



["Signs and Wonders"]

**BEHOLD, I AM
ALIVE FOR
EVERMORE**

Revelation 1:8

St. Nicholas', Nottingham.

February 1985

The Powerful Gospel

The Powerful Gospel

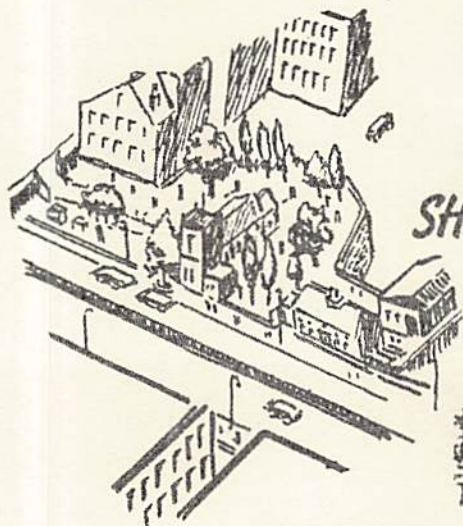
('Signs and Wonders')

Notes from the teach-in at
St. Nicholas', Nottingham.

David & Joyce Huggett
February 1985

CONTENTS

The Powerful Gospel (Introduction)	2
Forgiveness is Healing	5
Praying for People	7
What I need to exercise a Powerful Gospel Ministry	10
Power Evangelism	14
Deliverance	16
Notes on being Filled/baptised with the Holy Spirit	18
The question of Tongues and some Answers	20
Some General Questions Answered	22



HOW TO SHARE JESUS



THE POWERFUL GOSPEL

3 Preliminary Statements :-

1. Unlike the modern, secular, political concept, "power" here means power to serve, not power to dominate.
2. This power is potentially available for all Christians, to enable all to exercise a powerful "ministry" for Christ.
3. We are not here discussing "healing" only, but a much wider range of service in which God's power is seen to be present.

1. In daily life, alongside our friends, colleagues, and neighbours (both Christian and not Christian). Our individual powerful ministry should be exercised and stimulated by membership of a cell group (ie "Link Group", student group etc).

2. Special Events ("organised mission")
eg with J. John, streetwork in the city, beach missions, Mission England. God's power should be evidenced in all these events.

3. Worship in Church

This is where we are in these meetings, primarily in the Christian worshipping community, but this powerful ministry must not be confined here, though we may learn it here first.



Our Teaching Method

is similar to that of our Lord, who "began to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). Jesus often did things before explaining what was happening. He also told His disciples to do things (eg begin to feed the crowd) before explaining what would happen and what the result would be. Contrast this with our traditional Western rationalistic approach, which tends to demand explanation first, and to refuse any experience/activity which is not already "mapped-out".

Notice that Jesus' method is more related to faith, ie confidence that He is in control and will ultimately explain His actions.

However, we must of course always test any experience/activity by the teaching of Scripture, and reject as counterfeit anything contrary to the Bible. We are to "test the spirits" (1 Jn 4:1).

Preparedness to move out with Christ into uncharted waters is a biblical model of discipleship.

Major Question - "is the power in which our Lord Jesus and His Apostles ministered still available to Christians today?"

1. The situation then: early in their ministry, the 12 were sent out "to preach and to have authority over demons". (Mk 3:14-15)

Matt 12:1 adds that the 12 also had authority "to heal every disease and sickness".

Lk 9:1-2 brings together these elements in the apostles' work: "He gave them (the 12) power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick".

Mk 6:12-13 shows that the 12 did indeed do this.

BUT "After this the Lord appointed 72 others ... (they) returned with joy and said "Lord even the demons submit to us in your name. He replied "I saw Satan fall ... I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy". Lk 10:1, 17-19.

So we see that this authority was not limited to the 12.

ALSO in Acts 6:8 8:6,13 "signs" are performed by Philip and Stephen, (not of the twelve), and in Acts 15:12 16:18 19:11 by Barnabas and Paul.



2. Traditional Western Evangelical Views:-

- (a) "Authority and Power limited to the 12" - this is untenable - see refs. above.
- (b) "Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20) is binding on all Christians, but makes no mention of the miraculous; this was limited to the disciples in the time of Jesus earthly life". - this view is also untenable - see refs. above and note also
 - (i) Matt 28:18-20 was spoken to "the eleven" (v16)
 - (ii) "everything I have commanded you" (v20) must include the miraculous dimension of his commands to them.
- (c) "These signs and wonders were needed by the church in its infancy, but now we possess a complete Bible and modern medicine and so have "outgrown" the need for such things". - there is no suggestion in Scripture that this is the case.

3. Reasons for Rejecting the Traditional Western Views:-

- (a) Biblical evidence - see above.
- (b) The Western view has cultural and historical (not biblical) roots.
 - ie (i) scientific rationalism with its emphasis on empirical, verifiable observable analysis and distrust of emotional behavioural + practise - orientated things.
 - (ii) pre-occupation of evangelicals with intellectual debate with liberal theologies rather than street-level kingdom of God activity.
- (c) On a World-Wide Scale, "signs and wonders" are normal in church life. (eg China, S. America, Singapore).
- (d) Western Theology is partly a result of a poverty of experience, which is in turn due to a poverty of expectation of what God can, (and wants to) do today.

Final Scripture for Encouragement:- John 14:10-14, esp.v12:

"I tell you the truth" says Jesus "anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father".



