a psalm or a few words from the Scriptures, but speak it out. Do

not be afraid to act, but get into a loving situation where you, too, can be blessed.

I praise God for showing me how to get started and for continuing to encourage me.

Do not overlook the fact that prophecy is often for you. While you are giving the word of prophecy, it may relate to your own circumstance and your own situation. God himself may be speaking to you as you speak the word.

Remember that the Holy Spirit does not interrupt Himself. If a message is being brought in tongues or interpretation, or in prophecy, then it should not be interrupted by another message coming at the same time. Sometimes this cannot be avoided in large meetings, where one person cannot hear what another is saying some distance away; but normally the Holy Spirit sorts that out fairly quickly and the voice of one person finally predominates.

When a prophecy is shared there should be a witness in the spirit of others that it is of God.

Whether brought in English or through a tongue and interpretation, the Holy Spirit will show others in the meeting that it is a word of prophecy and of the Holy Spirit. If we do not have a witness to it and if it is not in accordance with the Word of God, then it should not be accepted.

'Let two or three prophets speak and let the others judge.'

(1 Corinthians 14:29)

On the other hand, this must all be done in love. We would not shout a person down just because they were bringing a word from their own mind rather than from the Spirit: the word may be perfectly harmless and even uplifting. Judging (testing by the Word and the Spirit) must surely be done in love. However, if the word that is given is directive, condemnatory, or could bring people into bondage, then it should not be accepted.

If somebody else is speaking and we feel we have a tremendous burden to bring a word of prophecy or a message in a tongue, we should be prepared to wait until they finish and the opportunity opens up to bring that message. Some good folk have told me that they cannot hold the message God is giving them because they are bursting with it and **must** bring it. The Holy Spirit is a gentleman. He does not force Himself upon us.

We should expect to have perfect control as we move in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit many times has given me a word of knowledge as somebody else was speaking. I do not jump up and say I want to bring that word right while some other person is bringing a message. I must wait until an appropriate opportunity presents itself. It may be that I myself am speaking when the Holy Spirit brings me a word of knowledge, but still I wait until He shows me the right opportunity to bring that word.

'And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.'
(1 Corinthians 14:32)

We should be able to exercise self-control.

If the leader of the meeting moves sensitively in the Spirit, he will sense that there is a word or message to be brought, and will help give the opportunity for it at the correct time.

Another way in which the gift of prophecy frequently operates is that the Holy Spirit begins to give us a picture of a situation in our mind's eye. It may be a waterfall, a sunset, a field or some other situation. The Holy Spirit then begins to speak to us about it. The Holy Spirit is able to bring a vivid message as we speak forth with the picture in our mind. Both Pat and I frequently receive a picture in our minds as we are about to bring a prophecy, and as we begin to give expression to it we find that the prophecy becomes dearer to us.

As I am speaking in prophecy I receive only a few words in advance at each moment, and as I continue the Holy Spirit provides the words for speaking.

Could I encourage you to receive this gift right now? If you are prepared to say the following prayer with belief, the anointing of God will come upon you and God will bless you.

'Dear Heavenly Father, I come to you in the mighty name of your Son Jesus Christ. I come believing, Lord, to receive the gift of prophecy. I ask you to pour this gift upon me now. Thank you Father in Jesus name, Amen.'

I believe if you begin to speak out words of encouragement to others and believe for this gift, you will find the Lord will speak through you.

I have included this prayer in this book because Scripture says all may prophesy. This is a gift for all true believers. As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, I believe that it is the starting point for other gifts.

Chapter 8

The Word of Wisdom

... for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit,'
(1 Corinthians 12:8)

I believe that the word of wisdom is an impression or a thought or a vision or the direct audible voice of the Holy Spirit from God about how to deal with a situation. The first of the spiritual gifts referred to in 1 Corinthians 12 is the word of wisdom. I believe it is there in first place for a very good reason. As you move in the gifts of the Holy Spirit you must move in God's wisdom.

In Proverbs we find that Christ and wisdom are one and the same:

'Wisdom calls aloud outside;
She raises her voice in the open squares.
She cries out in the chief concourses,
At the openings of the gates in the city
She speaks her words:
"How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorners delight in their scorning,
And fools hate knowledge.
Turn at my rebuke;
Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;
I will make my words known to you.'" (Proverbs 1:20-23)

Again in 1 Corinthians we encounter these words:

'Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.' (1 Corinthians 1:24)

'But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God — and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.' (1 Corinthians 1:30)

We must move in Christ and in His wisdom as we move in the gifts of the Spirit. For example, as we begin to move in the gift of the word of knowledge, the Holy Spirit often will reveal to us something concerning a person. Do we blurt it out, or do we wait until the Spirit gives us a freedom to speak of it?

If I have a word of knowledge concerning a person, that he is fornicating, I would not, unless God specifically ordered it, stand up and publicly say, 'Brother, you are fornicating.' There would be no love in that approach. I would destroy what the Spirit of God was showing me and trying to accomplish in that person's life.

The same applies to the use of other gifts. Though you may be full of a prophecy coming to your lips, the question of when you bring it is a crucial issue. If a person were to stand up while I was speaking from the Word of God and begin to prophesy, I would say, 'I am sorry but you are out of order. I am speaking from the Word of God and you have interrupted me.' I do not believe that the Holy Spirit interrupts Himself.

You may not agree with what I am saying, but these are my discoveries. The gift of wisdom is a gift we should all seek ardently, and God offers it very specifically and clearly. He offers you a word of wisdom. Sometimes as you wait upon God or minister to a person or pray for him, something may be impressed upon your mind as to how to deal with that situation. If you are working in God, you may be sure that a good word, in the sense of righteousness, propriety and otherwise, is from the Lord. We must guard against operating in that word of wisdom without really grasping that it is of God.

So the word of wisdom is the gift of having a word at the right time concerning a situation. In counselling situations this gift is tremendously useful. Jesus is wisdom, and we must seek to operate in His wisdom and love.

The word of wisdom may come simply and clearly at any moment, as we are filled with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the Holy Spirit will show you a person is suffering from a very distressful or negative condition. But the fact He has shown you this condition does not mean that you should speak it to that person at that time.

That is why I emphasise the need for love. God will open the door to minister at the right time, showing you how to deal with a situation as you move in His love.

There are various ways of expressing a situation like that described. You may say, 'I believe you need prayer. Do you need prayer for healing?' Perhaps the person comments that he has a problem, but the Lord is showing you that it is a very much worse problem than the person realises. You need wisdom in this situation. The Holy Spirit may well quicken to you that a person in a certain part of a meeting has cancer. If I felt compelled by the Holy Spirit to announce this, in order not to introduce fear I would say, 'I believe a person who knows they have this condition is present.' Otherwise, every person in that part of the meeting might begin to feel he or she had cancer.

When you begin to move in the gifts of the Spirit, Satan comes along and tries to put fear into people. But if you move in God's love, reassuring people in that situation, the power of God is able to operate fully and the Holy Spirit is not quenched. I have observed that God will usually bring attention to conditions that are well known to the individuals concerned, thus increasing the faith in that meeting. At other times and in other circumstances - as wisdom leads you - when the person is willing to do so, you may freely go through all the problems in which he is involved.

Wisdom, the first of the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12, is, I believe, closely associated with God's love. I find it works this way: as we move in wisdom, and wait on a word of wisdom, God will drop something into our mind which is the right thing to say at that time to a person. But I can only do this when I am moving in the love of God.

Many times the word of wisdom operates with startling simplicity. I can recall a case where a pastor brought his son, aged nineteen, to me for counselling. As they entered my home, the son was looking at the ground and would not raise his head. During the next thirty minutes of conversation, he still did not look up. When I was speaking to him, he persisted in looking at the ground.

I was wondering what I should do next. It was clear to me that the young man was suffering from rejection and that the father had unwittingly not given him the attention that he should have had. He obviously needed encouragement.

I could have spiritualised the matter, but suddenly the Holy Spirit gave me inspiration. I asked the son whether he had ever played golf. He replied that he had not done so. I asked him whether he would like to. Suddenly he looked up at me for the first time. I knew that with the help of the Holy Spirit, I had struck a cord with the young man.

I went down to the basement of my home and found a disused set of golf clubs which I brought up and gave to him. His whole demeanour changed. I then gave his father a cheque to buy a set of clubs for himself and told the father to go and play golf with his son.

By the time the son left our home, he was a different person. A week later I received a note from him that he and his father had been on the golf course and that he was playing to a handicap of 21. The father took my advice and continued to play golf with his son.

About two months later, they visited me again at my home. They had travelled some 150 miles and on the way they had played golf at almost every course. The son was now totally changed. His face had a beaming smile and you could see his true personality was now flourishing.

He kept in regular touch with me. Prior to his visit with me, he had not been attending any form of education. But after this experience, he went on to qualify in a highly skilled career. I could have spent hours counselling him on rejection, but I believe it was a word of wisdom from the Holy Spirit to encourage them to go and play the game of golf together. Thus a bonding started between the father and son, which had not been there previously. Then the rejection disappeared.

Sometimes we give a word from the Lord without realising we are doing so, but other members of the body of Christ will discern that we are operating in the gift of wisdom. There is a wonderful gift of wisdom which I often receive from the Lord - the word repentance. So often folk come to you for counselling and help who have never really repented, deep down in their hearts, of their involvement with the world. They have never repented of sin, and often the Lord will show you that this is the case. Here God's wisdom is a simple word of love, showing them that they really need to surrender totally to the Holy Spirit if they are to receive what God has for them. That can be a word of God's wisdom.

In other circumstances the Holy Spirit quickens (makes alive) to you a portion of the Word of God for a person, or in respect to a situation. If you are saturated with the Word of God, reading it on a regular basis, it is readily brought to your mind... With God nothing is impossible; He can bring to your mind a word which you cannot recall having read in the Bible, but which you find to be there. However, I believe he expects us to be diligent in His Word.

