

## GIFTS FOR CHRISTIAN GIVING The Ven. Larry Mitchell, Sharing Dec. 2010

We are a gifted people. It is the nature of God to give, and God is always pouring into our lives to enrich us in our faith and to enable us to share that faith in a hurting and broken world.

As I grew up I cannot remember hearing about the gifts of the Spirit, nor can I remember being told about Jesus' ministry of healing. Nevertheless, I lived what I believed

Ven. Larry Mitchell to be a normal Christian life and exercised a supposedly normal Christian ministry, being totally unaware of the role of the Holy Spirit in that life and ministry. I felt a sense of emptiness during that time and could see little value in who I was and little purpose in what I was doing. It wasn't until I had been ordained and in parish ministry for over ten years that I discovered the wonderful truth that we are called to be a gifted people, and that it is impossible to be an effective Christian without accepting all the gifts of the Spirit that God has to bestow upon us. Through some members of my parish I discovered that it is God who empowers us to live the Christian life and to share it in our world in a way that we simply cannot by ourselves. After understanding and accepting this reality I discovered a new and exciting life as a Christian and I began to exercise an empowered ministry as a priest. The secret is that only as long as we continue to look to Jesus, and accept the gifts that he imparts to us through the power of the Holy Spirit, will we find the joy, strength, and ultimate meaning in life that flow from His abiding presence.

God has generously endowed His Church with all the necessary resources and gifts to minister to people's deepest needs. "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by

that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds

He has already provided for us beyond our imagination!

of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines." (1 Cor 12.7-11) The key to successful Christian living is to be open to receive the gifts of the Spirit, leading to wholeness and empowering us for the work of ministry. But too often we are blind and ignore what God wants to do in and through our lives. We would rather try to do things ourselves, using our own limited resources, instead of relying on God. He has already provided for us beyond our imagination! That is what the abundant life is all about, the life that Jesus talks about in John 10.10, the life



he is waiting patiently for us to walk in. God supplies us with all we need to be his gifted people, but we must accept and use those gifts!

Healings, miracles, signs and wonders are definitely gifts of God that come through Christ to His people. As we read the Gospels and then the Acts of the Apostles we begin to see what the "normal Christian life" was like for the people

of the early Church. Just as Jesus preached the Good News of hope and salvation, so did the apostles and disciples. Just as Jesus laid his hands upon the sick and they were healed and restored to perfect health, so did his followers. At Pentecost the power of the Holy Spirit was given and it mightily empowered the church. It was when the church stopped allowing the Holy Spirit's ministry that the church became powerless and lives became meaningless. The Spirit is with us today just as much and just as powerfully as in the days of the Acts of the Apostles. Through the gifting of the Holy Spirit, God gives us the power in



our time to witness to his love and to minister through the gifts to a broken and hurting world. Accepting the gifts of the Spirit enables the church to do all the things we read about in the Acts of the Apostles. Believe it!

The Christian life as lived in the New Testament was revolutionary indeed, because it brought into the kingdom of this world the rule and power of the Kingdom of God. We too are called to be a revolutionary church turning our world upside down for Jesus. We can only do that when we are open to accepting and using all the gifts that God so freely bestows upon us. Then God will use us to perform signs, wonders, miracles and healings. Are you using the gifts that flow from the throne of God's grace to turn your world upside down for Jesus? That is what you need to do, and that is what is going to give us the church we want today! As members of Christ's body let us embrace all of the gifts of the spirit and work to make our churches centres of godly power, faith, love and healing. That is the Good News of the Gospel and that is the Good news the world longs to hear! May we accept and rejoice in our highest of callings, as channels for God's gifts to humanity.



# The Steps of a Good Man

In the bible we read of two men in jail. The first was described by Jesus as the greatest man who had ever lived. The second had previously persecuted Christians to death. The first remained imprisoned until he was beheaded, (Matthew 14.10). The second was freed on his first night in jail when a mighty earthquake opened the doors. (Acts 16.26). Why did God allow one man to die a sad death, and not long afterward intervene so dramatically to save the other? After all, we know that God can do anything He wants, "My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please." (Isaiah 46.10) Since the devil didn't order the events in the life of John the Baptist, there is only one reason he died when he did. His work was complete. As early in the gospels as John 3.30 John had said, about Jesus and himself, "He must increase, but I must decrease." For the other man, Paul, his work was just beginning. God had already told him, "... how much he must suffer [during his long life] for my name." (Acts 9.16) Would either man have asked for a different path?

