

WORKBOOK

positioned for

MIRACLES



Making your life an amazing story

Dr. Jerry Stott

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This workbook was designed
to be used with the book

Positioned for MIRACLES

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By Dr. Jerry Stott

For additional copies of Dr. Stott's book
or this workbook, please contact:

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Getting the most out of this workbook

This workbook was created for group Bible studies and encourages group discussion. However, it can be equally beneficial for those who want to use it for private study and devotional times.

The workbook was designed to be used in conjunction with ***“Positioned for MIRACLES: Making your life an amazing story,”*** by Dr. Jerry Stott. In his book, Dr. Jerry uses the first miracle of Jesus – turning water into wine at a wedding feast – as a blueprint for positioning believers to experience more miracles in their own lives.

Dr. Jerry draws seven significant points from this real-life biblical story and explains how each point positions us for a greater release of God’s power.

The last two sections of the book discuss the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the importance of praying in the Holy Spirit.

Each section of this workbook will focus on one chapter from the book. Groups will want to assign and read the designated chapter and workbook section in advance so study participants will be ready for serious group discussion.

Sections include chapter reading, introduction to the “Position” being discussed, inductive Bible study

questions, group discussion points, a prayer point, a power point, and an action point.

Participants will get the most out of this study by committing to do the workbook in advance of the group session, participate in the discussions, and practice the principles.

INTRODUCTION

Read: “An Important Word from the Author” pages 27-28 and the “Introduction” pages 33-37

Introduction: Most of us like to dive right into the story and get to the interesting stuff. However, the beginning sections of a book – before chapter one – are very important because they help the reader understand some things they might not get from just reading the main subject matter. The Foreword, Notes from the Author, Introduction, and other pre-chapter material are all designed to help you get the most out of the book by allowing the author and perhaps others to speak directly to you, the reader, concerning why they wrote the book or what they were trying to accomplish. In the brief Author’s Note and Introduction, Dr. Jerry helps position you to receive the most from this teaching. In these sections, Dr. Jerry points out that there is no short-cut to seeing the power of God in your life. He encourages you to develop an intimate, daily walk with God; and as a result, you will see the miraculous happening more routinely as you go about your everyday life.

Points to Ponder: What is the most significant thing you got out of reading this section of the book?

In the section “An Important Word from the Author,” Dr. Jerry encourages you to get the most out of this book by developing what?

The Christian Life is not just about knowing the right information, but about knowing

The leading of the Holy Spirit will never _____ the written Word of God.

The “Introduction” reminds us that being “Positioned for Miracles” is all about

Why is this important?

In the “Introduction,” Dr. Jerry starts out by telling an embarrassing story that didn’t have a great ending. He also told about John Wimber and his early struggles to develop a miraculous healing ministry that would later span the globe and impact millions of people.

Why do you think he shared these seeming “failures” at the very beginning? It seems a strange way to encourage people. Were you encouraged or discouraged? Why?

Do you think healing and miracles are more about: 1. The person doing the praying; 2. The person being prayed for; or 3. Jesus? Explain your answer.

Read Matthew 7:7-11 and Luke 11:5-13. What do Matthew and Luke say God will give to those who ask him? The author suggests that God will give the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and the power of God to those who: 1. Want to minister to the world for God; and 2. Ask God for them. What do you think about these verses?

List one or two important lessons you personally got from this section of the book?

Discussion Point 1: Do you think the miraculous power of God is reserved for a few special Christians, or that it is available to every born again, Spirit-filled believer to manifest the power and glory of God's Kingdom and touch lives?

Discussion Point 2: The question might have come up in your group discussion (or in your mind), “What happens if I try it and it doesn’t work?” What should your response be? How committed are you to developing this Spirit-dynamic in your life?

Power Point: The Holy Spirit is referred to as the “Promise of the Father” (Acts 1:4-5) and a “Gift” (Acts 2:3 and 10:45). God will not break his promise and a gift cannot be earned, bought, or otherwise merited. You can receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit simply by asking in faith and receiving with thanksgiving.