So the word of wisdom is a supernatural gift: a word from the Lord for a particular circumstance or situation, in which God gives you wisdom from His Word in dealing appropriately with that same situation.

A beautiful example of the way in which Jesus exercised the word of wisdom is found in the gospel of John. The scribes and Pharisees, having brought to Jesus a woman found in the very act of adultery, tested Him by reminding Him that the law of Moses commanded that she should be stoned. They asked Him what they should do. Here are the words Jesus wrote upon the ground:

'He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.' (John 8:7)

In 1 Kings 3:16-28, we find God's wonderful gift of wisdom given to Solomon when the two women came to him, both claiming the same child. Solomon commands that a sword be brought to him, then gives instructions that the living child is to be cut in two - one half, to one woman; the other half, to the other. The true mother of the child is easily identified for immediately she wants the child to be given to the other woman in order to save its life, whereas the other woman would have the child divided.

The apostle James says, concerning wisdom:

'If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.'

(James 1:5-7)

Perhaps the simplest way to describe the word of wisdom is that it is a thought, an impression, a vision or the direct audible voice of the Holy Spirit telling us how to deal with a situation. This gift is very closely related to the word of knowledge, insofar as it may be an impression upon one's mind or a thought brought to one's mind by the Holy Spirit, as we are yielded to Him.

The basis for operating in any of the gifts is faith in Jesus Christ. As we move in that faith in Him, the Holy Spirit can move through us and the gifts of the Spirit can be clearly manifested. When we ask for these gifts in faith, nothing wavering, God will always grant our request.

Chapter 9

The Word of Knowledge

'... to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,'
(1 Corinthians 12:8)

I believe that the word of knowledge is a thought, or impression on our mind or a vision or the direct audible voice of the Holy Spirit about a situation. This gift amazes and heartens people perhaps as greatly as the casting out of demons or the gift of healing. But far beyond that, it becomes a viable channel to bring restoration to needy people.

In the flesh, I had been a greedy person. Praise God, when I came into the things of the Spirit I became greedy for God. I said to my heavenly Father, 'Lord, I just want all of those gifts!' And over the years, in varying dimensions, I believe I have moved in all of them; this has been confirmed by other members of the body of Christ.

I came into the things of the Spirit under the ministry of a man who operated very freely in the word of knowledge. But the word of knowledge came to me only as the result of quite a long battle. (I do not suggest that your experience will be the same; many of you may already operate in this gift.) Here's how it happened. It was in that simple prayer meeting held in my home (again, through the love of that Pentecostal brother) that I began to move. He was moving freely in the gifts and was undergoing persecution because his church did not believe as he did in the things of the Spirit. I am glad to report that he remained faithful to that church, which today is fully charismatic.

This same man stood with me for nine months because I told him I wanted to move in the word of knowledge.

He would have a tremendous word for thirty, forty or fifty people as he stood with them towards the end of the meeting. As I stood next to him, he would ask, 'Brother Bill, do you hear anything from the Lord?' I would say, 'No, nothing.' That happened the first week, the second week, the third week, the fourth week - thirty-five weeks in all. 'Brother Bill, do you hear anything from the Lord?' I heard nothing!

I believe there are times God wants to show us that we must be persistent. Some, of course, can move more freely than others. I am seeing my own children moving straight into it without any difficulty.

But I had to persevere. One night during the thirty-sixth week, as I hung in there, the anointing came upon me and something was impressed upon my mind. I began to speak out concerning the person before me. Within moments the brother said, 'Bill, that's from the Lord - I have the same word!' Once I received that impression upon my mind, I anticipated more of them. I waited expectantly week after week, until one night I began to hear audibly the voice of the Lord. I implicitly believe the following scriptures spoken by Jesus Christ:

'He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.' (John 8:47)

'However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come; He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.' (John 16:13)

We should expect to hear the voice of God.

As the Holy Spirit hears from God, He speaks to us accordingly. It must be confirmed, of course, that it is the Holy Spirit speaking to a person. That is where our submission to the body of Christ is so vital.

There are people for whom I prayed for the baptism of the Holy Spirit who were not open to the appropriate admonition, would not receive correction, and were not delivered from a spirit of deception. They have gone out and moved in the Spirit of God, and also moved in the spirit of deception - and I have never seen such confusion. They had the Holy Spirit but were subject to spiritual deception.

The last time I heard from one man to whom I saw this happen, he told me he was going to the most southern part of South America to buy a motor car to drive to Canada, since God had told him to do so. He listened to nobody! So we need to be subject to the body of Christ.

Concerning the audible voice of the Lord, sometimes in a meeting it is totally audible to me. I have been in situations where, as I moved about in a meeting, I could hear the voice of the Lord very clearly telling me about conditions in people nearby, or about some other situation. I would move into another place in the same meeting and could hear nothing. In this way I began to recognise how the Spirit of God can be quenched, perhaps by unbelief, in meetings. I was walking down the aisle of a church in New Zealand, in a city called Dunedin, and about every three feet I would sense a blank. I could stand in one position, look along the rows, and hear the voice of the Holy Spirit telling me about a specific person in the row. I would call the individual out and the word given me would be absolutely right. I would move another three feet and not hear a thing. Another three feet and the Holy Spirit would speak to me again. I said to the vicar, 'There is something wrong in this church.' Then I began to spiritually discern five portals or frames along the church at intervals. They seemed to be in the construction of the building, but I saw them only in the spirit.

I shared this with the minister. 'Oh Bill,' he said, 'That's right, yes, there are five of those pillars - this building was erected by the Masonic Lodge.'

'Well,' I said, 'Brother, you know that the Masonic Lodge is demonic. You need to re-consecrate this church.'

'We have done that,' he replied.

Then he explained to me that a hundred years ago the Masons had walked down the main street of that city, shovels on their shoulders, to lay the foundations of that building.

Let me be clear: I love the Masons themselves but hate the occult spirit of freemasonry. Well, I prayed afresh with the vicar, in faith, by agreement, and we were settled within our hearts, but nothing seemed to happen at that time. Later that afternoon we were in a home praying for a sick person when suddenly the Spirit of God let me know, 'That building is released' - and I felt in my spirit that it had happened.

God had heard the prayer which we had prayed. I went down to see the building, anxious to prove it.

That night I preached, then began to move about, listening to the voice of the Lord. Sure enough, I could hear Him from one end of the church to the other. There was no longer any blank space as I moved around. I could hear His voice in every part of that church. God's Spirit was no longer being quenched.

I praise God for the fruit that comes forth when we believe His Spirit.

In the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), I was taken by the bishop to a hospital, where he asked, 'Will you pray for some of the sick people?' I had to speak at a meeting that night. Tired, and realising that once I entered I could not tell how long it would take, I was a little reluctant. As I prayed for these sick people, it was not difficult to know their problem; all in that ward were lepers. So I prayed a general prayer and prepared to leave.

Then the superintendent of the hospital saw me exercising the word of knowledge, and, saying by way of explanation, 'You believe you know what is wrong with people,' asked me to come into the main ward.

As we entered he asked, 'What is that patient suffering from?' Just like that!

Well, that's really testing you. He pulled the chart at the back of the bed, looked at it and waited for me to answer. The Spirit of God told me, one after the other, of four problems from which the patient suffered. More than a little amazed, the superintendent, a very methodical man, ticked off those conditions. He went to the next bed. Exactly the same thing happened. We went to the next bed, and the next bed. By the time we reached the seventh, I had grown bolder. And so we moved to each of the thirty beds in that hospital. The God- glorifying result of this demonstration was that the superintendent came that night to the meeting and was baptised in the Holy Spirit.

The voice of the Lord is a still, small voice. As we open ourselves to Him, and begin to trust Him, even for impressions upon our minds, He is able to move. I began to move forward in this particular gift in a small prayer meeting — not the one in our home but at my local church on a Sunday night — where there used to be nine or ten people. The Lord would impress upon me that somebody had a headache. 'All right,' I said, 'Somebody has a headache.'

Now that is not a big thing, but somebody did have a headache, and it encouraged my faith. As I continued I would believe the Lord was speaking to me about somebody's kidneys: 'I believe somebody has a kidney problem.' And someone would answer, 'Yes,' and I would pray for them.

Then I began to learn that the Holy Spirit will also impress upon you conditions related to people other than those in the meeting. For example, when a person came with a concern for someone else, I learned that you may be given by the Holy Spirit an accurate description of that condition. While nobody in the meeting would have that condition, somebody would be there who had a burden for that person. I have seen many people healed when they began to understand that God is so wide in His love that He is concerned for all of our problems, not just for those people who are sitting at a meeting. If you are concerned about your family right now and what is happening within it, God may well be helping them even now, as you believe and are reading this. He is not limited by time or space.

As I was giving this message at a Philadelphia meeting, a woman pastor who really wanted to move out in the gifts of the Holy Spirit began to believe for this gift. When I stopped the meeting for a short time so that people might greet one another, she tuned around to speak to my daughter-in-law, seated immediately behind her. (The lady pastor did not know to whom she was speaking.) She said, 'I believe I have a word of knowledge for you.' For the first time in her life she gave a word directly from the Lord, and very accurate. It related to a desire deep in the heart of my daughter-in-law. It was so astonishingly accurate that it shook both of them. How important it is to really believe for God's blessing! Then we will receive.

When I begin to pray with people, I find the Holy Spirit gives clear directions as to where I should lay my hands and how I should pray for them. For example, when I am praying for a woman, if the Holy Spirit directs me to place my hand on her stomach, I will ask her to place her hands there first. As I lay my hands on her hands, quite frequently a powerful demonic spirit will manifest and the person will know a tremendous anointing of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the Holy Spirit directs me to lay my hands on a part of a person's body, such as their forehead, the backs of their necks, their shoulder, their arm, or He may tell me to ask them to raise their left or right arm.

As I do this, I find that the anointing of God falls upon the person and the Lord is able then to give further direction as to how to pray.