GOD'S MIGHTY ACTS

Ransomed
Healed
Restored
Forgiven

Forgiveness is Healing

Inside each of us there are pockets of poison - lack of forgiveness - which cause havoc to our spiritual, emotional, physical health.

God wants to drain this poison from us, like the draining of infected sinuses. This is part of "The Powerful Gospel".

1. How does this miracle take place?
2. Why does it happen in Christians so rarely?
3. What is forgiveness?
4. What happens when we forgive?
5. What do I have to do?

1. How does this miracle take place?

Through recognising the forgiveness available to us through Christ's death "for me".

Think back to when you first knew deep down that Christ's death dealt with all your guilt - God wants that to be a frequent, ongoing experience of cleansing, of rejoicing in the miracle of His forgiveness.

2. Why don't we experience this miracle regularly?

3 possible reasons:-

(a) We don't take the Lord's Prayer seriously:-
Matt 6:12 (GNE) "Forgive us the wrongs we have done, as we forgive the wrongs others have done to us".

Think of those who've wronged you in the past week; Jesus tells you to forgive them, to let go of the anger you feel towards them. To refuse to do so will result in poison collecting in your system, and will block your receiving God's forgiveness; this harbouring of resentment is therefore a killer: "If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you the wrongs you have done". (Matt 6:15)

(b) Some resentments are so deeply hidden that we ourselves are unaware of them within us:-

when receiving "prayer ministry", when the Holy Spirit is particularly active in power within us, He may bring to the surface of our minds, unexpectedly, these often long-hidden resentments, scenes from childhood which have had an unconscious, though crippling effect on our emotions for years.

(c) Sometimes the person who remains to be forgiven is ourselves:-

We know that God has forgiven us, yet the guilty images return to us and rob us of joy and wholeness.

Jesus challenges us to

- (i) Admit that the sin was sin and the guilt real.
- (ii) Acknowledge that, the moment it was confessed, He forgave.
- (iii) Stop condemning ourselves; let go of the guilt.



The results of this will be certain, though possibly not immediate, release into freedom and wholeness.

3. What is forgiveness?

There are several words used in the Bible:-

(a) "To flush away waste matter". eg Lk 6:37 "Flush away your opponent's sins and God will flush away yours".

(b) "To let off the hook". eg in the Lord's Prayer "Let us off the hook, as we let others off the hook".

(c) "To be gracious to" eg Eph 4:32 "Being gracious to one another as God has been gracious to you".

(d) "To let go" eg Ps 86:5. "You, Lord, are good and ready to let go".

Putting these concepts together, we arrive at:-

"when I say I will forgive you, I am promising to give up a grudge I've held against you, I am resolving to refuse to harbour resentment against you any more, here and now I pardon you, that is I let you off the hook, and with an act of will I will let go of the past because I want nothing to stand between us; I want the breach to be healed completely".



4. What happens when we forgive?

Answer:- Healing is released.

either to ourselves (spiritually, emotionally, spiritually)

or to the person we've forgiven

or to the group to which we belong.

The most healing question: "Will you forgive me?".

The response may well not require words - our actions will show our forgiveness.



5. What do I have to do?

Our model is Jesus, on the cross, feeling the full pain of the wounds inflicted by others, **FORGIVING THEM**, and then **HANDING OVER HIS SPIRIT** (and the entire situation) **TO GOD**.

Therefore:-

Step 1 :- Feel the full brunt of the pain - forgiveness has nothing to do with forgetting the pain.

Step 2 :- With an act of will, pray Jesus' prayer "Father, forgive them", and call them by name.

Step 3 :- Let go of the situation, abandoning it, yourself, and the consequences of your obedience into God's hands.

Praying for people

There are four Phases of Prayer Ministry -

- I Interview/Diagnosis
- II Prayer
- III Disengagement
- IV Follow-up

During this time we are asking ourselves 7 questions. This methodology must not be seen as a blueprint, but may from time to time help us in our 'Prayer Ministry'.

I Interview/Diagnosis Phase

- 1) "When does it hurt?"
- 2) "Why does it hurt?"



I am asking these questions on two levels

(i) Natural, Empirical Level develop your knowledge of people. Jesus recognised the difference between eg Nathaniel, Woman at the well, Peter. It is often more important to know 'what sort of person has a bug' rather than 'what sort of bug has a person'. As you interview sort on the basis of people you know, experiences you have had.

(ii) Supernatural Level As you interview sort also on the basis of gifts of the spirit (see p.11). This part of the method can be summed up as 'Depend on the Holy Spirit'.

Things to watch out for in Phase I

- in telling you when it hurts they may tip you off as to how or why they got hurt
- your ultimate interest is in 'Why does it hurt?' Phase I finishes when you can answer this
- the same condition may have different causes in different people
- Phase I can come to an end when God 'tells you) what to do, how to pray for them and that may be right at the outset of Phase I. Don't go on talking, move to prayer.'
- Phase I may end with you frankly not having a clue as to cause or how you should pray. Don't pretend you know. Be frank, admit your ignorance, underline God's understanding of them and pray for them in that understanding, encourage them to come back again or to ask some other group/individual to pray with them. (Be like the disciples Lk 9:28)

Possible answers to when and why it hurts:-

- a. sickness sometimes they are just sick Jn 9:1 ff
- b. sickness produced by sin eg gonorrea of the throat. When sickness and sin coexist and are related we must deal with both. Lk 5:17-24, Jn 8:1-11)

Sin produces sickness in some people, and behind this sin is sometimes deep hurt, bondage or demonic activity. To deal with such a person we need to deal with any underlying causes and expose any deliberate disobedience.