Prayer Point: Father, you said that if I asked you for a good thing you would not refuse. You also said if I asked for the Holy Spirit you would not give me something else instead. Today I ask you to fill me with your Holy Spirit afresh and anew and give me the Gifts of the Holy Spirit so that I might serve you and minister to people in Jesus’ name. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: If you have prayed in faith and received God's promises, put that into practice. Find someone in the next 24 hours (the sooner the better, actually) and offer to pray for them about a need in their life. Look for something tangible and specific (as opposed to a general prayer). Remember that, at times, miracles happen suddenly and sometimes they work out over a period of time. Pray in faith and confidence.

Chapter 1

THE GREATEST MIRACLE

Read: Pages 39-48

Introduction: In this chapter, Dr. Jerry tells the incredible story of Isaac Wan, the leader of a cargo cult on Tanna Island, who repents and turns to the Lord. As a result, thousands of cult members followed suit in a short period of time. God is still moving on Tanna Island. (For a miraculous update to this story, please see the end of this section). The salvation of a single soul is one of the greatest miracles. It is even more miraculous when many people turn to the Lord all at once. It is a miracle that Jesus, the sinless Son of God, would take on the sins of the world. It is a miracle that the creator of life itself could, and would, take on death for every mortal man. It is a miracle that a holy and righteous God loves enough to forgive those who have willingly sinned against him. Then again, God is in the miracle-working business. Truly, salvation is the greatest miracle. We don't often think of salvation as a miracle because we often don't see "miraculous results" immediately when someone professes Christ and begins their Christian life. However, we must remember that the healing of a physical body or the miraculous provision of a need means very little if that person loses their soul because they failed to receive Jesus

as Savior. Dr. Jerry also shares some of his own story and how God worked miraculously in his life to “position” him for miracles.

Points to Ponder: Firstly, it is amazing how God seemed to position every detail for the salvation of not only Isaac Wan, but also most of his village. So often we see God using various circumstances and situations to get us to the right place, right time, and right people that we would hear the message of salvation.

What are some of the key events, timing, and people that brought you to receive Jesus into your life?

Secondly, miraculous power is often a visible sign that points to the unseen realities of the Kingdom of God, and more specifically, salvation. Read Matthew 9:1-8. Here we find the story of the paralytic man whose friends tore a hole in the roof of a house and lowered their friend through the roof to get to Jesus for healing. The Bible reveals a couple of interesting realities in this story. First, we find Jesus telling the man that his sins were forgiven. The religious leaders were very upset and accused Jesus of blaspheming because only God could forgive sins. In reply to this accusation, Jesus heals the man saying, “That you

may know the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins . . .” We are also told that Jesus healed the man when he SAW the faith of the friends.

Jesus and the apostles used miracles and healings as evangelistic tools. Does this mean that Jesus was willing to heal people who were not already “saved”? Do you think people who experience a miracle are more open to listening to the Gospel message? Why or why not?

How does this fit in with the idea some people have that a person has to be “right with God” before God will work in their life or respond to their faith?

The paralytic man’s friends went to a lot of trouble (even tearing the roof off the house) to make sure their friend got to Jesus because they were so sure he would be healed. When Jesus “saw” the faith of the man’s friends – the effort they made to get him to Jesus – he healed the paralytic. How far are you willing to go to see another person experience the miraculous power of God? Explain.

While you probably won't be tearing any roofs off in your ministry to others, what are some difficulties you might experience, or some effort you might have to expend in ministering the power of God to people?

Discussion Point 1: From the Tanna Island story we can see clearly that God was “working on both sides of the fence.” While God sent Dr. Jerry to the Island, he also prepared the heart of the Cult leader, Isaac Wan, to receive what Dr. Jerry had to say. Should you expect God to “work on both sides of the fence” for you also?

Discussion Point 2: Dr. Jerry shared how, looking back, he could see God at work in his life to bring him to Jesus and how God worked in his life afterward to prepare him to serve the Lord. Can you look back on your own life and see how God has moved miraculously, even though

you might not have realized it at the time? Has God worked any specific miracles in your life?