We read of two other men. The first one wanted to follow Jesus just as soon as he had buried his father. (Matthew 8.21) Surely this was a reasonable request, and so Jesus' answer, ...let the dead bury their dead." (Matthew 8.22) seems hard, if not unreasonable. The other man begged to be allowed to follow Jesus right away. Surely he would hear the expected words, "Come and follow me." Actually, no, Jesus' reply was, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you." (Mark 5.19) Now, no one would dare suggest that the Son of God was inconsistent. What we can't know is what Jesus did know; the personal circumstances of those two men. each of whom was given the wisest guidance they could possibly receive. Jesus knows our personal circumstances too, better than we do. Each of us is unique, and each of us needs to acknowledge the prophet's words, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.' (Jeremiah 10.23)

The one universal calling is to love God with our whole heart and to obey Him joyfully in whatever He has called us to do. Our unwavering faithfulness in following Jesus may lead to health, success and prosperity, or it may lead to tribulation, persecution and death. But whatever our lot, "...we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." (Romans 8.37) We need fear no one and nothing, for truly God is utterly faithful, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD; and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Psalm 37.23,24) Amen.

Faith is never built up by reasoning, but by accepting and acting on God's Word

St. Andrews Cathedral Healing Ministry, Sydney

## HINDRANCES TO REAL FAITH

Footscray, 1973, St. Andrew's Cathedral Healing Ministry, Sydney. Rewritten from Wholeness August 1980

We know that faith is vital in the healing ministry because "The prayer of faith shall save the sick." (James 5.15) It can be helpful then for us to be reminded of some of the things that hinder a Christian from exercising real faith. Rather than seeing this as a

negative approach, let us consider the following points as a guide in ensuring that our heart is aligned with God's heart, and as a means of once again stirring up that strong faith that will claim great things from our Heavenly Father. Here are some of the failings that can hinder our prayers from being answered.

### 1. DEPENDING ON THE FAITH OF OTHERS

Everyone should build up his own faith. So many Christians drift casually along until some accident, sickness, bereavement or financial problem arrives, and then they are so affected that they search frantically for someone to pray for them. We should be able to come to our Heavenly Father through Jesus at any time, and through asking in His Name, believe and know that God will not fail us. Faith is never built up by reasoning, but by accepting and acting on God's Word, and by letting that Word live in us as it lived in our Lord.

#### 2. PRAYING FOR FAITH

Sometimes people pray that God will help them to have faith, or to increase their faith, rather than simply claiming healing. Our place is to claim and to rest upon the promises of God, "I am the LORD that healeth thee." (Exodus 15.26)

Rejoice in such promises and tell God that we believe them! Tell others that we believe them! Tell the devil that we believe them! We must believe God's Word, not only with our head but with our heart. We have His Word, both written and living inside us. As we read the scriptures and as we believe them through the quickening of the Holy Spirit, we will find ourselves so taken up with Him that we will just know that He can do all things. This heart knowledge is faith!

#### 3. FAILURE TO REALIZE WHAT BELIEVING IS

We speak of faith as something we long to have, "If only I had more faith!" A better word to keep before us is "believe", the active aspect of faith. "Faith" is a noun, whereas "believe" is a verb. A noun can refer to a lifeless thing, whereas a verb always relates to action. In this



context to believe means to act on the promises and power of God. James said, "Faith without works is dead," (James 2.20) proving that faith needs the activity that believing Believing is a provides. living experience. Faith may be the cause for action;

believing is the action.

### 4. READING "ABOUT" THE WORD

Reading about people of faith and their great works can certainly produce a desire for faith. However, desire alone can leave one disappointed and discouraged. There is no substitute for reading the bible. The regular reading and hearing of God's Word will of itself produce faith in a remarkable way. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10.17)

### **5 HAVING A WRONG CONFESSION**

"For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved." (Romans 10.10) It is very important that the confession of our lips corresponds with the action that has been prompted by our believing hearts. If we believe that God heals, and if we have trusted Him to heal us, then we should watch that we are not snared into talking about "our sickness", "our weakness" or "our pain". Instead we should confess God's Word, which proclaims that He is able to "... do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us... (Eph. 3.20)

#### 6. HOPING INSTEAD OF CLAIMING

There are many promises in the Bible, but there are also many statements of fact. The Lord's second coming, for instance, and our place in heaven, are promises and we rightfully hope and look for them. These hopes are totally wonderful, but the Lord's commission to His disciples and his healing power are statements of fact. We do not hope for these; we accept them! We should not hope for healing, but claim it as soon as we have yielded ourselves to God. In claiming healing it is proper to act upon our deliverance knowing that God never fails the one who trusts Him. Mark 9.23 says, "Everything is possible for one who believes."