I also find that when I am praying for a line of people in a meeting, that as each person comes up to me, the Holy Spirit gives me this type of direction. Frequently I see that the Holy Spirit is already upon them and the power of God is touching them. This is a great encouragement. I also find that the Holy Spirit gives continuous instruction as to how we should be praying for people during the course of ministry to that person. The Holy Spirit is not confined to time or space.

Sometimes a pastor will seek my counsel concerning another person and the Holy Spirit is able to give me a clear definition about that person, including problems that they may be having in their life and insights into how they should be ministered to... This happens even though I have not met that person. The pastor, who knows the person well, is able to confirm insights the Lord has given me.

Sometimes when I am praying for a person, the Holy Spirit will show me various forms of hereditary bondage which have come down the generational lines of one or both of the parents. Many times the counsellee is able to confirm this information and as they renounce the bondages, great deliverance takes place. For example, in the case of asthma, I have often found that the spirit behind it is fear. When a child is brought to me, I always ask for the mother or father to be available because I usually find that the spirit of fear has been inherited from one or both of them. I encourage the person to honour their mother and father, renounce their sins and the sins of their ancestors and claim deliverance from the curse of the law through the cross of Jesus Christ in accordance with Galatians 3:13: 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")'. I then cut off the spirit of fear in the name of the Lord. With that the child is often instantly healed. I have seen hundreds of such healings.

Again, the Holy Spirit will often give insight into a person's childhood. For example, they may have suffered shock at a certain age or some traumatic event such as molestation may have occurred. Obviously, in the case of molestation, great wisdom has to be exercised before any comment is made to the counsellee.

Often they will volunteer this information and confirm the insight the Lord has given you. As these issues are dealt with by the Holy Spirit, memories are healed and the person is set free. In such instances I usually find that the word of knowledge and the gift of discernment of spirits flow together.

If you are close to and working with any person moving in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, I believe you will move very quickly yourself in the gifts of the Spirit. My own family have come into the gifts much more rapidly than I did, simply because on many occasions they have sat under my ministry and seen this gift operate.

We must be moving in faith. All gifts are based upon it. When I come to a meeting I may feel terrible, but as I seek the Lord Jesus Christ, I begin to hear His voice or receive an impression upon my mind concerning the situation. I am not saying that I came into the experience overnight. I practised the gift and it has grown within me.

As the Spirit of God moves across a meeting, an authority comes into the meeting, and you can begin to operate in that authority. You begin to hear His voice very clearly, as though a person were standing beside you, constantly talking to you. I have been in a meeting where the Lord accurately conveyed to me, one after another, specifics on all kinds of situations. I can only explain, as humbly as possible, exactly what He gives me.

It is important always to remember this verse from Hebrews:

'But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.' (Hebrews 5:14)

It is important to utilise your human senses while functioning in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We must continually be open and learn to grow in faith so that we may move more deeply into the gifts.

I learned that I must exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit by going into situations where I had the opportunity to practise. That is what I did with the word of knowledge. I found it to be a tremendous gift in the ministry. If you are going into a town and praying with the word of knowledge, you will soon fill any hall.

It is surely by the exercise of this gift, among others, that the early church manifested such power. It is a valid gift which every believer is entitled to seek.

An example of Jesus exercising the word of knowledge may be taken from John's gospel: 'Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."'

(John 4:16-19)

Jesus exercised the word of knowledge to show His supernatural power and wisdom at this time, and it was such a witness to this woman that she indeed believed He was the Messiah. People have asked me, 'Why should God allow us to read the thoughts and intents of other persons' hearts?' They cannot believe that this is of the Holy Spirit. However, if we look at the Scriptures we find that the word of knowledge as set out in 1 Corinthians 12 is part of the Word of God. Then, turning to the Epistle to the Hebrews, we find these words:

'For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' (Hebrews 4:12)

Here is a clear indication that the word of knowledge will allow us to discern the thoughts and intents of the hearts of others in certain circumstances, as we operate under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. In counselling it saves hours of time, since it takes you directly to the cause of a problem. It is important that you put all things completely out of your mind, other than the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His presence. As you do He is able to speak to you concerning the person you are counselling.

It is also very important to persevere when you believe you have received something from God. I have been to meetings where the Holy Spirit spoke to me about a person's condition, which I was then able to describe with great accuracy, but where nobody responded.

As I have continued to persevere, however, even for several minutes, someone has finally stood to his feet and said, 'I believe it is me.' And it has been, in fact, that person. Many people after the meetings will come up and say, 'We were embarrassed and did not want to come out during the meeting.' But when you hang in there the Spirit of God meets the situation. Hold on in faith - faith is one of the basic gifts in which we must move. If I believe I have a word from God for a person, I hold to that word and I find that they come forward eventually.

If I stand at any meeting where the gospel is preached and begin to wait upon the Lord, I will hear His voice concerning people in that meeting. I am not boasting; I just expect it to happen. It is part of having an expectant faith as you work in the gifts. So I encourage you to expect the gifts to operate through you, and you will discover it happening.

Quite frequently when my wife is to speak at a meeting she will ask me ahead of time concerning any words of knowledge I may have received for that group. I give them to her, she lists them, and at the meeting describes the conditions, asking the persons concerned to stand. The Holy Spirit knows they are going to be there, and He has given the prior word of knowledge. This greatly increases faith at a meeting.

Often I wait upon the Lord before a meeting at which I am to speak, and He gives me accurate words of knowledge concerning people who will be there. I write these down and call them out at the meeting, especially if I am short of time, and because God knew they would be there and prepared their hearts, these people will come forward.

Yield to God and you will hear Him continually. The words in John 16:13 do not say that He speaks only between one and two o'clock in the morning, but at any time, and the more we yield to Him the more we will hear Him.

But remember that there are other voices in the world as well. That is why we must be committed to, and part of, the body of Christ, where our gifts from the Lord may be tested and confirmed.

Summing up this gift therefore I repeat that I believe it is a thought, or an impression on our mind or a vision, or the direct audible voice of the Holy Spirit telling us about a situation.

Testimony

A lady who came to one of my meetings in Wellington, New Zealand, was suffering from depression. She had been pregnant four times, but on each occasion there had been a miscarriage. Her fallopian tubes had been badly damaged and the doctor informed her that it was extremely unlikely she would ever be able to conceive again.

Prior to the meeting, the Lord had given me the name of Deborah and told me that this person had a problem with her reproductive system. During the course of the meeting, I called for the person with this condition and said that I believed the Lord had given me the name of Deborah. The Lord also gave me a clear indication as to where she was sitting. The lady concerned stood up and was healed instantly. The doctors were amazed to find the damage had been healed. She has since given birth to a healthy baby boy.

Chapter 10

Gift of Faith

' . . . to another faith by the same Spirit,'
(1 Corinthians 12:9)

Faith is a gift. It comes from total belief in the Word of God.

'So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' (Romans 10:17)

It grows through constant reading of the Word and total belief in it. We must totally believe the Word of God without question if faith is to grow. Each time I open the Bible, I ask the Lord for a rhema: that is, for part of His Word to be specially enlivened to me; He never fails. Faith comes from simple, childlike belief in the Word.

Faith must not be confused with feeling. Faith touches our spirit, while feeling springs from our soul-area — the emotions. Many times I have stood before a meeting feeling very sick, but, putting that aside, I have had faith in the Word. Then as I ministered in faith, I have felt the presence of God.

Some people mistakenly try to feel the presence of God in order to obtain faith — but He wants us to move in faith first. Then feeling follows.

Some men have great faith to see people healed of ear problems, others have great faith for people who need their teeth filled. It's just a particular dimension of faith with which God has blessed them as they seek to expand in that area. I have a strong gift of faith, for example, for people's back conditions, for asthma or diabetes or similar conditions, perhaps more than in some other areas of human need.

I believe that as you go from faith to faith you can see people healed in greater and greater measure. It is a great way in which to pray for people. You build faith upon faith; so from a very practical point of view if you want to move in the gift of faith, build upon the faith which God has already given you. Maybe you will start in a simple area of healing. Just continue to believe and as you do you will grow in that area.

We should be prepared to move in the faith that God offers us, not limiting Him. And always remember that faith is a gift also to the person for whom you are praying. Through the Word of God the gift of faith may be implanted in a person's heart, and just at that moment tremendous healing can begin or be accomplished. So never overlook the need for faith in that person.

If we believe implicitly that 'they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover' (Mark 16:18), their recovery starts immediately. This is an act of faith even though nothing may appear to happen at the time.

One of the circumstances in which the enemy attacks is when we are tired; in that state we may find it difficult to move in the area of faith.

Faith is based on an implicit trust in the Word of God, and He is able to pour out a richer measure of faith as we believe the Word. Remember, of course:

'For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.' (Mark 11:23)

If we begin to verbalise wrong attitudes and thoughts, then we receive those attitudes and thoughts because our ears hear what our mouth speaks out. This is a faith destroyer. Instead, our faith can be fortified if we are prepared to praise God, no matter what the circumstances. There have been so many times when events were working totally against me, and I have gone into my office, knelt and praised God, believing He was in charge of the situation. As this measure of faith has been exercised despite how I have felt, the circumstances which I thought were traumatic have fallen away and a beautiful solution has been found for the problem.

I have mentioned the need for complete and absolute faith in the Word of God. It is the foundation of all faith: complete, unquestioning belief (as a little child) that the Bible is the Word of God. I discover that many people have difficulty reading and understanding the Word because their mind gets in the way. The greatest enemy of faith is unbelief. If we persist in unbelief long enough, the spirit of unbelief enters. It is remarkable how, when we entertain unbelief, thoughts can lodge in our minds and remain there long after we have forgotten them, ready to rise up when we wish to move in faith. I remember reading a footnote to a certain translation of Mark 16 in the Bible. It stated that the latter part of Mark 16 did not appear in the original manuscripts. This created doubt in my mind concerning the statements of Jesus about healing and the casting out of devils, until I realised that whether or not those verses were in the original, we read in the book of Acts of these things happening after Pentecost. However, the thought still remained in my mind and would surface periodically. Subsequently I found that there are 4,200 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. At least 680 of them contain the gospel of Mark, and only two of these 680 do not have these verses. Of three Latin versions, 8,000 now exist — and they all contain the verses in question. The Gothic versions, the Egyptian versions and the American versions all contain these verses. It was not until the fourth century that the verses were questioned. In one of the two oldest versions in which they are missing, there is a space left blank, apparently for these verses; and in the other manuscript also omitted are Genesis 1-46, Psalms 105-137, Hebrews 9:14 and 13:25, all of Timothy 1 and 2, Titus, Philemon and Revelation!