- c. emotional sickness doctors estimate that up to 80% of all illness is psycho-somatic in its causation. It is no less real sickness when it is caused by stress, tension or emotional causes. Typical illnesses in this area are high blood pressure; stomach ailments, gastric diseases, heart problems.
- d. social/relational difficulties disorder is produced by harbouring ill feeling, anger, frustration, lack of forgiveness or hostility.
- e. familial spirits spirits attached to families can afflict individuals in that family.
- f. spirit affliction eg a spirit can afflict with blindness cf. Lk 9:37ff
- g. demonisation there are degrees of spirit affliction up to possession /full on demonisation. In a culture increasingly open to occult practices (eg horoscopes, tarot cards, spiritism, ouija board, hypnotism, yoga, and the more intense manifestation of the demonic) spirit affliction and demonisation are increasingly apparent.
- h. professional diagnosis to some people even the word of a doctor spoken correctly according to medical practice, heard authoritatively can become a bondage - a sort of curse. Anyone in authority can have that sort of power over us, eg pastor, parent and schoolteacher.
- i. self-diagnosis in our competitive culture many young people begin life with a low self-image and considerable doubt about self-worth. Some people are feeding these doubts and have a crippling self-imposed diagnosis.



II Prayer Phase

3) "What kind of prayer are we going to pray" (to help this person)

- (i) Prayer towards God (a) Petition, asking the Lord to send the power of the Holy Spirit on the individual to bless, release, heal etc.
(b) Intercessory, maybe vocalised, maybe quietly in tongues.

- (ii) Prayer from God (a) command of faith, eg "In the name of Jesus rise ... stand ... see ... hear .. pick up your bed ... walk ... come forth" - all New Testament commands. The use of such commands need to be initiated by the Holy Spirit from deep within you.



- (b) Pronouncement of faith,
"You may go, your son will live" Jn 4:50. We may find ourselves saying "I really sense that God has ..."

- (c) Binding, rebuking, expelling, breaking, in prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit we come against (Eph 6:12) the power of evil and devils. In the name of the Lord we break their powers, bind them or expell them.

4) "How are we doing?"

(i) Watch what is happening Keep your eyes open. Watch to see what God is doing and bless it, strengthen it. Jn 5:19. We are working for effect, visible signs - warmth, tingling, heat, muscle spasm, shaking, deep breathing, eye lids fluttering. These will tell us that something is going on.

(ii) Question the person ask "what is happening?" "What are you feeling?" let them tell you.

(iii) Listen to God sometimes God will tell you what is happening to guide you as to what to do or pray next. (Throughout the Prayer Phase keep focussed on Jesus as well as the person).

III Disengagement Phase5) "When do we stop praying?"

(i) When the person tells you its over eg They look up and tell you that they are healed.

(ii) When the Holy Spirit tells you its over. He may tell you to stop praying. Your part is finished in prayer, often He is still at work.

(iii) When the group's 'arsenal' is exhausted - you have done all you know and have no more to offer.

(iv) When the group is clearly stuck - you are ceasing to gain ground.

6) "Is there something the person needs to do to keep his/her healing?"

eg (i) Cut out a sinful, or temptation-inducing habit (Jn 8:11).

(ii) Put right a wrong relationship.

(iii) Memorise/meditate on a scripture.

IV Follow-up Phase7) "Is this piece of work sewn-up?"

Note - we are not really looking for completion (there is always more which God can do in any one of us) but we are checking that there are no "loose ends" to this particular piece of ministry.

Sometimes immediate follow-up is important, especially in any deliverance ministry.

Hand each person over to the Lord and on to an alongside Christian (or group of Christians) if possible and appropriate.

Beware of the unhelpful dependancy and emotional link up which easily creeps in when individuals are not handed on to others.

Remember that ultimately Jesus is the Good Shepherd and responsibility for sheep lies with him and not you.

* * * * *

Please remember that this is not a blueprint. It is more of a helpful checklist.

WHAT I NEED TO EXERCISE A POWERFUL GOSPEL MINISTRY.

"Gospel Ministry" = bringing Jesus to a person, in word, deed, prayer, touch, sensitivity etc.

I need knowledge of God's Written Word, Humility, Spiritual Gifts, and the Power of the Holy Spirit.

1. Knowledge of God's Written Word. (The Bible)



- a. Bible = Yardstick of Truth. Therefore we can begin to discern whether a 'Word from God' shared during "ministry" is genuine by comparing it with the Bible's teaching.
- b. Bible is a source for verbal ministries of all kinds eg words of prophecy, wisdom etc which are drawn from our previous intake from scripture; eg Jesus' use of scripture in many situations.
- c. Bible is a guidebook to give us principles of ministry.

Involvement with "signs and wonders" ministry will drive us to more study of scripture, since we recognise our need of the 3 components above.

2. Humility.

- the antithesis of "I know it all" and "I've got it all".

There is always more growth possible, more learning about God's ways, more sensitivity to what He is doing. A lack of humility will close us to all these possibilities since we cease to be learners in God's school.

(Beware of allowing a desire to 'test all things by scripture' to become a self-satisfied attitude or a preservation of the status quo. A stance which appears to give me the right to stand aside until all is satisfactorily explained in advance).