Say it out loud, "I believe in God! I believe He is healing me now!"

# CONFESSION

(N. Fawcett, Prayers for All Seasons) Loving God, You call us to live as Your people -

loving kindness, and walking humbly with You. Teach us what You

would have us do.

Help us to offer You the lives You want to see, and to be the people You would have us become.



Teach us what You require, That by Your grace we may live as Your people, To the glory of Your name.

I repent and accept salvation in Jesus Christ. Thank You for the forgiveness of my sins in the name of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



#### "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father ..." Revelation 1.4-6

We talk about being free in Christ, but what does that mean? John's



revelation tells us that Christ has made us a kingdom, a place where Christ is King and ruler, and he has made us priests, a people who stand before God for the people and before the people for God. We have been freed to give up our lives to the rulership of Jesus, so that we can serve God by making bridges with our neighbors and our communities, bringing glory to God. That is being free.

FREEDOM

Dave Whitehead, Senior Pastor, GraceNYC.org



Tony Campolo, Evangelist, Quoted by Bob Gass

"God chose ... the things world considers foolish." 1 Cor 1.27

Boys have а tendency to pick on some unfortunate child. That summer it was 13-year-old Billy, a child who couldn't walk or talk right. When the



Tony Campolo

children from his cabin were assigned to lead devotions, they voted Billy in as the speaker. It didn't seem to bother him. He dragged himself up to the pulpit amid sneers and snickers, and it took him a long time to stammer,

"Jesus	loves	me	
andI	loveJe	sus."	

There was stunned silence, and when I looked around, there were boys with tears streaming down their cheeks. We'd done many things to try to reach these boys, but nothing had worked. We'd even brought in famous baseball players whose batting averages had gone up since they started praying, but it had no effect. It wasn't until a special needs child declared his love for Christ that everything changed. I travel a lot and it's surprising how often I meet people who say, "You probably don't remember me. I became Christian at a camp where you were a counselor, and do you know what the turning point was for me?" I never have to ask. I always know I'm going to hear - "Billy!"

The Bible says, "God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise" (1 Cor 1.27, 28). So when you find yourself focussing on what you can't do, remember His "power works best in [your] weakness" (2 Cor 12.9). Just do what you can, and God will do the rest! He'll crown your effort with success.

Losers see failure; winners see beyond it! Bob Gass

### seeking Your will, pursuing what is right, and showing Your love to others. Teach us what You would have us do.

to walk each day at Your side,

Forgive us that we sometimes make Your call so complicated,

losing sight of the things You really require. Forgive us that we become preoccupied with the trappings of faith,

rather than focussing on the essentials. Forgive us that we are often good at being religious,

but poor at doing justice,

# ORDER OF ST. LUKE



For all OSL enquiries: Mary Christian, National Secretary, 28 Colenso Street, Sumner, Christchurch 8081, natsec@oslnz.org www.oslnz.org or phone 03 326 5616. For prayer requests, testimonies etc., contact "Wholeness" using the addresses on page 4.

"So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere." (Luke 9.6)

Greetings from a very newly inducted National Chaplain of the Order of St Luke in New Zealand. I am actually to be inducted at a very auspicious time as we are celebrating the fiftieth year of the introduction of the Order to New Zealand. I am writing this in anticipation of Wholeness going to print as the induction and celebrations are yet to take place between 17 and 20 October.

The Order started in the USA with the vision of Rev Dr John Gayner Banks and his wife Ethel with a small parish prayer group in the early 1930s, with the formal founding of the Order there in 1947 and then the first members in New Zealand being inducted in 1962 and growing from there. The Order exists to promote the awareness of the ministry of healing in the church, encouraging local congregations to focus regularly on the ministry of healing in their services of worship, enabling members to gather as chapters for fellowship, study and prayer for wholeness. The Order comprises clergy and laity of the Christian church who believe that the Scriptures set forth healing as a continuing and essential part of the ministry committed to the church by Jesus Christ.

The Order supports and co-operates with the medical professions and hospital chaplains and encourages members to be involved in hospital chaplaincy services. The Order is

# **Do It Anyway**

Ad Clerum, August 2011, The Most Reverend David Moxon

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centred.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.

Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

Archbishop David Moxon

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them ... anyway.



international, being present in many countries, all being independent but in fellowship with each other. In some countries, such as Nigeria, the members are persecuted through their association with a Christian organisation. It is not possible to assist with practical help, which never reaches its destination, but our prayers are with them.