Power Point: The miraculous power of God to and through a person has a two-fold purpose: 1. To demonstrate the love and power of God; and 2. To open a non-believer's heart to learn more about the gospel message and the Kingdom of God.

Prayer Point: Father, let me see the divine value in others that you do. Help me to be willing to make the effort, spend the time, or even sacrifice if need be, to minister your power and love to those around me. Lead me to those who desperately need you right now. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Look for God to create an opportunity for you to share a portion of your own testimony with someone this week as a starting point to presenting the gospel message, or pray for someone to experience the miraculous power of God.

Update on the Tanna Island Story

The following is an email Dr. Jerry received from two pastors on the island mentioned in the book:

We are having a great move of God on Tanna now. The second biggest village of the cult movement on the North of Tanna has asked me to build a Foursquare church there. This village stopped the church in the year 1940 when the cult broke out around that year till 2016, 2nd of April when God stepped in to take over this community! Brother, we are excited that this chief, by God's grace, chose the Foursquare family to put a church there. We are cleaning up the area now and my son has sponsored the community to clear the place. There is a lot of work that is happening and we need your prayers and support on this mission field. ONE THING I KNOW! Is the message you preached at the cult village IS STILL BURNING the cult away.

Let God have the Glory!

Ps Salome and Ps Barnabas

Chapter 2

THE POSITION OF HUMILITY

Read: Pages 49-60 Miracle Ingredient 1 of 7: Bring it to Him

Introduction: In this chapter, you read several stories of people who literally had no hope other than a miracle. Each of these people brought their need to Jesus. The truth is, when you don't have something and have no way to get it for yourself, it takes faith and humility to ask someone else – even if that someone is God! Humility is a very important virtue in the Kingdom of God. In fact, pride is often the reason we don't see more miracles. This portion of the story emphasizes Mary's role in bringing the need to Jesus. At first take, it appears his mother even asking annoys Jesus. Yet Mary's faith was undeterred by this seemingly rude response and is demonstrated in her instructions to the servants, "Do whatever he says."

Points to Ponder: Dr. Jerry points out that sometimes God initiates divine encounters and at other times he sits back and waits to be invited in. We also see here – and in other passages – that Jesus doesn't always immediately respond with a miracle. He suggests that perhaps Jesus is refining the faith of those who bring him a need. It is also important to note that he used those experiences to point

out what true faith looked like, thus honoring the person who had to go through the experience. It has been said, “Testimonies are usually made up of ‘tests and moans.’” Finally – as in the story of the Fijian Witch – we can expect spiritual warfare sometimes as we determine to experience the power of God for ourselves and to minister to others.

It seems very strange that Jesus chose – from the world’s perspective – an obscure wedding in an obscure Jewish town to perform his first miracle. One might think that he would have gone to the temple, gathered a crowd, and raised a person from the dead to get his ministry kicked off with a bang. What are some reasons why God might have used this situation as the opening of the miraculous ministry of Christ?

The fact that the master of the wedding reception ran out of wine seems a trifle insignificant to most of us, at least on the grander scale of the Kingdom of God. Jesus met the need anyway. Do you think God is really concerned about everyday things in your life and the lives of those around you? Why or why not?

Are there any times in your life, even ones that may seem insignificant to others, where God showed up and did a miracle for you?

Sometimes, when you offer to pray for people, they will say they really don't have anything to pray about. Do you think sometimes they really mean they think their issues aren't significant enough for God to bother with? How should we respond to this idea?

What is an issue in your life right now that you could be tempted to say is "too big for God"? What is an issue you might consider too insignificant? (Resist the temptation to avoid this question by saying, "Nothing is too big or small for God.")

In the story of the Canaanite woman seeking the deliverance of her daughter from a demon spirit, we see the woman approach Jesus as a religious and cultural outsider, yet using the religious and cultural language of the Jews. Do you think she thought that identifying with the right religious group would gain her some points with God? Is this why Jesus responded as he did at first? Is there a tendency for us to do this too? Explain.

Later, the woman simply worships him (indicating that her attempt to be religious was not true worship). Jesus responded positively to this appeal. What is the lesson you get out of this story?