3. Spiritual Gifts.

A) The Spiritual Gifts Distributed. (1 Cor 12:1-11)

Keynote :- Variety and Unity in action.

v1-3 - similarities with spiritism BUT the guidelines for testing what is from the Holy Spirit are clearly given here.

v4-6 - different kinds - Variety
same Lord, God, Spirit - Unity
service, working - Action.



v7 - for the benefit of others, not private enjoyment.

v8-10,11 - each individual has a tailor-made gift pack from God.

v7,11 - gifts are for each Christian.

vll - gifts are GIVEN, not earned or deserved (after all they are gifts not rewards).

1 Cor 12:31,14:1 - gifts are to be discovered, asked for, sought for.

There is a strong link between the needs of the situation/group, and the gifts given.

B) The Spiritual Gifts Listed. (1 Cor 12:8-10,27-31
Rom 12:6-8
Eph 4:11-13).

We will look especially at the gifts which are relevant to "prayer ministry" and relate them to the phases of this ministry as already described.

I. Discernment Gifts.

(relevant to Interview/Diagnosis Phase)

These three gifts are 'the eyes of God', revealing to us God's view of the situation.

1. Discerning of Spirits (1 Cor 12:10)

NIV:- "ability to distinguish between Spirits"

= supernatural perception into spiritual realm, capacity to judge spirit's source as human, demonic, or divine.

eg Jn 1:47 Jesus knowledge of Nathanael's character.

2. Word of Knowledge (1 Cor 12:8)

NIV:- "message of knowledge"

= a message inspired by God, spoken out giving insight from the Holy Spirit about a specific occasion, person or thing.

eg Jn 4:17 Jesus and Woman at the Well.

3. Word of Wisdom (1 Cor 12:8)

NIV:- "message of wisdom"

= a message inspired by God, the wisdom and appropriateness of which is beyond our human understanding of the situation. By it, the Holy Spirit speaks powerfully to the occasion or person.

eg Mk 10:21 Jesus and Rich Young Ruler.

II. Ministry Gifts.

(relevant to Prayer Phase)

4. Tongues (1 Cor 12:10)

= Spirit - inspired prayer/praise in a language not known by the individual; a private love-language which expresses the deep love and longings of the individual and edifies him/her.

5. Healings. (1 Cor 12:9)

NIV:- "gifts of healing"

- used to speed up the process of healing in a sick person; applies to emotional, spiritual, or physical areas of life.



6. Miraculous Powers. (1 Cor 12:10)

= events in which people and things are beneficially affected by an extraordinary power of God working through an individual.

(distinct from healing eg growing a new finger is not "healing", but is miraculous!)

III. Follow - Up Gifts.

(relevant to Disengagement and Follow-Up Phase)

7. Prophecy. (1 Cor 12:10)

= declaring the message of God to an individual or group. The words are spoken out under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Note - the prophetic message is special for its 'now-ness' (ie its powerful relevance to the present situation) rather than its newness (since the content will be based on the revelation of God in scripture and will not therefore be "new").

8. Tongues with Interpretation. (1 Cor 12:10)

Interpretation enables the message in a "tongue" (spoken publicly) to be understood by all, and becomes a "prophetic word".

Note - Some of the "Ministry Gifts" are also used in the Disengagement and Follow Up Phase.

IV. Other Spiritual Gifts. (not obviously relevant to prayer ministry) include:

Apostles
Prophets

Evangelists
Teachers

Individuals in whom specific gifts and ministries are clearly and repeatedly displayed.

Administrations
Exhortation
Faith
Giving of aid/leadership, mercy, helps
Service
Teaching



Discover your spiritual.

Long for them; Seek for them; Ask for them.

Be open to receive different gifts at different times.

4. Power of the Holy Spirit.

= Power of Jesus.

The appropriate spiritual gift makes contact point with the individual in need and the Power of the Spirit then needs to flow. So, the important question for each Christian is "Do I know that power".

- 3 things to note:-
- (a) Power and Gift(s) often come after conversion (sometimes long after).
 - (b) Jesus taught that we should ask for gifts, for the Holy Spirit. (Mt 7:7; Lk 11:13)
 - (c) Experience alters theology. (Not that experience alters scripture, but it alters our presuppositions as we look at scripture)

A Common Question:- Does every Christian possess the Holy Spirit?

- Answer :- Look at a)
- a) OT experience - Holy Spirit came on a person for a task or short period.
 - b) OT promise - Holy Spirit will be in your hearts. (Ezek 36:26-27)
 - c) NT experience -
 - i) Jesus was the first man on whom the Spirit could come and remain (Jn 1:33)
 - ii) Jesus will baptize His followers with the Holy Spirit. (Lk 3:16)
 - iii) Jesus breathed the Spirit on His first disciples. (Jn 20:21) = Initiation into the Holy Spirit.
 - iv) Jesus told them to wait until "in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5) = Overwhelmed by Holy Spirit (for it would be coming on them in power Acts 1:8)
 - v) Paul was "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:17) three days after conversion. ie Initiation, then later overwhelming.

So.....

Every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but not every Christian is overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit.

Notice too that the Baptism/Fullness of the Spirit is to enable us to be like Jesus - Holy, Powerful, Obedient to God. In Lk 3:16 notice the coupling of Holy Spirit and fire. There is a crucial aspect of this work of Jesus which is associated with costly obedience, refining, growth in holiness. Notice also that elsewhere, as in Jn 1:33 it is Jesus who is the baptizer with the Holy Spirit.