Many testimonies are made of healing resulting from prayer, whether accompanied by the laying on of hands and/or anointing, or conducted at a distance. It is our certain conviction that Jesus is the same vesterday, today and for ever, and that he ministers to people wherever they are through the prayers and hands of his people today. This is not magic in any way; it is the love and power of God in his world for his people. It is not dependent on a person's faith, neither the person ministering nor the person being ministered to, though at the same time some people are blessed with gifts of healing, sometimes for one particular ailment such as headaches or hearing, sometimes for physical restoration, and sometimes for a broad spectrum of infirmities. "There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord." (1 Cor. 12.5)

If you have a question or a need do not hesitate to be in touch with the Order through addresses found on our website www.oslnz. org.

May God's richest blessings be yours. Brian Flower



gathered apostles themselves "The together to Jesus, and they told him all things, whatever they had done, and whatever they had taught." (Mark 6.30)

That is just what we should always do when we have been working at any service for Jesus. We should do it as well as we can, and then go and tell Him what we have done. At the close of each day we should go to Him and tell Him how we have lived, how we have done our work, how we have wrestled with temptation, how we have treated our friends and those whom we have met, how we have performed our mission as His servants, what words we have spoken for Him, what efforts we have made to do good or to give comfort or help, and how we have responded to the needs of others.

We must also not forget to tell Him about the day's failures. Did we lose our patience? Did we give in to temptation? Did we neglect to share words of encouragement? Were we

unkind to anyone? We must tell Him of the efforts to do good that seemed to come to nothing. Often we are like the disciples who had toiled all night long and caught nothing. At the end of the day we feel like we've achieved nothing for all our efforts. Then, sometimes, are we



Rev. Brian Flower

Neville & Janice Cooper led by Bruce Collins from West London. Bruce, who oversees the international networks of New Wine, is passionate in his desire to have spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy, used productively and with discernment in our churches.

During the first day Bruce spoke of our mighty God who encourages us to ask for big things and to believe that for him nothing is impossible. When Bruce offered prayer at the end of the day I didn't hear what he was saying very well which led me to complain. However my first thought was to seek healing for a pesky cough and cold that had been with me for too long. Then the word came to me, "Ask for something BIG - ask to have your hearing restored." At that very moment Bruce gave a word of knowledge that God was seeking to heal hearing loss. I was out of my seat and first up to the front! After prayer for the right ear Craig said, "How does it seem to you now?" My response, "You're speaking very loudly".

"No, I'm not, I'm speaking very softly," was his reply. I looked down and there was my hearing aid in my hand! The same procedure followed with my left ear, again with the same question and reply, only this time I saw he had stepped back from me as he answered me in a very quiet voice. Well, what rejoicing and thanksgiving followed!

As I was going back to my seat Bruce spoke out, "I believe God is going to use that lady to bring healing of deafness to many other folk." After that I heard every word of teaching given by Bruce! What a mighty God we have with us wherever we go in his service. His prophetic word has since been brought forth in my church and in two OSL groups I have visited.

"Praise and Glory to God and to Jesus who heals today and forever."

tempted to stay away from the Master and give no account; for what have we to report? Nothing but a fruitless day. But we should not keep away from Jesus -- the one who sends us. Jesus had days in His own life that seemed fruitless, and He can understand our sadness when we come to Him with nothing.

So let's tell Him everything. That is the kind of prayer that will bless us and him. If we have to give account to Jesus for how we have spent our time each day it will make us careful in how we spend that time. It will keep us in more intimate contact with Him. Even in our failure His graciousness, understanding and

forgiveness will strengthen us for better service the next day.

Make a practice of telling Jesus how you spent your day; starting with today tell Him everything and let Him bless you.



## **HEALED OF DEAFNESS**

Janice Cooper, OSL Northern Area Convenor

Eight members of our church travelled from Whangaparaoa to the Manukau Baptist Church to attend a three day teaching seminar



## REPENTANCE

Intercessors for NZ

Repentance is something that you occasionally hear someone preaching about but is seldom referred to either when we pray alone or in groups. Prayer may be thought of as comprising four main areas: praise and worship, confession,

thanksgiving and intercession. It is common to praise and worship God when we gather together as Christians. We may spend a bit of time giving thanks when something special has happened and prayers have been answered. Most people are ready to intercede - to pray for their own needs and the needs of others. But repentance often gets omitted - or is often very general, "Lord, forgive me for anything I have done wrong." The problem with not spending time in repentance before God is that it becomes very easy to treat sin lightly and to go on sinning as before. Let's be honest, there is an awful lot of sin amongst Christians! This means we are not sincerely examining



our hearts and lives before God - our motives, thoughts and actions. We are not really repenting of sin and changing our lives as a result. We might ask for forgiveness, but that is not repentance. Repentance is a change of heart and mind leading to action!