Of course it was very comforting to read these facts. Nevertheless, the belief that had entered through my reading that faith-inhibiting footnote took a lot of erasing. Similarly, when we seek to move in faith all kinds of factors around us can intrude. It may be our education, our training in a particular discipline, or our reliance on man. For example, I have found that doctors readily believe in the power of God to heal, yet nurses, so accustomed to relying upon the skill of doctors, often have difficulty relying upon God's Word. For these reasons I encourage people to renounce any spirit of unbelief.

This spirit can be particularly strong if they are involved in the occult or if their parents have been involved in the occult. A familiar spirit can then come down through the generations to bind that person's mind.

When individuals say they have difficulty reading the Bible and understanding it, or that a veil seems to come over them when they attempt to read the Bible, I look upon it as a possible indication that they have been involved in the occult and need deliverance.

Faith is a finely balanced, tender plant needing to be nurtured. If we rely totally upon our natural mind we will not operate in faith. We must understand the spiritual dimension. As Paul writes,

'while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.'
(2 Corinthians 4:18)

We should be aware of the spiritual dimensions around us, the two kingdoms — of God and of Satan. We will only come into spiritual understanding as we approach the Word of God with the simplicity of a little child.

For all these reasons, if we are going to operate in faith we must nurture the faith which God has given us in His Word. We must come to the Word totally believing and accepting what it says to us.

I never question the Word of God. If I do not understand it, I just believe it. Then in time the Holy Spirit shows me clearly what is meant by a particular phrase or portion of it. To our natural mind the Word of God may at times seem to contradict itself, but once we move in the Spirit we can see clearly that there is no contradiction in any part of the Word of God. The failure of our natural mind to grasp the spiritual insights which God offers is what prevents our understanding of the Word.

Thus God offers us this gift of faith and we are to receive it without question or argument. As we continue to exercise it, we begin to sense God's wonderful anointing upon it.

During a recent crusade in Samoa, the Lord gave me a word for a person who had one arm shorter than the other. Immediately a lady in the audience got up from her seat and began walking towards the platform. It was obvious that she was the right person.

As she walked up the steps towards me, a sudden sense of doubt came into my mind. Would God do a miracle?

The next moment, I felt a sudden surge of faith in my spirit. I realised God was granting me the gift of faith at that very moment. Within a few seconds her right arm had grown out to the same length as her left arm. The crowd erupted.

One word which has always been a tremendous encouragement to me is found in Matthew, where Jesus said, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth' (Matthew 28:18). The word 'authority' in this scripture means 'power'.

'Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' (Matthew 28:19-20)

As Jesus has given us His authority, we can command healings and deliverance in His name, acting in faith. But it has been the Word illuminated to us, the rhema, which gives us that faith in which to operate.

We must be disciplined in the Word of God if we are to go in faith. We must study the Word diligently, making it our first priority of the day, if we are going to really grow in it. If we cannot accomplish it early in the day, then we must find some definite time each day to read it. Our spirit must be fed. Our body is fed with food and our mind is fed with what we read and hear and see. Our spirit, if we are committed to Jesus Christ, is fed only from the Word of God.

If we are prepared to act in this way, yielding to God through His Spirit as we read the Word, then the gift of faith grows. We pray in accordance with the Word, we believe the Word, we do not doubt the Word. Then it works.

"Is not My word like a fire?" says the LORD,
"And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?"
(Jeremiah 23:29)

Chapter 11

Gifts of Healing

' . . . to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,'
(1 Corinthians 12:9)

If you implicitly believe the verses from Mark 16 where it says that if you lay hands on the sick they shall recover, recovery starts immediately:

' . they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.'
(Mark 16:18)

I believe that every person for whom I pray and upon whom I lay hands begins to be healed immediately. If the healing has not already started before that, it begins at that point. There are no exceptions. To lay hands on the sick and to believe for their healing is a scriptural method for being healed. And I believe that the healing begins immediately.

Among other reasons, healing may be blocked by sin or unforgiveness on the part of a person. Many times as I have ministered to a person the Holy Spirit has quickened to me that there is unforgiveness in that person's heart. The Spirit of God is endeavouring to touch and to heal him but the hardness is blocking what God wants to do.

As a sovereign God, He will move in any circumstance or situation. I don't want to set out a list of rules for healing, but I do want to tell you that forgiveness (a basic pre-requisite to expressing love) is a basic requirement for healing.

I have asked people to stand in a church and begin to forgive. I have asked them to name those whom they should forgive. The pastor has come to me and said, 'Brother, some people are offended because you made them do it three times.'

That same pastor has come to me a year later, reporting an elderly man in his church healed instantly of arthritis (which he had had for thirty years) as he began to forgive his son. From the moment I began to move in the ministry of healing, and in the prayer of faith for healing, with the word of knowledge, I found the Lord impressing upon my mind the need for people to forgive; for men to honour their parents, to understand that they are accepted by God, that they are accepted in the Beloved:

'to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.'

(Ephesians 1:6)

When people can begin to understand that they are truly accepted by God, that they are forgiven, and that they must forgive, a release takes place. So in praying for the sick it is essential that we obey the Word of God. Based on Isaiah 59:1-2, I believe that where there is unbelief and a spirit of unforgiveness or other sin, it can block His healing power.

Other sins can prevent healing. I know of a girl, aged fourteen, who had leukaemia. The doctors had given up; they said she had only a few hours to live. I went to pray for her, and as I entered the room all the family were there, grouped around her. As I stood there the Lord began to speak to me about her father: 'This man has been fornicating for the last ten years.' That shook me.

I prayed for the girl, then went outside to speak to the father about how the Lord was able to heal and save. He responded to me by saying, 'I'd like to believe you, Bill, but I have problems in my life.'

I did not tell him I already knew of his problems. Instead I asked, 'What is your problem?'

He answered, 'I just can't stop chasing other women.'

I have seen that girl since - she has improved remarkably. Her father made a partial repentance, but later went back to his former condition. He said, 'I prefer to carry on the way I am.' I told him, 'The healing for your child is greatly dependent upon your attitude in this matter.' He would not give it up even for his child. However, the mother continued to believe, and I saw that child, considerably improved, a year later at a meeting. But I believe there was a direct spiritual link - not in all cases, but in that case - between the sins of the father and the daughter's illness.

(That is the third child I have prayed for who suffered from leukaemia whose father had been fornicating.)

It is important that in healing we encourage people to thank God before they see the healing manifested in their body. This is faith in accordance with Mark:

'Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.' (Mark 11:24)

I always encourage people to believe they have received their healing, although they may feel nothing at the initial stage. Often I have returned to places a year or two later, to learn that many were completely healed over a period of time after the first meeting.

When I am praying for a sick person I stand quietly with him, centre my thoughts on Jesus Christ, then begin to sense the anointing of the Spirit descending. I try to keep a humble attitude, with total dependency upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and as I am able to do so I find that His power and love operate in the most impossible situations.

In order to operate with the gift of faith for healing and in the gift of healing, I must be absolutely single-minded, believing in the authority that is given me by the Word of God to His servants:

'they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.' (Mark 16:18)

I recently had the experience of praying with a lady of eighty years who was almost entirely deaf. She had written, asking that I pray for her. I responded that I would be happy to do so, provided her vicar was present (she had told me she was a churchgoer). Her vicar called me by telephone, saying that he would be happy if I should pray with his parishioner. Nevertheless, he was concerned that if she were not healed she might lose her faith. Obviously, this man had reservations concerning the power of God to heal under these circumstances. As he and I walked together to this lady's home, I shared with him the words that 'with God nothing is impossible' (Luke 1:37). He agreed.

We entered the lady's home to find a parishioner friend, seventy-five years old and partly deaf, present with her. Although the lady used a hearing aid, she was so deaf that I had to shout at the top of my voice, speaking very slowly in order for her to understand what I was saying. It was clear from the outset that she loved the Lord Jesus Christ and had faith in her heart, but it was also clear that she couldn't hear anything.

After offering counsel concerning the ability of the Lord Jesus Christ to heal, and His gift of healing for her, I asked the vicar to anoint her with oil, which he did. Then I laid hands upon her, praying for her healing, and immediately I sensed the presence of the Holy Spirit.

After praying, I spoke no more to her but turned my attention to her seventy-five-year-old lady friend, who appeared to have an improvement in her hearing as soon as we had prayed for her. I then turned again to the eighty-year-old, temporarily forgetting that previously I had had to shout. I spoke to her in a normal voice. She responded immediately, hearing me clearly. The longer our conversation continued, the more astonished the vicar became. God had performed a miracle in a moment, and this dear lady was able to hear in a beautiful and normal manner.

In ministering healing to the sick, it is most important that God's love also be ministered. If the sick person feels you are judging him for past sin in his life, or in respect to any other matter in his heart, he will shrink back from the fullness of God's power, which should be operating through you.

When we minister to the sick, we must accept people as they are. They need to be told that they are loved and accepted by God. We all need to understand that God accepts and loves us, and as we do so we can accept His healing love and power much more deeply.

I find so many people are rejected, and suffer from feelings of rejection, particularly if there has been wrong parental relationship or unforgiveness in their lives. As they are encouraged to honour their parents and forgive others, and as the love of God flows through you as the ministering person, the healing power and anointing of God may fall upon them.

Praying for the sick is not a mechanical action. It is an act of love, and it requires the total giving of oneself by the person who is praying. If we are to be ministers of God's love then we must act in love.