"He (Jesus) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire". (Luke 3:16)

POWER EVANGELISM.

Signs + wonders do not mean a powerful healing ministry only but are an integral part of our presentation of the Gospel to outsiders.

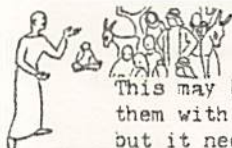
"Traditional" Evangelism has included 3 P's :-

1. Presence - ie Christians are among others, who are confronted by the challenge of a Christian life - style ("Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" Mt 5:16)

This is good but needs to be augmented by :-

2. Proclamation - ie the spoken, open declaration of the good news. ("How can they believe in one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" Rom 10:14)

This may bring people to the need for a decision, facing them with their need of Christ, their need to be converted but it needs to be followed by :-



3. Persuasion - ie taking people from the point of decision AND LEADING THEM ON BEYOND CONVERSION TO MATURITY IN CHRIST.

("Go and make disciples" Mat 28:19)
(not just "converts")



Here 'deciders' become 'disciples'.

At best evangelism has often included all the three above elements. Many Christians have looked hard at the typical evangelism and sense that it is deficient.

In the New Testament there is a 4th P in evangelism ie

4. Power - Today, worldwide, the churches which are growing most effectively are involved in this dimension.
(see C Peter Wagner "What are we missing?")

In power evangelism we expect God's power will be displayed in healing and 'signs and wonders'. These events will be a part of the total evangelism which opens people up to Christ.

4 - P evangelism looks like this :-

Presence	be there
Proclamation	tell it out
Power	show God's power
Persuasion	make disciples



But is 'power evangelism' really Biblical?

- a) Jesus used it
- b) Notice that in Mat 28:19-20 Jesus said "All authority ('exousia' power) has been given to me I am with you". So we can expect that He will continue to work 'signs and wonders' with, in and through us as He did when present incarnate on earth.
- c) This was certainly true of the early church, as shown by the summary below, taken from "Acts".

Power Item	Result
Speaking Gifts:- Tongues 2:4 Tongues 10:44-46	3000 added 2:41 New believers baptized 10:47
Visions:- Cornelius 10:1ff Paul 16:8	New believers baptized 10:47 European churches founded ch16ff
Power Encounter:- Paul + Elymas 13:4-11	Proconsul believed 13:12
Dead Raised:- Dorcas 9:36-41	Many believed 9:42
Miracles:- Paul stoned +raised 14:19-20 Viper's bite ineffective 28:3-6	Church strengthened 14:21-22 Church established on Malta (church history)
Healings:- Lame man 3:1-8	Church grew to 5,000 men 4:4
Nature Miracle:- Earthquake 16:25-26	Jailer + family converted 16:29-34
"Signs + Wonders" :- By Apostles 5:12 By Philip 8:6	Multitudes added 5:14 Samaritan church founded 8:12
Angelic Visitation:- To Philip 8:26	Eunuch converted and baptized 8:38



In "Acts" there are 20 occasions when church growth is related to preaching with signs and wonders, and only one occasion when it is related to preaching alone.

- d) In the epistles of Paul, there is ample evidence that signs and wonders accompanied his evangelism.
eg 1 Cor 2:4-5 "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on man's wisdom but on God's power!"

1 Cor 4:20 "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk, but of power."

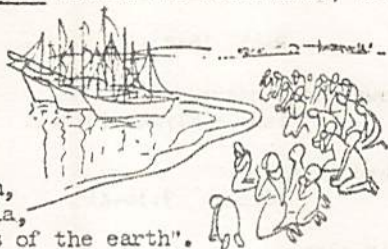
1 Thes 1:5 "because our Gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction".

Rom 15:16-19 "... a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles proclaiming the Gospel of God leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said or done, by the power of signs and miracles through the power of the Spirit."

Learning about signs and wonders berins within the fellowship, but must not stay here.

"...You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in

Jerusalem,
and in all Judea and Samaria,
and to the ends of the earth".



"DELIVERANCE"

is God's ministry of deliverance, His rescue operation restoring His children back to their rightful Parent, from Satan, who has stolen them.

Eph 6:12 is clear that we are in a conflict against "spiritual forces of evil" 1 Peter 5:8 gives a picture of Satan's activity. Satan tries to trick us into believing he's all-powerful, but in fact though he's active, he's chained.

1. How can a Christian be 'stolen' by Satan?
2. What is deliverance ministry?
3. Who should be involved in it?

1. How can a Christian be 'stolen' by Satan?

ie oppressed by evil powers - this is not demon possession, ownership by Satan - this is impossible for a Christian, but one of Satan's agents can gain a foothold in certain areas of a Christian's life. (though 'demons' are not caught like measles from contact with those who are oppressed).

Two Ways in Which Satan's Agents can get a Foothold in a Christian:-

- a) Deliberate and Persistent sin.
eg Acts 5:3 Ananias gave Satan a way in.
- b) Emotional Hurts, leaving a vulnerable area for infiltration.
(see McNutt "Healing").

2. What is "Deliverance Ministry"?

17

It's recognising where one of Satan's agents is oppressing a person, has taken up residence in a corner of his/her life, and in the name of Jesus (ie on His authority) telling the spirit to go. (eg Mark 9:17 - 29; 5:2 - 13; 1:23; 4:24; Lk 4:33 - 34).