Discussion Point 1: Outside of salvation, there is no one-size-fits-all experience with God. At times, Jesus walked into a situation and ministered. In others he waited to be invited. Sometimes he just healed people (like the lame man at the pool of Bethesda) and other times he asked people what they wanted him to do for them (such as the blind man on the road to Samaria). We must be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit to see miracles on a consistent basis. Discuss this concept.

Discussion Point 2: Why is humility such an important virtue, both in the life of a believer and in positioning oneself to experience more miracles? Find and discuss one or two scriptures that talk about the importance of, and the results of, humility. (Here's a hint to get you started: James chapter 4.) Do you have a problem with pride in your life?

Discussion Point 3: Have you ever experienced spiritual warfare when praying for something for yourself or when trying to minister to others? Could the delay (Daniel chapter 10), or even a failure in seeing an answer to prayer, be directly related to spiritual warfare?

Discussion Point 4: Only God can work a miracle. There is a real danger, when seeking the power of God, to make it about us. We should always be willing to examine our motives and attitudes. How can wrong motives and attitudes cause a problem for us and others?

Power Point: Bringing every need to Jesus – no matter how big or how small – keeps us humble, reminds us that what is important to us is important to God, and demonstrates a faith and a confidence in Christ.

Prayer Point: Father, right now I have some needs in my own life. I humble myself and bring those needs to you now in Jesus' name. I state them specifically. I ask you to meet my needs according to the promises in your word. Strengthen me to encourage others that no need is too large or too small to bring to Jesus, and to commit to praying with others about their daily needs as the Spirit directs me. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, submit to God, and resist the devil (James chapter 4). Work on this virtue of humility in your life this week. Miracles are not about us, but about God. Give him the Glory – always!

Chapter 3

THE POSITION OF OBEDIENCE

Read: Pages 61-71 Miracle Ingredient 2 of 7: Do as He Says

Introduction: In this chapter, Dr. Jerry shares a couple of stories from his ministry: one about the first blind man he prayed for and the emotional and spiritual battle he struggled with, and the other was about two very different types of church goers and how they responded to the same message. The need for and the power of obedience are highlighted in this chapter. Dr. Jerry also talks about the importance of a clean heart and a clear conscience in order for faith to operate properly.

Points to Ponder: Stepping out to pray for the miraculous can be intimidating. There is never a guarantee that, at the end of the prayer, something will happen. That is why it is called faith. This is one reason why obedience is so important. Throughout his book, Dr. Jerry is honest about the times he felt afraid, distracted, doubtful, and very un-anointed. He reminds us that obedience has nothing to do with our emotions. Mary told the servants to just “Do what he says.”

Read John 5:19-29. What did Jesus say he did on his own initiative?

How can the enemy use fear, doubt, and other negative emotions to hinder your life and ministry to others?

Have there been any times in your own life that you believe the Holy Spirit was leading you to reach out and pray for someone in need?

Does the fear of possibly failing, or looking foolish, keep you from stepping out in asking God for miracles publicly? Why or why not?

On a scale of 1-10, how well would you say you seek the leading of the Holy Spirit and obey it on a day-to-day basis? What factors lead to disobedience? How could you improve?

Fear, insecurity, guilt, and shame can steal our confidence before God. Having a clean conscience is important for the Christian to operate in faith. Read Hebrews 9:14. What does this verse tell us the blood of Jesus and the ministry of the Holy Spirit do for us?

Why is it difficult to serve God with a guilty conscience?

Discussion Point 1: Read John 5:19-29. What did Jesus say he did on his own initiative? While Jesus ministered to everyone who came to him, we also see he did not feel obligated to meet every need he saw. As far as we can tell from the biblical story, he healed one man at the pool of Bethesda and left the rest unhealed. Perhaps he went back later and held a healing crusade at the same spot. Certainly, the other sick people who went there day after day had to know about the miracle and be inspired to believe also. The bottom line is that Jesus demonstrated absolute obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit – and he was 100% successful. This should encourage us. Although you are not God in the flesh, you can follow the leading of the Spirit 100% of the time. Discuss what it

might take to begin following the leading of the Spirit on a regular basis and what it might look like played out in real life.