It is good to speak the Word of God to a sick person and encourage him by pointing out that Christ indeed died not only to give him the gift of eternal life and to forgive him of all sins, but also to heal him: 'by whose stripes you were healed' (1 Peter 2:24).

In praying for the person to be healed, I wait upon the Lord until I sense the power of the Holy Spirit upon me. This usually comes in the form of the anointing — but not always. I try to set my heart at peace before God and focus my whole mind upon Him. With total belief in my heart, I recall the promises of God, and having counselled the person to release any bitterness, unforgiveness, rejection or fear, I can then believe for God's Spirit to touch that person. As I said earlier, the sick person must believe that God has touched him and must begin to praise Him for the healing, although there may be no immediate evidence in his body.

The ministry of healing requires sacrifice on our part. We are often approached to pray for the sick when it is not very convenient for us. We may be required to travel considerable distances, people may come to our home at an inconvenient hour, or they may telephone us at a late hour of the evening. All of this requires the fruit of love and patience in our lives combined with a sense of complete dedication.

When praying for the sick, we must never overlook the admonition from James:

'Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.' (James 5:14)

Usually prayer for the sick is best carried out in the presence of a group of believing elders from the church. For this reason, I always ask whether or not the elders of the person's church have already prayed for him. We must always encourage believers to look in the first place for ministry to their own pastor and elders. If the person persists, then I will usually ask whether their pastor or elders can be present when I pray for them.

On the other hand, there are many circumstances when it is not practical to suggest such a course of action. Sometimes the person does not belong to a church, or it is an emergency situation and the church is a very considerable distance away. In all of these circumstances, every Christian should be prepared to minister in love to the sick, acting in faith, in accordance with the Word of God.

Chapter 12

Miracles

' . . . to another the working of miracles,'
(1 Corinthians 12:10)

The gift of miracles is often reflected in instantaneous healing. Observe how Jesus healed the nobleman's son:

'When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe." The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives!" So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying "Your son lives!" Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household. This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.' (John 4:47-54)

This is described as the second miracle which Jesus performed; thus, an instantaneous healing is properly referred to as a miracle.

When I say that as we lay hands on the sick they begin to recover, I have no doubt about it. On some occasions, however, the Spirit of God moves miraculously on people; we see the electricity of God pulsing through their bodies, and there may be an instantaneous healing. So we do not limit God either way, for He does bestow the gift of miracles.

Let us believe Him for miracles, and let us not be discouraged. And if we do not see instantaneous miracles, let us keep a balance in the Word of God; let us not go back into unbelief and say that God does not heal. We must always remember that as we lay hands on the sick they shall recover, and also that God is a God of miracles.

Let us also remember that Jesus told us,

'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.' (John 14:12)

God is not bound by time or circumstance. Contrary to the case in the natural realm, in the spiritual realm, miracles are within our grasp if we only will move in that realm with total belief in our heart.

As always, of course, we must be obedient to the Word of God and ensure that our requests are in accordance with His Word. If we have a right heart relationship towards Him, and are obeying the commandment of Jesus to love one another as He loved us, then I believe we are on strong ground for God's grace to operate in our lives. Remember, we are told,

'Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.' (1 John 5:14)

I've found it is generally easy to find the will of God because the Scriptures are so clear. It is obviously His will to prosper us in a total sense:

'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.' (2 Corinthians 8:9)

It is obviously God's will also to give us health in a total sense:

'Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things, and be in health, just as your soul prospers.' (3 John 2)

'who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed.' (1 Peter 2:24)

I recall an incident a few years ago in a city in New Zealand where I was speaking at a Women's Aglow meeting. After I had finished, the Holy Spirit directed my attention to a person present who He let me know had wanted to have a child for the last seven years. The Spirit revealed to me that her womb was twisted, almost into an inverted position.

As I spoke the words the Holy Spirit gave me, a young lady rushed forward. She knew the Holy Spirit was speaking about her. As I began to pray for her, she fell to the floor under the power of the Spirit. As we watched, we observed her abdominal area moving up and down in a great heaving motion. She seemed to be in some pain, but it was clear to me that the power of God was moving through her body. Then she jumped to her feet and said, 'I know I am healed!'

God had reversed her womb condition in a moment of time, as she had touched the hem of His garment. A few months later she was pregnant. A year later we visited that same city and she brought her child to the public meeting and gladly gave her testimony to the glory of God. In these areas of healing and many others, as we remain humble before the Lord and believe His Word, He is able to accomplish miracles.

The story of Grant Parker as told by his mother — extracted from the book *I Believe in Miracles*:

I lay flat on the floor of the businessman's office.

'This can't be happening to me,' I kept thinking. Above me people were moving around, but it was all a bit hazy, somewhat unreal.

'I don't believe in the power of God,' I thought. 'I don't believe in healing. I don't believe in miracles.'

Yet I couldn't deny what had happened — what was happening — to me.

Brian and I had only come here as a last resort. For the last eight years we had tried unsuccessfully to cope with the disease crippling our eleven-year-old son, Grant.

But nothing worked. The best medical advice in the world couldn't even tell us what was wrong, let alone know how to cure him.

Increasingly potent drugs proved useless, and the pain which racked Grant's body got worse and worse.

Now he was wheelchair bound, facing a life of misery and premature death. It was too much for Brian and me to cope with. Physically, emotionally and spiritually we were completely drained. We had reached the end of our tether. The incessant day and night responsibility had come close to destroying our family, our marriage, our finances, and — worst of all — our faith in God.

So here we were in Bill Subritzky's office as a last resort. Even then, I personally didn't expect, or want, a miracle.

In fact, I wasn't quite sure why I was there.

I was so uncertain and nervous that it was just as well he shut the door when he ushered us into his office. Otherwise I would have bolted.

Then things really got out of hand.

Instead of praying for Grant, he wanted to pray for me.

I remember him putting his hand on top of my head and then ... nothing.

It must have been a few minutes later that I came round to find myself lying flat on the plush carpet in the office.

I didn't know how I got there. All I knew was that I was enjoying this experience.

Bill prayed for Brian and then, finally, he turned to Grant saying, 'I want you to stand up.'

But Grant couldn't stand up. I knew that. The degeneration in his back was so far advanced that he couldn't even get out of the wheelchair unaided. But this was to be my day of discovery. Slowly, surely, Grant got out of the wheelchair.

I was bewildered. It just wasn't possible. And then reality hit again — suddenly he collapsed to the floor. 'Oh, he's fallen again,' I thought. 'That's it.'

By then I had stood up and I looked down at my son, prostrate on the floor, still crippled.

Even this great faith healer hadn't succeeded.

But as I looked, I could see something dramatic had happened. Grant's eyes were shut, but the most beautiful and peaceful smile covered his face.

It was then that I began to cry ...

The difference I had seen between Grant then and the Grant I had seen the day before, just after the plaster cast incident, was unbelievable.

They were two different people. If you'd seen photos of the two you wouldn't have believed they were the same. All the torture had been taken out of his face.

Bill knelt down and dabbed oil on his forehead, demanding that in the name of Jesus all tormenting spirits come out of Grant's body. Grant lay completely calm and still. Still I fought the possibility of a miracle happening. I was witnessing the most amazing expression of God touching someone's life, and yet I still couldn't shake off my belief that God didn't work today. I even warned Bill that Grant couldn't walk, thinking that somehow the things taking place before my eyes had to stop.

But Bill wasn't ready to stop yet.

He asked Grant to get up, which he did, and then told him to touch his toes. I couldn't believe it, but Grant did so without the slightest hesitation. During his illness, if he stood with his hands at his side, he could only slide each hand an inch down his legs. Now he was touching his toes.

Bill then began walking Grant around, like you do when you teach a child to walk. He led him round the room — and there was my boy, just like a toddler following his father around. Brian was sobbing and I think I was too. It was all too unreal to be true and yet I knew it was really happening. I felt so excited and realised for the first time in my life that God is not to be limited by man.

My doubts were still there, but they were being quickly dispelled. As Bill led him round the room, Brian and I hovered anxiously, waiting to catch him if he fell. I knew something wonderful, a miracle, was taking place. But I still thought it would have to happen over a period, that this would be the start of a recovery process.

In fact, I didn't really want any more right then and there. I didn't want to be greedy. But Bill still wasn't finished.

Next he opened his office door and asked Grant if he would like to walk down to the reception area and back. The corridor is about sixty metres long and he managed that quite well.

When he came back, Bill said, 'Would you like to run?' And so off Grant went again running up and down the corridor.

And all the time the office floor became wetter and wetter with our tears as Brian and I cried for joy. I was uncontrollable, sobbing and sobbing ...

And I began to feel Bill's sympathy and compassion, whereas before he had seemed a bit clinical. Now he was human again.

It was an amazing feeling to be so desperate and feel there is no hope and then see such a victory. It was something you could never describe, something that will be with us for the rest of our lives. Even now, when we talk about it, I cry. I find I get very emotional when I think just how wonderful it's been.

Grant returned from running up and down the corridor looking a bit sheepish, slightly embarrassed. But he was exhilarated all the same. His face was a bit pale, but it glowed. He was healed! God had healed him. God was alive and working in the 20th century. It was an amazing discovery.

The reality of God working in the modern world was brought home when one of the workers at the office looked in, simply said, 'Oh another miracle, praise the Lord,' and walked off. To him it was commonplace — he saw it all the time. To us it was the most wonderful thing ever, a total revolution in our thinking and indoctrination.

And then, suddenly, Bill was gone, saying something about grabbing a sandwich for lunch. I wanted to hug him and thank him, but looking back I know that would have meant I was giving him the glory and not God.

I looked at my watch and it was 12.45. It had taken 45 minutes for our lives to be turned upside down — Grant was healed and our lives would never be the same again.

Now I believe in miracles!

Two years later as I was skiing on a mountainside I heard a voice shout, 'Hello Mr Subritzky!' It was Grant Parker skiing at great speed down the mountain. Twenty years have elapsed since Grant received his miracle. He is still fully healed.