Two Reasons for this Ministry

- (a) Jesus did it (see refs above).
- (b) Jesus commands us to do it (Mark 16:17; Lk 9:1).

3. Who Should be Involved in this Ministry?

Never work alone; work in a group with an experienced person - there are dangers in this ministry, especially the possibility of leaving the person ministered to feeling condemned.

There should be a man present - experience shows this.

Other necessities for those involved in this ministry:-

- Knowledge of God's Written Word
- Power of Holy Spirit
- Spiritual Gifts
- Authority of Jesus.



All Christians need to be aware of this ministry and if not personally involved, to back up the ministry by praying.

Practical Notes.

Those ministering listen to what the person says
what the evil spirit says
what God is saying,
then command the spirit (no need to shout, or to be aggressive
- this can be counterproductive) to leave,
then pray for healing of hurts in the person, and for the
infilling of the Spirit,
then pray for protection for everyone involved.

(There is no rigid ABC of how to minister, but the above is a guideline).

After-care:- check that the person is whole in the days following the ministry, and help them to live in a way which will give no future foothold to Satan or his agents. People who come to us in need of ministry will from time to time need deliverance ministry. It is obviously right that this should occur and be dealt with in the context of church services. This presents no problems for there are experienced people on hand. Where demonic involvement is "deep" (it can range from mild oppression to full-on demonisation/possession) help of experienced people must be sought. Where such "deep" problems arise outside of the 'protective' context of church services, the clergy must be contacted before any ministry is attempted.



Notes on being filled / baptized with the Holy Spirit.

- 1) Why do some people find it difficult to move out and welcome this?
- A) Ignorance - we may have to lift the expectation of some Christians who do not expect to be filled.
Should I not have been baptized with the Spirit at my conversion?
Perhaps you should have been, but what we receive depends quite considerably on what we expect, what we ask for....
At conversion we need to raise the expectation. If Christians are seen to be living powerful Spirit-filled lives, then new converts will expect that sort of a life from the Christ whom they turn to Him.
- B) Not committed - Some are not fully committed to him as Lord.
The promise of Lk 11:13 is of teaching to the disciples, not fringers or outsiders. Are we fully yielded to him?
- C) Unconfessed sin - often there is emptying work to be done before we may be filled.
- D) Complacency - the context of the promise of Lk 11:13 is the teaching that to receive you must "really want" ...Do I want the power of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit? If so, is it for the right reasons?
- E) Unbelief - not believing the promises of scripture/Jesus words
- F) Because it doesn't ring true - it appears to offer instant holiness, a kind of magical step ...Baptism with the Holy Spirit does not offer instant holiness! If anything, it heightens the awareness of lack of holiness!
- G) Casts doubt on our previous discipleship - You are a second rate Christian until you have been baptized with the Spirit, we seem to hear. Was Jesus second rate until he was baptised with the Spirit in Lk 3:22??
Yet our pride needs to be cut! Are you humble enough to recognise that there is much more for you at every stage of Christian discipleship?
- H) Afraid of the unknown - we always fear when God does a new thing. Not for nothing does God have to say to us 366 times in scripture "Fear not". The promise is of "Good things". Lack of trust and fear need to be exposed 1 Jn 4:18. Ignorance concerning the very beautiful gift of tongues causes many to fear.

"Good things" Good gifts....

because God is Sovereign and we are all different, his action is both unpredictable but also marvellously suited to the individual. Things that commonly happen include:- a new sense of praise - suboling up from deep within; praise which glorifies Christ,

- a strong sense of his indwelling presence - bringing deep assurance, joy...

- a new deeply-rooted desire to share Christ with others

- a heightened sense of sin

- a new love for and insights from his word

- new spiritual gifts.



3) Seeking and Receiving.

1) Repent Examine your life,

Are you prepared for a clear, decisive break with the known sin in your life? Peter's word at Pentecost was "Repent...and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" Acts 2:38.



2) ObeY Later in Acts (5:32) Peter talks of "the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him". Peter is here speaking in the context of witnessing. The gifts, ministries and filling of the Spirit are not to be sought as comforting experiences. They are equipment for service, to enable God's servant to obey and glorify Jesus. Do I long for a new motivation and ability to obey him? Do I want the Holy Spirit to fully indwell and control my life?

3) Thirst Christ's magnificent promise about receiving the Spirit in his fulness is "If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink" (Jn 7:37). The realisation of my emptiness and my longing to be met in my need is the (God-given) drinking force which, tested by the conditions of repentance and obedience, thrust me out into the fourth step of asking.

4) Ask To ask is to lay hold of God's promise in faith. God promises to give (eg "How much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him" Lk 11:13). To ask in faith is to believe the promise to be true, to humbly yet confidently claim it, and then to begin to act as if it were already true.

God invited Solomon to "Ask for whatever you want me to give you". (1 Kings 3:5) Solomon chose the gift of wisdom because he saw his need of it to further his effectiveness for God. What do you need?

"...They encircled the throne... in a loud voice they sang:
"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise! "





The Question of Tongues and some answers.

(part of an article by P.A.Smail)

Speaking in tongues is still one of the most fascinating - and controversial - aspects of charismatic renewal, which often looms largest in the thoughts of those who have not experienced it. The following are some of the most usual questions raised, with outline answers to them.

1) What is speaking in tongues?