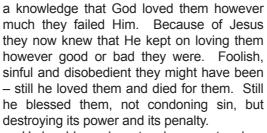
Please pray that Christians (us!) will earnestly seek to repent before God of everything which is displeasing to Him, and really desire a changed heart and life so that people will recognise us as Christians because of our godly lives - the way we think, speak and act. Pray that the individual and collective areas of sin in the church will be dealt with so that people will know we are Christians, not just by our love, but by our godly lifestyles too. Pray for true repentance in the Church, the Body of Christ, and for holiness amongst the people of God, for "... without holiness no man will see the Lord." (Hebrews 12.14)

## ONE BLESSING AFTER ANOTHER

"Out of the fullness of his grace he has blessed us all, giving us one blessing after another." John 1.16 John Borman, Faith for Daily Living

As the year draws to a close you may well be thinking about what sort of a year it has been for you. Maybe it has been a good year, for some it will have been a bad year, but for the great majority it will have been a mixed year, since that is how normal life is, a mixture of good and bad. When John thinks back to the coming of Jesus, some fifty years earlier, he recognizes that the first Christmas was the most important event in human history,

for without it there would have been no resurrection. The disciples had been brought out from a way of life in which they were commanded to obey God's rules if they were to receive blessings, or to expect punishment if they didn't, to



He has blessed you too, however tough or rough your year has been. Beyond the ups

and downs of your personal experience, God was, is and always will be the source of all goodness. The coming of Jesus tells us who God is and how much He loves us. HALLELUJAH!

### "Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control." Proverbs 25.28

To cultivate restraint over our appetites brings us great gain, because it builds in us the reserves that we need when we are tempted to cross a boundary that we will later regret. In the ancient world a city without walls was vulnerable to any enemy who wanted to attack or loot the city treasures. In the same way, a life that does not cultivate boundaries

### **HOW TO ORDER**

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Cheques in your currency are acceptable, but not Postal Notes. For donations to our KiwiBank account number 3890050310586-00 please include your name in the details space. For N.Z. receipts (tax deductible) a stamped and addressed envelope is appreciated. God bless you all and thank you.

We love to hear from you: testimonies, news, donations, and requests for prayer. Please address all such letters to our editorial office. We also hope that you will interest others in our paper.

is vulnerable to any distraction or seduction that comes its way. Don't easily give up the treasures of godliness in your life. Adding small measures of discipline into your daily lifestyle will return a huge reward.

> Dave Whitehead. Senior Pastor, GraceNYC.org

"The fruit of the Spirit is self-control." (Galatians 5.23) Righteous anger arises from grief at what is happening to another; unrighteous anger arises from a grudge at what is happening to oneself."

Dr E. Stanley Jones

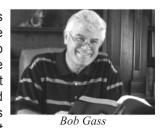
### *"WHOLENESS"*

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### Walking In Purity

Word for Today, Bob Gass "... he will purify... and refine them like gold ... " (Malachi 3.3)

When gold is refined over extreme heat the first thing to come to the surface is dross. The next thing to be separated from it is silver, a less precious metal that



blends with the raw gold ore. There's an important lesson here; most of us are unable to separate the good from the best, so Malachi writes, "...he will purify... and refine them like gold." God does it because we don't know how. After committing adultery with Bathsheba, David pleads, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." (Psalm 51.10) David prays for two things: a clean heart and a steadfast desire to walk in purity.

Personal failure is not usually a single act of disobedience, but rather the result of a slow, steady build-up of independence. It happens when we focus on the wrong things and neglect our spiritual life. So God calls us to the place of solitude, a place with no distractions, in order to expose our deepest thoughts and open our eyes to personal issues that need attention. It is here that He makes us aware of what we excuse, or try to hide from others. It's here the junk we've collected during the busy hours of our day gets filtered out. With the debris out of the way, we're able to see things more clearly and respond to the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit. There's no way to have a deeper, more intimate relationship with God without the discipline James talks about, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands... and purify your hearts... ' (James 4.8)

God loves me just as I am and not as I should be. He loves me beyond worthiness and unworthiness. He loves me beyond my fidelity and infidelity. He loves me in the morning sun and the evening rain. He loves me without caution, regret, limit or breaking point. No matter what I do, He will not stop loving me. And this is grace.

**Brennan Manning** 

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