Chapter 13

Gift of Discernment

' . . . to another discerning of spirits,'
(1 Corinthians 12:10)

I believe that the gift of discernment can best be described as a thought, an impression or a vision or the direct audible voice of God telling us about spirits which are attacking a person or are involved in a situation.

The gift of the discernment of spirits is a vital one for Christian ministry. It is linked to the casting out of demons. Do you know that Jesus never once commissioned His disciples to pray for the sick without also commissioning them to cast out devils?

The ministry of standing on the authority of the Word of God and believing it implicitly enough to use against demon power is, I believe, for every one of us. I am not saying the ministry of casting out devils is necessarily for every one of us, but the ministry of standing on God's Word and believing it against demon power is for every one of us.

One night a brother at my prayer meeting said to me, 'Brother, the Lord is giving you the gift of discernment.' I thank God for this brother who encouraged me in that way. From then on I began, by practise, to develop the Lord's gift. As I prayed with people I found that the Holy Spirit would show me the various demons or spirits that controlled some of them, and so I began to move in considerable depth in this particular ministry.

However, a balance is needed. But I learned one thing which I have never forgotten. That is that I can take any verse from the Word of God - any verse - and speak it to someone who has a demon problem, and, as the demon manifests, it will invariably say, 'I don't want to hear it, I don't want to hear it — I do not want to hear it!'

This is one more evidence of the authenticity of the Word of God. When you discern spirits and pray, you must have a complete faith within your heart. If you do not, you will be challenged by the demon before you.

I love to quote the Scriptures from Revelation:

'Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.' (Revelation 20:14)

I tell the demon that is where it is going.

In Fiji a pastor and I were praying for a young couple. The girl received the baptism in the Spirit beautifully, but the young man was having considerable problems. The Holy Spirit had revealed to me that there was still a Hindi spirit to be dealt with in his life. As we continued to pray, the people in the church, who knew we were ministering, began to sing. After a while we heard them singing, 'In the name of Jesus the demons must flee'. As they sang this with great gusto, the young man began to sway backward and forward and a voice came from his mouth, singing the same tune. I knew it was not the boy; I knew it was the spirit.

I asked, 'What on earth are you doing?'

The spirit replied, 'This is my favourite tune.'

Now, I know we are not supposed to converse at any length with demons, nor do I make a practice of it. But this is what that spirit said to me: 'This is my favourite tune — in the name of Jesus the demons must flee.' Then the realisation flooded over me that this demon had heard so many unbelieving Christians sing 'In the name of Jesus the demons must flee' that he was no longer afraid, and had even made it his favourite tune. We must have faith in what we are doing!

The demon named himself — he was the Fijian shark god — and the young man was totally delivered — in the name of Jesus.

I report this to emphasise the need for proper spiritual discernment in these ministries. Even the devils believe in God according to James 2:19. But accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour is an entirely different level of spiritual commitment. A total Christ-centred faith at work, based on the Word, is absolutely necessary in the discerning of spirits.

The discerning of spirits is a gift whereby the Holy Spirit clearly begins to create an uneasiness within you concerning a situation. As you wait upon the Lord you realise that there is a spirit of fear, rejection, or some other force operating within a person. Then there is, of course, a need for deliverance ministry.

The following is an example from the Scriptures concerning the use of this gift:

'Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.'

(Acts 16:16-18)

Paul discerned a spirit of divination within the girl. Many times as we stand with a sick person we discern that the sickness is caused by a demonic force. As mentioned, Jesus never once commissioned His disciples to pray for the sick without commissioning them to cast out demons. The discerning of spirits is an important part of the healing ministry.

Often when people have harboured bitterness against others, even though they have forgiven them, the spirit of bitterness still remains attached to their being. A person may have repented of the bitterness but the spirit of bitterness itself may still be present, causing some physical problems. As the Holy Spirit reveals it, I command the spirit of bitterness to leave, and if the person remains in an attitude of repentance the spirit goes and the healing commences. This is particularly important in the case of arthritis and similar conditions.

When we are actually involved in deliverance ministry, the discerning of spirits is valuable in discerning the chief demon and also whether the 'cleansing of the house' (the person) has taken place. The Holy Spirit will bring to our mind through the gift of discernment the names of the various demons that may be involved with the person, and as they are named the demons will manifest themselves.

I well recall a man, approximately forty and a pillar in his church, brought to me who claimed to be a tongues-speaking Christian, baptised in the Spirit, and leader of his prayer meeting. He told me that whenever he was leading his group something seemed to take over his voice and he would sing notes at an ever-higher pitch.

As I waited upon the Lord, the Holy Spirit showed me that his mother had tried to abort him. I commanded the spirit of abortion to leave him, and this man lay upon the ground, curled up like a foetus, with the demon of abortion screaming out of him. As he was released from this demon, other demons also came out, until he was finally completely cleansed.

At times, demons do oppress Christian people and organisations. Under the authority of Anglican Bishop Chui of Singapore, I was leading a teaching session with some of his clergy. During the course of the discussion, the bishop, who is a godly and gentle man, said he believed the cathedral could be subject to demonic attack. Earlier, as I was speaking, I had discerned this, but had not felt it was my place to raise the issue.

As the bishop spoke to me I saw in my spirit the angel of death, three metres high, resting over the cathedral. I told the bishop about this and he said, 'Bill, I have no difficulty believing what you are saying. During the war years the Japanese took all the Australian nurses in Singapore, brought them into the grounds of this cathedral, and massacred them here. Their bodies were buried in these grounds and exhumed after the war.'

With that we agreed to go outside and march around the cathedral, taking it Jericho style. As we passed the place where the nurses had been buried, a noise like a tornado came down from the side of the cathedral to the ground. It was the wind of the Holy Spirit. As we trusted God, I sensed the angel of death leaving the pinnacle of the cathedral and being brought down by the Spirit of God. The wind of the spirit swept over the procession, taking nearly everybody to the ground. We knew then that God had driven the angel of death from the cathedral. We all sensed a tremendous anointing as the yoke of the enemy was broken; this was followed by great rejoicing. It is significant that the Anglican Diocese of Singapore was the first Anglican diocese in the world in which every parish came into charismatic renewal. I believe that this was a direct result of the cleansing of the cathedral and the defeat of the angel of death.

When I pray for people with cancer I often discern a spirit of fear about them. Before I rebuke the spirit of cancer I command the spirit of fear to leave that person, and as they themselves renounce it in the name of Jesus, the Holy Spirit is able to touch and to deal with the remaining spirit of cancer.

To sum up, in order to operate in the gift of discerning of spirits we must yield our heart and mind to the Spirit of God. As we do so, He will quicken an uneasiness in our spirit and bring a thought or an impression to our mind, and as we speak it out in faith we will find that the Holy Spirit confirms it.

The Holy Spirit will often show me that a person has been fornicating or is masturbating and I will take them aside and confront them about it. Sometimes they deny it at first, but then feeling convicted, they admit it. As they confess these sins and renounce them, we command the spirit of fornication or the spirit of masturbation to leave, and they are set free.

Masturbation, if allowed to control our body, brings with it other unclean habits and desires which we cannot control. We must always be aware that we are operating in the spiritual realm and against spiritual forces. God gives us the gift of discerning of spirits to enable us to discern the hand of the enemy and to set the captives free. If you are with a group of loving Christians and practising this gift, as you let the Spirit of God impress something upon your heart and mind concerning a situation, you will discern any spirits that may be afflicting or tormenting any person present in the gathering. The Holy Spirit will bring to your mind the name of that spirit and, as you are moving in openness and love, the person afflicted by that spirit will readily agree that this is so. Of course, sensitivity and wisdom must be observed. When we are praying for deliverance for a person, we must always remember the authority we have in Jesus Christ. In Luke Chapter 7, we read of the Centurion who clearly recognised the authority of Jesus Christ.

'Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go', and he goes; and to another, 'Come', and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this', and he does it." When Jesus heard these things, He marvelled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" (Luke 7:7-9)

The order of authority is clearly set out in the scripture, namely God, then Jesus, then man, then woman, then child. If we are operating in this correct order of authority, the demonic powers will understand it and will submit to that authority. I have been involved in the deliverance ministry for many years, and I find that knowing the authority in Jesus Christ is an absolute key to a successful deliverance ministry. As the demonic powers recognise our authority in Jesus Christ they submit to us.

Remember that even though we may have yielded our bodies as instruments of righteousness, in accordance with Romans 6:13, and have really turned to the Lord, these spirits can still be oppressing us, causing sickness, or seeking to torment us.

That is why the Holy Spirit has placed the gift of discernment and the ministry of deliverance in the body of Christ - so that we may defeat the darts of the enemy.

Chapter 14

Tongues

... to another different kinds of tongues,'
(1 Corinthians 12:10)

The gift of tongues for public ministry is a beautiful gift, and it too should edify the body of Christ. Paul says,

'I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.' (1 Corinthians 14:5)

It is therefore important that an interpreter be present when the message is brought in tongues, as otherwise there will be confusion. Paul says,

'If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.' (1 Corinthians 14:27-28)

It is therefore important that messages in tongues be delivered in order, and only one at a time, with at least one person present to interpret. Scripturally, it seems to be that there should only be two or three messages at the most in tongues in any one meeting.

Here again, encouragement is needed in speaking out in tongues. If we are prepared to put aside the thoughts of our natural mind and really centre them on Jesus Christ in order to allow Him to speak to us, we will feel a quickening in our spirit that we should speak out in this way.

We may have only the first few syllables to speak, but as we do God will anoint us with a message, and as the meeting is led by the Holy Spirit the interpretation will come. It may be from the person bringing the message, or it may be from another person.