Discussion Point 2: Read Romans 8:14 and John 10:27. To say you should obey God first assumes God has given you some sort of direction. Mary directed the servants to listen to Jesus' instructions. To receive miraculous answers to prayer – for your own life or when praying for someone else – requires you to hear what the Spirit of God is saying in specific situations, not only in what to pray for, but in how to pray. Discuss the issue of God speaking to his children and some ways you might improve your ability to understand the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion Point 3: In Dr. Jerry's story about the blind man, his friend received a "word of knowledge" from God concerning what was hindering healing. The blind man

had fallen to the floor – meaning he had experienced the power of God – but in this case, something else was hindering the complete answer to prayer. If the miraculous doesn't seem to happen, should we seek God for possible reasons, or just assume God doesn't want to work at that point in time? Discuss this issue and what it might mean for those praying for people and those being prayed for. (We should be cautious about assuming it is always the other person's fault.)

Power Point: Jesus said, “I only do what I see the Father doing.” Being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in every situation and determined to obey what you believe the Holy Spirit is saying will open the door for more miracles in your life.

Prayer Point: Father, right now I ask that you would cleanse my conscience so I might serve you. Remove all the guilt, shame, fear, and insecurity I might be feeling. I open my heart to the leading of your Spirit as never before. Help me to hear you more clearly and give me the courage to step out in faith and obedience for the sake of the Kingdom of God and others who need your miraculous power. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Allow the Holy Spirit to cleanse your conscience on a daily basis. Be determined to walk in obedience to the Holy Spirit and watch for opportunities where the Spirit might be directing you to step out and obey God in ministering to others. If there is a delay in something you are asking God for, ask God if there is an issue of obedience hindering the full manifestation of your miracle.

Chapter 4

THE POSITION OF GIVING

Read: Pages 73-85 Miracle Ingredient 3 of 7: Give Him What You Have

Introduction: Operating in the power of God is not always grand and glorious. Sometimes it requires willpower, sacrifice, and obedience in spite of how we might feel. Dr. Jerry shared two stories in this chapter that reflected his utter lack of having anything to give to those he was ministering to. As you press through your doubts and emotions (in the case of one of his stories, embarrassment and fleshly weakness) you will consistently see more miracles in your life.

Points to Ponder: You will not always feel like you are at the top of your game when ministering. Sometimes it seems like ministers give the impression that they never have a prayer that isn't answered, or that they are always absolutely confident when they minister. Are you encouraged or discouraged by this chapter? Why or why not?

Read the story of Naaman, the Syrian general who had leprosy in 2 Kings 5:1-14. Naaman was disappointed and angry that the prophet Elisha didn't bother to come out to see him or do some dramatic display by calling on God (no doubt with a voice like Charlton Heston in the Ten Commandments) to heal him. Naaman's pre-conceived idea of how it was going to work almost caused him to miss his miracle. How can your pre-conceived ideas about how God works cause you to miss out on miracles in your life?

Should we expect God to always do things the same way every time? Why or why not?

Are there specific areas in your own life where God is asking for your full obedience so that greater things will come?

Read 2 Corinthians 8:12 again. In God's economy, willingness seems to make up the difference between what we have and what we don't have. How important is "willingness" when it comes to spiritual things?

What is the opposite of willingness? (Come up with several different words or definitions.)

In our keynote passage (John 2) the servants had only water pots with some water in them. However, when they gave them to Jesus and obeyed his Word, something miraculous happened. Why do you think Jesus told them

to fill the pots to the brim? Are your actions (obedience) a critical part of the miraculous? Why or why not?

The Bible does not tell us the water changed to wine BEFORE the servants dipped some out to give to the master of ceremonies. Mary certainly had faith, but do you think the servants had faith too? What faith risks were the servants taking by obeying Jesus?

Does “feeling spiritual” have anything to do with faith? Why or why not?