When someone speaks in tongues he utters sounds and syllables that do not belong to any language that the person speaking has learnt or understands. To hear it is like listening to a foreign language. The speech may be loud or soft, fast or slow, calm or excited, spoken or sung - may have in fact all the variations of ordinary speech except that the person speaking does not understand what he is saying. This sounds so foolish and pointless that we have at once to ask:

2) What is the point of speaking in tongues?

Here we can give an answer, based not only on experience but also on the witness of scripture. Thus we can claim that to speak in tongues has meaning and significance:

- a) In our relationship to God
- b) In our relationship to the church
- c) Within our own Christian life.

3) How do tongues function in our relationship to God?

The scriptural answer is that to speak in tongues is valid communication with God, although the communication does not have intellectual content. Paul says a man who speaks in a tongue is speaking to God (1 Cor 14:2). If we ask what Christians say to God through speaking in tongues, the scriptural answer is that they offer his praise for his mighty deeds in Christ. The crowd at Pentecost heard the apostles who were speaking in tongues, 'telling...the mighty works of God' (Acts 2:11). Cornelius and his friends, in response to Peter's declaration of the gospel, were 'speaking in tongues and extolling God'. (Acts 10:46).

Speaking of singing God's praise, Paul says, 'I will sing with the mind also.' (1 Cor 14:15) Alongside the formulated conceptual praise of the mind, which is indispensable, there is also a release of the Spirit - of the deep inner core of our personality - in an overflow of spontaneous and loving thanksgiving to God our saviour. To speak in tongues is part of this overflow.

It releases him in praise at a level of his personality that often needs liberation. It will help to ask: What was the difference in Peter pre - and post - Pentecost? It was not a difference in theology; he had already confessed Jesus as Christ (Mat 16:16). It was not a difference on the level of will - he had already made the right decision to go with Jesus to prison and to death (Lk 22:33). But it only took the awkward question of a maidservant to overthrow the conviction of his mind and the decision of his will, because on a deeper level of his personality he was not yet open and surrendered to Christ. At Pentecost the Spirit who had already illuminated his mind and moved his will, was set free in his deep heart - in his subconscious - so that without internal contradiction he was able to preach Christ with such effect. Tongues was the sign that this part of his personality was now released for and surrendered to Christ. Jesus himself says that it is out of our 'belly' (Jn 7:38), out of that gut-level of our personality that rivers of water will flow. Tongues come from just that part of us, and can indicate that sub-conscious release.

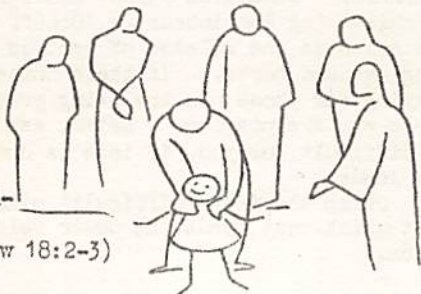
To put this in another way, the Holy Spirit will make us of 'sound mind' (2 Tim 1:7 AV) ie he will bring us into the balance of our personality. Many of us, because of the religious tradition we have inherited, have been overbalanced towards the intellect and the will, and need to be released on the more primitive and instinctive level. Sometimes to speak in tongues marks the initiation of such a release, so that we are able thereafter to respond much more spontaneously to God and to others.

5) How does this gift of tongues function in the church?

Paul's

basic answer is, 'It should not function in the church at all in a public way, unless it has added to it the twin gift of interpretation' - by which, after someone has spoken in a tongue, words in English occur to another person which express what the tongue has said. This, says Paul, edifies the church in a way that uninterrupted tongues can never do. 'Therefore he who prays in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret' (1 Cor 14:13). The rule therefore is that all public utterances in tongues, require interpretation, and the meeting should wait till this has been given, and then test it as with prophecy. In a prayer meeting, after much speaking to God, an utterance in tongues can remind us of God's presence and so deepen fellowship, and stop us from speaking in order to start us listening to what he has to say to us in the interpretation and prophecies which follow.

"...He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children..."



(Matthew 18:2-3)

Some questions being asked in the context of this course and especially about the ministry that arises from it.

1) An open invitation is given to gather round an individual to pray for him. Is this wise? Do we **Keen but clueless?** not open ourselves to enemy attack or at best, keen but clueless, inexperienced and immature christians? Isn't this a ministry for the elders of the church (James 5:14) ?

James 5:16 goes on to say "Confess your sins to one another and pray for each other so that you may be healed." v14 probably refers to someone confined at home with sickness.

1 Cor 12:7-11 indicates that gifts (including healings) are given to everyone, not just elders, nor even only to mature christians, but to 'each one'.

Jesus sent out the 12 (Mt 10:5ff). Young, inexperienced, those who could not even believe that Jesus would rise from the dead! He also sent out the 72. Lk 10:1,17. Note that Jesus didn't even go with them!

Acts 2;17 reminds us that God's spirit will be poured out on everyone. Wherever people gather in his name, he is there in the middle, this and nothing else is our ultimate safeguard in ministry (Mt 18:20 of 28:20).



2) Encouraging people to receive ministry in the aisles seems to some to add an unnecessary, public dimension to ministry. Is some ministry too long, too noisy or too public?

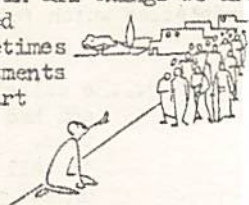
It is difficult to dictate to the Holy Spirit what he may or may not do in public! But neither must we place in the public eye that which God would do in private.