As I began to lead our own prayer meetings the Holy Spirit spoke to me concerning the fact that He had given a person present among us a song. I began to encourage a certain lady to whom the Holy Spirit directed my attention in this regard, and as she began to sing in the Spirit, the anointing came upon her words. The Holy Spirit then gave clear direction that there were second and third verses. Finally the Holy Spirit gave me the faith to encourage my sister to bring the interpretation in English. This she did, in perfect rhythm and syllables, and as a result the meeting was greatly blessed. After being thus encouraged, this lady began to minister at other meetings and now has a tremendous ministry along these lines.

I was recently at a meeting of young Christians, some only a few weeks old in the Lord, teaching on the gifts of the Spirit. I encouraged some of them to speak out in a new language which the Lord had given them. I waited on each occasion for the interpretation. The first message in tongues was rather hesitant and consisted of a few syllables only, but as boldness came upon the person the anointing began to fall. Almost immediately afterward a beautiful interpretation in English was presented. The person bringing the interpretation was a young man who had previously led a life of deep sin before coming to the Lord, but the anointing was unquestionably upon him.

The pastor of the church shook his head in disbelief. Although Spirit-filled, he found it difficult, as did others, to believe that God could move so spontaneously through such a new creature in Him. No, we do not need to be people of great learning or great merit to operate in the gifts. We simply must believe the Lord and be faithful to what He gives us.

If you believe that the Lord wishes you to move in this gift, it is suggested you pray quietly in the Spirit so that no other person can hear you. Then as the opportunity offers itself and you believe it is God's will, bring forth the message in a tongue. Here again, it is wonderful to move in the confines of a small, loving prayer group, which can assist you in developing this gift.

You may only utter a few stammering syllables in tongues, but it will be a start. Encouragement in the gifts of the Spirit is indispensable if great growth is to result in this area. The love and concern of those around us can cause the flower of faith and love to flourish abundantly in our midst.

I believe it is plain that the foregoing Bible passages are primarily for the public ministry of the gift of tongues; that is, God impresses on you to bring a word of prophecy in an unknown tongue. Most folk in this situation have a sense of God's anointing as they bring the message publicly. It is a public expression. The message comes in that tongue; then, of course, there should be the interpretation. We are told that at meetings there should be only three such messages.

'If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret.'

(1 Corinthians 14:27)

I don't know how legalistic we need to be, but that is what Paul seems to say in 1 Corinthians 14. (Otherwise you could go on with tongue messages all night.) I take the view that, in addition, there should be an interpretation after each message. Otherwise, there could be confusion. So interpretation may come through the one bringing the message, or it may come from another person. Here again, it is a question of simply waiting upon God and trusting Him. If you believe He is speaking to you, then speak out according to His direction. Sometimes when people move in this gift, they utter only a few syllables and then stop. They should be motivated by others to continue further; then God will anoint them. If the message is continually repetitive, using the same syllables, then obviously we must offer a gentle word of encouragement to ensure that they go on to other words which God would have them speak.

As I said at the beginning of this chapter, the gift of tongues referred to in 1 Corinthians 12:10 is for public ministry. This is to be used to edify and build up the body of Christ. As God gives a message in tongues to a person for the Body, it can be interpreted. In order to do so, we need to be baptised with the Holy Spirit.

If you have never had this experience, may I suggest the following:

How to ask for the baptism with the Holy Spirit

- Go on your knees before the Lord and confess all your sins and receive God's forgiveness.
- Acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.
- Allow the Holy Spirit to remind you of any areas of occult involvement on your part or on the part of your parents or ancestors. Renounce that involvement in the name of Jesus Christ.
- Believe in your heart that the Word of God is absolutely true and that God through Jesus Christ will give this great blessing to you as you believe.
- Say a simple prayer like this:

Dear Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus I renounce all my sins (name those sins) and I

especially renounce all involvement in the occult or witchcraft on my own part or on the part of my parents or my ancestors. I renounce all fear and unbelief and any blockage of my mind. I ask you, Lord Jesus, to baptise me with the Holy Spirit.'

How to receive

You may be standing or kneeling. It is good to close our eyes and think of Jesus seated at the right hand of God, ready to pour out the promise of the Father upon us. As we quietly wait upon Him and allow Him to do this we begin to sense the peace of God.

We should not listen to what we are saying but let God give us a new language. Then we will find that from our innermost being will flow a river of living water of words as the Holy Spirit helps us:

'But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.'

(John 4:14)

While we are kneeling and praying to God through Jesus Christ we should realise that the Holy Spirit deep within our heart will rise up as we allow Him to do so. He will come like a river onto our tongue and help us to speak out in our new language.

We must do something. God will not force us to do anything. Accordingly, when we are expecting to receive the gift of tongues which accompanies the baptism of the Holy Spirit we should be like a little child and open our mouth and speak out words. If necessary we can start with words which we make up. As we do so the cord between our mind and tongue is cut and our mind no longer controls all the words that come onto our tongue. As we become like a little child and are fools for Jesus Christ, making baby-like sounds and continuing to have our heart directed towards God, the Holy Spirit will come upon our tongue and will give us the gift of a new language.

Chapter 15

Interpretation of Tongues

. . . to another the interpretation of tongues.'
(1 Corinthians 12:10)

I believe that the interpretation of tongues can be described as a thought, impression or a vision, or the direct audible voice of God speaking to our heart and mind and giving us words that interpret a message which has already been brought to us in a meeting through a tongue. This gift may be operated by means of encouragement within the body of Christ. After a message in a tongue has been brought, there should be a pause to enable the interpretation. Here the leader of the meeting has a great responsibility to wisely aid the provision of an interpretation. Often God has given it to a person present at the meeting, and that person just needs a little motivation to bring forth the message.

We should remember that the interpretation of a tongue is not necessarily the translation of the message. People sometimes misunderstand, believing that it must be an exact literal translation of the message brought. But it is not a translation; it is an interpretation. However, I have known occasions when some person in the meeting who did not believe in the gifts of the Spirit was amazed to hear the message first in a language which he knew, then the interpretation, which was a perfect translation. God is not limited, and the Spirit moves as He wills and to His glory. He may indeed bring a perfect translation through you or another person, but on the other hand it may be simply an interpretation of the truth presented.

I have heard some very young Christians bringing beautiful words of interpretation as they have moved in boldness. God wants bold people, and as we move in His boldness and love, if we are faithful and obedient to His Word, He will anoint us.

Speaking in tongues is really our spirit speaking to God with the aid of the Holy Spirit, right past our natural mind. I often encourage people who have spoken in a tongue to wait upon the Lord and follow it up with the English words that come into their mind. Many times this is a beautiful interpretation of what God has given them in the Spirit.

Prophecy and interpretation may be brought in any form of the native tongue. It does not have to be, for instance, in old fashioned English (thus said the Lord'), but can be brought out in simple words of modern English, such as 'I believe the Lord says'. There are great messages delivered in large public meetings where God has anointed vessels to bring forward strong words of prophecy and interpretation in a very loud voice. Hearing these, some people are intimidated, feeling themselves to be too weak a vessel to operate in this gift. We must not limit God to this form of ministry in a public meeting. He can just as easily operate in a small gathering of two or three persons with His still small voice, or in the largest meeting, speaking quietly through the most unassuming member of the group.

We must always be aware, in love for one another, that God may wish to speak through any Christian, bringing a message of great faith and hope to those nearby; in fact, often that person may be more spiritually attuned to what God is saying than the most 'professional' prophet.

As we have discussed already under the gift of prophecy it is important to encourage people to move in this ministry of interpretation of tongues. Here again, we need to make a start and to trust God. As we are encouraged to do so then the Holy Spirit can speak through us and give the interpretation of a message which has already been brought as a tongue. These messages in tongues and their interpretation are often a form of prophecy and can be a message related both to the person bringing it or to the whole body of persons listening. God loves to speak to His people. We only need to give Him the chance.

Chapter 16

Leadership for the Meeting

It is very important that the leader of a meeting move sensitively in the Holy Spirit. We must be very attentive to God and to His voice.

So often, when singing and the praising of God have reached tremendous heights in the Spirit and God has wanted to bring a message, I have felt that the Holy Spirit has been grieved.

Instead of waiting for that message, the leader of the meeting has plunged into the next song, whether it be praise or worship, and the opportunity has been lost. What is wrong with silence at the appropriate time? I am sure that some dear folk who are leading meetings feel that a moment of silence would be wrong, or perhaps they may even fear such a moment.

Again, some leaders appear to fear the move of the Spirit in a meeting. Perhaps they feel that some person may bring a wrong word of prophecy, or a word not anointed by the Spirit.

I have often been confronted with this situation. We must remember that the word of prophecy or an interpretation can originate in the 'soulful' realm; i.e. in the realm of the mind, not the realm of the Spirit. It may be a perfectly good and valid word, but has arisen through the person's mind - not directly from inspiration of the Spirit. I do not go out of my way to stop such a word, because we can very easily damage the faith of some young Christian who is seeking to move in the Spirit. I would stop that person from speaking only when the word of prophecy or interpretation is contrary to the Word of God.

In accordance with 1 Corinthians 14:3, if it does not edify, exhort or comfort, but rather is a strong word of condemnation with nothing to commend it in terms of the Scriptures, then my own spirit witnesses against it.

'But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.'

(1 Corinthians 14:3)

During the last fourteen years I have had to do this on only two occasions out of the hundreds of messages I have heard in public meetings.

In some situations church leaders permit only 'professional prophets'. I call them 'professional' without intending to be derogatory, but in effect everybody looks to these persons to bring a word of prophecy in accordance with the gift of prophecy referred to in 1 Corinthians 12, but they do not look to any other person.

I feel there is confusion here between the gift of prophecy and the ministry of a prophet. In God's grace, some churches have acknowledged 'prophets' but we must remember that the ministry of prophecy is for everyone and we should all be able to participate in this ministry.

'For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.' (1 Corinthians 14:31)

It is so in order that we may learn and be comforted.

I remember speaking in a church on the gifts of the Spirit, then encouraging church members to move in this gift. The Holy Spirit indicated that there were ten persons in that place through whom He desired to move that day, so I asked that no person should speak who had ever previously brought a word of prophecy or a message in a tongue.