Discussion Point 1: In the story of the man in the hospital Intensive Care Unit, Dr. Jerry shares how he was concerned about his “good reputation.” Stepping out to believe for the miraculous isn’t a normal part of most

people's lives. In fact, it can appear a little fanatical to most non-Christians and to a lot of Christians as well. Being overly concerned with our reputation (or pride) can generate some false motives and effectively hinder the miraculous. How can false motives (wanting to be known and recognized, or not wanting to look foolish or like a spiritual failure) get us out of a position to experience more miracles?

Discussion Point 2: How concerned are you with your reputation? Would you be willing to go “out on a limb” to publicly ask God for miraculous answers, or to state that God is going to do something? How does taking some risks – in faith – open the door for more miracles?

Discussion Point 3: Read Romans 10:17. Paul tells us, “Faith comes by hearing God’s word.” Does this just mean reading the Bible and coming to believe in Jesus as Savior, or are there other applications? If you knew God was speaking to you today, would it generate faith in your life?

Discussion Point 4: Read Matthew 4:4. Jesus said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of God’s mouth.” Did God stop speaking when the Bible was finished in the first century? Does God speak to his people today? How important is it to hear what God might be saying when it comes to praying for the miraculous in any situation? What are some steps you could take to hear from God more often or more clearly?

Power Point: God wants us to place our faith in his Word and in his ability and not in how we feel, what we see, what we have to offer, or how it might make us look.

Prayer Point: Father, I submit my life and reputation to you. Help me to examine my motives. I am willing to be used by you to demonstrate the miraculous power that is in the name of Jesus. Help me to listen more carefully as I

go through my day, and especially when I am given the opportunity to minister to someone. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: In Isaiah 55:11 God has told us, “So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” Determine to stop and listen to the Holy Spirit for direction before jumping in to pray about any situation.

Chapter 5

THE POSITION OF RECEIVING

Read: Pages 87-99 Miracle Ingredient 4 of 7: Keep Full of the Word and Spirit

Introduction: Sometimes ministry doesn't feel like it should. We often look at the celebrity minister on the platform, and it seems like he (or she) is perfect and never has a problem or an unanswered (or delayed answered) prayer. We take that as a model and dream to have a ministry like that. The truth is, that entire concept is false. Many times those same ministers are facing huge background issues, but know that they must be faithful in that which God called them to do. In this chapter, Dr. Jerry looks at the position of receiving what we need from the Lord at all times. Many times, when we personally do not feel up to the task at hand, God moves most miraculously. Satan wants to stop you. Pressing through weariness, emotional stress, or even spiritual attack is a real key to experiencing more miracles in your life and ministry.

Points to Ponder: Learning to receive requires the cultivation of four spiritual qualities. The first is humility. Those who don't think they need anything will not bother to ask or seek. The second is learning to ask. James tells

us, “You have not because you ask not.” The third quality that must be developed is receiving. That which is given must be received. Sometimes that means stepping out in faith to believe for what you have asked for, instead of waiting for it to float down from heaven. The final quality is using what you have received. We have all received gifts at some point that got thrown into a drawer or closet never to be seen again. Which of these points speak to you the most? Why?

Read John 3:27 and John 15:1-5. According to these verses, what can we do without Jesus?

Read Acts 1:1-8. Jesus referred to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as the _____ of the Father (KJV).

What did Jesus say they needed before they went out to be witnesses?

Do you believe that you have already been given what is necessary to be used by God? Why or why not?

Read John 16:22. What does Jesus instruct his disciples to do? What would be the result of their obedience? What else would they get besides what they asked for?

The issue of receiving can be a little hard to figure out. Someone might wonder, “If I ask, doesn’t that automatically mean I want to receive?” Not always. Sometimes we can ask in desperation without really believing for the answer. At other times the Spirit of God moves and waits for us to respond. Read John 20:22. What did Jesus tell them to do? What happened?

Read Acts 2:4. We see a cooperative effort between the disciples and the Holy Spirit. What did the disciples do? What are some of the key ingredients that the disciples

engaged in before the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit fell upon them? What did the Holy Spirit do?

The Spirit of God moves on us, but we must also step out in faith and allow the manifestation of the Spiritual Gifts in and through our lives.