Jesus ministered most of the time in public and in choas (eg Lk 8:40-49, 52-54) Occasionally he took a person aside.

In the middle of a spirit-filled, worshipping congregation are focussed both the searching light of God's Spirit which brings to awareness need and sin and also the power to heal, release etc. To remove a person from that environment would clearly seem to be unhelpful.

Where demonic manifestation is noisy, we need to learn to control (in Jesus' name) these outbursts, though in this as in all things we are learners. Sometimes Jesus' ministry was accompanied by noise (eg Bartimaeus Mk 10:46ff of 5:6ff). Sometimes the noise is the release of pent-up feelings, resentments longings and hurts. If these noises upset you, start praying for those who are being prayed for, and for those who are praying. Later, ask yourself why it is difficult for you, if this is how it usually was for Jesus.

Often the most 'difficult' ministry to 'execute' and 'observe' is that which most needs the power released through the gathered congregation.





3) Before the time of ministry and during the ministry we appear to be 'praying the Holy Spirit down'. Is this Biblical? Is it right to pray to the Holy Spirit?

Normally understood, prayer is to the Father, through the Son and by the Spirit. However since all three persons are God it is not wrong to address any of the three. Further we understand that it is the Holy Spirit who lives in us and the ideal of the Christian walk is continuously to commune with the Spirit of Jesus who goes with us through the day as he lives within us. This is one of the most important parts of prayer.

The Holy Spirit falls when God's people are at prayer (Acts 1:4, 14 2:1). The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus while he was praying (Lk 3:21ff).

The Holy Spirit is given to those who pray/ask for him (Acts 4:24, 31 Lk 11:9-13). Jesus 'prayed the Holy Spirit down' onto the 11 (John 20:22 or Acts 8:15). Paul 'prays the Holy Spirit down' onto his friends (Eph 1:17 3;16).

Maybe when we feel that the Lord wants us to pray the Spirit down onto a person/group, it might be better to ask the Father and/or the Son to send the Holy Spirit onto the person/group.



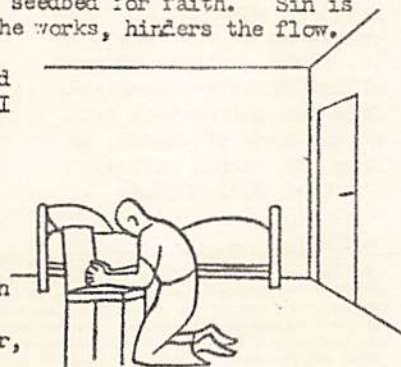
4) If this ministry is for any Christian, even young and inexperienced ones, is there any relationship between a person's usefulness to God in this ministry and personal holiness?

There is no direct relationship between holiness and usefulness. However prophetic gifts and powerful ministry are usually aided by prayer and fasting. A Christlike life is a ready seedbed for faith. Sin is a barrier to the work of God. Sin clogs the works, hinders the flow. Nevertheless ultimately God is sovereign.

So I may not say "I am so sinful that God cannot use me" nor may I say "I pray more, I am getting more holy and so God will use me more".

Holiness is the goal of the heart mastered by the love of Jesus and not something aimed at to facilitate usefulness to Christ.

Gifts and ministries are freely given in love by Christ and are not rewards given to deserving followers. They may be prayed for, asked for, longed for, but not worked for.



5) When some people pray with people their hands seem to wave. Does this have any significance? Is it biblical?

When the Holy Spirit of God comes in power on a person there are often physical manifestations of one sort or another. This is very obvious in the Old Testament. The first appearance of the Apostles was accompanied by a powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit, such that they were classed by their behaviour as drunk. Later physical manifestations of the Holy Spirit's presence in power includes earthquakes.

When the power of the Holy Spirit is at work today there are sometimes physical signs like waving, shading, heat etc.

The Bible does not have a norm. Jesus himself experienced, in his life, unusual physical manifestations of power (apart from healing). Sometimes these appear to be signs of power, at others almost incidental 'side-effects':-

- dove descending (Mt 3:13ff Mk 1:9ff)
- voice from heaven (Lk 3:21f 9:35)
- walking on water (Mk 6:45)
- transfigured raiment (Mt 17:1ff)
- appearance of Moses and Elijah (Mk 9:4)
- walking through crowd untouched (Lk 4:30)
- appearance of angels who minister to Jesus (Lk 1:13 Lk 22:43)
- bloody sweat (Lk 22:44)
- and others



The waving of the hand may be an indication that the power of God is on the person ministering.

... ..

Below is a synopsis, given in advance, for this course as it was taught at St. Nic's. Tapes of most of the talks are available from the information desk at the back of church, or from the church office.

(Tel 0602 502646)



The Powerful Gospel ("Signs and Wonders")

We take an in depth look at the Biblical teaching and models of the relationship between the Gospel of Jesus' saving acts and the power of the Holy Spirit. We evaluate the validity of the assertion that the New Testament demonstrates and teaches that Evangelism is normally accompanied by "Signs and Wonders". A more detailed leaflet will be available giving the timetable of the course which consists of both teaching and practical involvement. The course takes place at three Tuesday 'Central' meetings (Jan. 29, Feb. 12, 19) and three Sunday evenings (Feb. 3, 10, 17).