The first message which came forth was anointed, and I sensed in my spirit that the person had not spoken out previously. The second message was good, and again came from a first timer. But when the third message was brought I knew immediately that the person had frequently brought a message in that church.

After the lady had finished I asked if she had previously prophesied and she said yes. I pointed out that I had asked that no person should bring a message who had prophesied before.

The fourth message was again from a beginner, but the fifth person who spoke out was a 'professional prophet'.

Despite my repeated requests, it continued to happen. Some people feel tremendous pressure (inwardly or from their peers) to bring a word, even in disregard of God's direction to the leadership of the meeting. Those who had been accustomed to prophesying did not resist bringing a word of prophecy, even though they were told not to do so and to allow others to speak. At least seventeen persons brought a word before I reached the required ten which the Lord had given me and whom He wished to encourage for the first time.

I have said previously that I believe the Holy Spirit speaks through one person at a time in the directing of a meeting. That person may be preaching, prophesying or leading in worship.

Whatever is the case, he or she should be very sensitive to what God is saying at that particular moment. I well remember when the Lord began to encourage me to bring my wife Pat into the gift of prophecy. He spoke clearly to me one night that He had given Pat a word of prophecy. She then brought it forth somewhat hesitantly, but the Holy Spirit said there was more. I urged her to bring more, until the whole message was presented.

Even today the Holy Spirit will show me on occasions that not the whole word of prophecy has been brought, and I then encourage the person to bring a further word.

As we continued to hold prayer meetings in our home, the numbers became so great that it was necessary to bring people into the basement of the house as well as into the family room and the lounge. (The centre of worship was in the lounge and we had intercom speakers in the other rooms.) Imagine my concern one night when the Holy Spirit let me know there was a message in tongues among those gathered in the basement.

I did not know who was in the basement, or even if they were believers. However, moving in faith, I asked for a message in tongues to be brought from the basement and, sure enough, it flowed forth beautifully through the intercom system. The Holy Spirit then indicated that the interpretation was in the family room, and as I called for it somebody from that room brought forth a beautiful word of interpretation.

The obvious way in which the Spirit was moving created a tremendous spirit of faith in the meeting, not only inspiring me as a leader, but everyone else present, so that the Spirit of God was then able to bless and touch people mightily throughout the meeting.

Sometimes when I am speaking the Holy Spirit indicates to me that He is healing somebody of a particular condition. I may be led to stop at that point and express what I believe the Lord is saying. People will probably stand up at that moment, healed, or at least knowing that the power of God is falling upon them. This further heightens the faith and expectancy in the meeting.

Paul said that He did not come with excellency or speech or wisdom, 'declaring to you the testimony of God' (1 Corinthians 2:1). His speech and preaching were not with enticing words of men's wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

'And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,' (1 Corinthians 2:4)

The Holy Spirit is always willing to demonstrate His love and His power if we are open to Him.

When only a few people are spiritually stimulated to prophesy in a church, others become discouraged. That is why Paul said that we should all prophesy in the ministry of prophecy. I believe that if all members were motivated to prophesy, God would speak mightily throughout the congregation.

Therefore, if you are acting in a leadership role, remember that the Holy Spirit is the one leading the meeting through you, and you do not need to strive or struggle. Just let Him operate throughout the meeting, speaking through various persons as He leads. You will then find a great anointing coming over the meeting. The spirit of faith will be revived, and healings and deliverances will take place before your very eyes.

Chapter 17

How to Receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

There are various ways in which we can receive gifts of the Holy Spirit. The first is by the laying on of the hands of the elders. We find this referred to in 1 Timothy 4:14:

'Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.'

The apostle Paul refers to this episode again in 2 Timothy 1:6,

'Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.'

Sometimes God sovereignly grants the gifts of the Holy Spirit as we believe to receive them.

As we wait upon Him in prayer and believe for the gifts, then God can move mightily.

When I teach at a seminar on receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit, I find that people are hungry to receive these gifts. I now set out the methodology I have used with success on many occasions.

Practical ministry

- Encourage everybody to break into pairs.
- Tell them to say some words of encouragement, in a perfectly natural way to the other person, which they believe the Lord is giving them, i.e. 'The Lord wishes to bless you' or 'God loves you' or 'God is with you' or 'God hears the cry of your heart', etc.
- Now encourage them to expand on these words, but ensure they say nothing which directs people or tells their future.
- As the person begins to say something, they should believe the Lord is giving them words which would be words of encouragement, exhortation or comfort for the other person.

Step 1: Prophecy

Bring everybody back together again and break them into groups of, say, six people. Then begin to practise the gift of prophecy by encouraging each person in the group to say something that they believe the Lord wants to speak out to the group. As they do so, they should speak in the first person, i.e. 'I love you My people and I'm with you at this time.' Let the person say something that they have made up for the first part of the sentence but let the Holy Spirit help them to complete the sentence.

After this has been practised for, say, ten or fifteen minutes, we should move onto the next step.

Step 2: Gift of tongues and interpretation

Ask each group to pair off again into twos and encourage them individually to speak in tongues and let their partner or themselves give what they believe to be an interpretation. This interpretation should be similar to the form of prophecy above, i.e. God giving words of encouragement such as, 'I wish to encourage my people' or again, 'I'm with you my people', etc.

After a few minutes, bring the group back together and tell the group to encourage individual people to speak out in their tongue and either that person or one other person bring out what they believe is their interpretation. We should bear in mind that their interpretation is normally a word of encouragement like a prophecy.

We should emphasise that we are only practising and therefore people should feel at ease.

Step 3: Word of knowledge

Again, before moving into this step, the leader of each group should pray briefly, asking the Lord in His wisdom to grant words of knowledge. The next step is to encourage people into the word of knowledge. We should ask people in each group to allow the Holy Spirit to give them a thought or impression concerning somebody else in the group.

They should not name the particular person but have some thought about them, e.g. somebody is worried about some situation or has some particular illness or has some problem in their lives. The person to whom the word of knowledge applies should immediately say that it is them. Nobody should be prayed for at this stage. (Allow ten minutes.)

Discernment of spirits

In each group a person should now bring forward a problem in their life such as sickness or some oppression that they may be feeling such as fear, addiction or doubt or something which is driving, compelling or tormenting them. The others in the group should wait on the Lord as to what type of spirit might have been affecting that person. They should speak it out but no pressure be given, it should just be made aware at this stage. If time permits, another person may bring forward their problem and repeat the procedure. (Allow ten minutes.)

Word of wisdom

Two or three members in each group should be asked to bring forth a situation affecting their lives and others should wait on a brief word of wisdom from the Lord as to how to deal with that situation. There should be no prayer at this stage. (Allow ten minutes.)

Step 4: Healing and deliverance

Those who have been discerned as requiring prayer for healing or deliverance in the groups should now stand up, and the other members should stand and wait with them for the anointing of God and then lay hands upon them. Before doing so, however, the people should be counselled to forgive others, honour their parents and put God first in their lives. If any demonic powers manifest then they should be cast out at that point.

Alternative method of practising the gifts

- To demonstrate how people can come into the gifts, ask four or five people to come to the front who have never practised the gifts. There should be at least several women among them.
- After inviting the group out, you should ask for the anointing to fall upon them before taking any further steps.
- You could ask them one by one to say some words that they believe the Lord has given them to encourage the gathering. This leads them into prophecy.
- Then ask one of them to speak in tongues and suggest that another gives what they believe to be the interpretation of that. In this way faith increases in the meeting.
- After doing this several times, bring a fresh group out to do the next lot of gifts.
- Encourage several in turn to reach out for words of knowledge concerning people in the gathering.
- Suggest then that the person who has the word of knowledge asks the Lord for discernment as to whether the person needs to repent in some part of their life, e.g. for unforgiveness or whether there is some spirit attacking them. This shows the exercise of the gift of discernment.
- Suggest then that the person who has responded to the word of knowledge for healing comes up to the platform. Then ask one or more members of the panel how they believe the person should be prayed for, e.g. where the person should place their own hands and how the person should actually be prayed for. This, of course, is the word of wisdom.
- Ask one or two of the group to lay hands on the person concerned, exercising faith for healing. This demonstrates the gift of faith and the gift of healing. If there is an immediate healing, then of course this establishes the gift of miracles.
- Then suggest that all the people present be prayed for by one another to receive such gifts of the Holy Spirit as the Lord would grant. Suggest they tell each other what gifts they believe God has given the other person.

Both or either of the above methods can be used.

Final prayer

- The nine gifts of the Spirit should be read out slowly so that each member can be thinking of the gifts which the Holy Spirit may be imparting to another person.
- Everybody should be encouraged to stand in pairs, men with men and women with women. They should lay hands on each other and say a prayer similar to this:
`Dear Heavenly Father, in Jesus' name I ask You to impart to my brother (or sister) such gifts of Your Spirit as You would, to the end that they may be established.'
- Finally they should tell each other the gifts of the Spirit which they believe God has given the other person. Then they should pray together and the meeting should conclude.

Chapter 18

Final Practical Insights

- We should not minister when we are tired. There are times, of course, when we cannot avoid this. I find that when we are tired we are under a greater attack and it is harder to hear the voice of the Lord.
- Remain humble. Remember that Satan will try to convince you that you are better than the next person. He will attack you in pride; this is the very reason for his fall. Those to whom you are ministering will immediately discern in the spirit whether you are humble or not.
- Always act in love. If you are moving in God's love the Holy Spirit can move through you, and the person to whom you are ministering will have confidence in your ministry. He will know you are not judging him and he will be able to receive what God is offering him through you.
- Always be open to God's call upon your life. God often uses the weakest vessel in an anointed way to bring His message.
- Remember that God wants the gifts to be ministered in the body of Christ in order to build us up, inspire us and extend His kingdom. Never be afraid to move in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, for this is one of the principal ways in which the Holy Spirit is able to show His presence in a congregation. Then when the unbelieving come into our midst they will be able to say, "Truly, this is of God!"