Read 2 Timothy 2:6-7. We must use what we have been given. Timothy had been given a Spiritual Gift, but it appears he allowed it to become dormant. What does Paul instruct Timothy to do in these verses?

What could you do to “stir up” the Gifts you have been given?

How could fear stop you from using your Spiritual Gifts and hinder you from seeing more miracles? What fear might hinder you?

What did Paul tell us that God gave us (besides Spiritual Gifts)?

Discussion Point 1: Read Matthew 7:7-11 and Luke 11:9-13. What do these verses mean to you? Can you spot the difference in these two verses? Jesus instructs the disciples to ask, seek, and knock. Was he referring to different things or actions? If so, what are they? In the Greek language, the idea is conveyed not to just ask, seek, and knock once, but to keep on asking, seeking, and knocking. Does this indicate that we might not get an answer immediately? Were there times in your life where you gave up on asking and believing for the miracle or miracles you need? Is this the time that perhaps God is asking you to ask and believe for more?

Discussion Point 2: Paul told Timothy to “stir up the Gifts.” What could you do to “stir up” the Gifts you have

been given? The word for the phrase “stir up” has several connotations. The first and most obvious is to “stir” or “fan” embers into a burning flame again. There is another idea conveyed, though. The word is a compound word made up of three different root words. One of them is the root word of “beast” (zoo) or “life.” One could possibly take this to mean something like “awaken the beast (life) in you.” Discuss this point.

Discussion Point 3: In the book, Dr. Jerry shares some stories about times when he and others didn’t have anything to give. They received what was needed at the right time. How important is it to feel adequate or like you are “on top of your game” before trying to minister? Does God need our physical or even emotional strength to get the job done?

Power Point: Jesus continually instructed his disciples to receive – especially the Holy Spirit, the Spiritual Gifts, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer Point: Father, I want to receive everything you have for me. I set my heart right now not to refuse or reject anything you want me to have. I know every good and perfect gift comes from you, the Father of Lights. I ask now, and receive by faith, the power of the Holy Spirit and the Spiritual Gifts you have earmarked for me. In Jesus' name, AMEN!

Action Point: Practice! Step out in faith. You should remember from previous chapters that it may take a while to get the hang of it, but as the old adage says, "Practice makes perfect." You will never do it if you don't get started. Try it now with your study group. Pray for one another and allow the Holy Spirit to direct you.

Chapter 6

THE POSITION OF EXPECTING

Read: Pages 101-109 Miracle Ingredient 5 of 7: Consider Your Miracle Is On Its Way

Introduction: Expectation is a natural part of faith. Faith considers God's promises as valid and produces an expectation that the thing being sought after will manifest at some point. It is quite possible to pray without expectation. We sometimes pray out of desperation or because we know we should, or simply by religious habit. Cultivating expectation can be difficult, especially when only a miracle will handle the situation. However, as you build your faith in God's character and God's Word, expectation will also come alongside your faith. We are never told to pray "If it is thy will" prayers, which give us a convenient "out" where faith and expectation are concerned. That may sound humble and pious, but it is simply not scriptural. When John said, "If we pray anything according to his will we know he hears us . . ." (1 John 5:14), he wasn't suggesting shotgun prayers that may or may not be answered; John was encouraging us to pray according to God's will. Confidence in God's Word, combined with the leading of the Holy Spirit at any given moment, produces an expectation for results.

Points to Ponder: We are not told when the water turned into wine. It might have been when Jesus instructed them to bare it to the master of ceremonies. Or more likely, it transformed as it was being handed to the man. There is something about both the faith of Mary and the faith and obedience of the servants that God wants us to see.

How do you think the servants felt when they were asked to fill water pots with water in order to get more wine?

What kind of doubts or fears might they have had on the way to the master of ceremonies to give him a taste of that which they had not tried themselves?

What feelings or emotions might you experience in the time between the prayer for a miracle and the manifestation of an answer?

How can you prepare in advance and maintain an attitude of faith and expectation?

We see that faith and obedience worked together to produce a miracle that the servants got to be a part of. Could Mary's faith alone have produced a miracle? What part did obedience play in the miracle?

Trying to receive direction from the Holy Spirit – and then obeying – can be more than a little scary. Have there been times in your life when God asked you to do something? Did you obey or disobey? What was the outcome?

Discussion Point 1: In the story of Dr. Jerry's daughter, the faith of his friends, combined with the faith and obedience of Dr. Jerry and Julie, opened the door for a miracle. This reminds us of the story of the lame man whose friends tore through a roof and lowered the man in front of Jesus. In Mark 2:5 and Luke 5:20 the Bible tells

us, “When Jesus SAW the faith of his friends . . .” Faith needs to be SEEN, not just heard. The Beatles sang a song with the words, “I get by with a little help from my friends.” We should always be ready to receive faith and encouragement from others as we seek to serve the Lord. We should also be ready and willing to lend our faith to others who might be struggling. Is there someone you can lend your faith to today? Discuss what faith might LOOK like?

Discussion Point 2: In Dr. Jerry’s story there was a double miracle. Not only was their daughter healed, but also the bills were paid. It is important to note that the provision to pay the bill had been prepared long before the need was there. Could it possibly be that the man was a Christian and was being obedient to God and in faith donated the money and dictated the circumstances? 2000 years ago Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to provide the means for your miracle. The provision has already been made. Discuss the times when it appeared God’s provision was there before you needed it.

Discussion Point 3: Read Jeremiah 29:11: “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end . . .” This verse speaks of an expectation that is based on God’s Word. The Jews needed a miracle of deliverance. God had already spoken to them when they went into captivity that he would bring them out and restore them in 70 years. God reminds them of this promise and encourages them to develop an expectation that the promise would be fulfilled in its time. The word “expected” in this verse comes from a Hebrew root word that means a cord, or literally, “to bind together by twisting.” In Proverbs, we are told that a “three strand cord is not easily broken.” God’s character, combined with God’s Word and mixed with our faith (Hebrews 4:2), produces an anchor line of hope that will not break. Read Hebrews 6:17-20 and discuss this notion.

Power Point: God’s Word must be mixed with faith (Hebrews 4:2) for it to profit us. To receive anything from the Lord we must humble ourselves, ask, receive it, and then actively step out to use it.

Prayer Point: Father, I come to you today and humbly ask that I might receive what I have need of to serve you effectively. I open my soul and spirit to receive from you

and I determine to act on the direction of the Holy Spirit, demonstrating my faith by my obedience. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Before you pray for yourself or minister to others, take the time to hear what the Holy Spirit might be saying about the situation. There is no “one-size-fits-all” category with God. Sometimes Jesus healed a person with physical problems and, at other times, he cast a demon out. You cannot heal a demon and you cannot cast out a sickness. Likewise, on occasion, there is something that is not obvious hindering the answer to prayer. Through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit – Word of Knowledge, Word of Wisdom, and Discerning of Spirits – we can receive the information we need to minister effectively. And sometimes it is pure obedience to something that seems illogical. Remember, God told Joshua to march around Jericho for seven days without saying a single word. Yet it was obedience, not military strength or strategy, that won the crucial battle for the Promised Land.

Chapter 7

THE POSITION OF BELIEVING

Read: Pages 111-125 Miracle Ingredient 6 of 7: Add a Measure of Faith

Introduction: Without a doubt, faith is of primary importance in the Kingdom of God. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 11:6, “Without faith it is impossible to please [God].” Dr. Jerry makes two key points concerning faith in this chapter. The first is that we have all been given a measure of faith from God. The second is that we can increase or grow our faith. In this section, we want to discover what faith really is and how you can increase your faith to position yourself to see more miracles.

Points to Ponder: In the story of the woman whose back was healed, do you think it was Dr. Jerry’s faith or the woman’s faith that was operating?

Sometimes Jesus told people, “Be it unto you according to your faith.” At other times it seemed that miracles in the Bible were based on the faith of the one performing the miracles and the person receiving the miracle didn’t have a lot of faith. Why do you think this is? Do you think God will honor your faith as you pray for those who really don’t believe yet?

Dr. Jerry reminds us that there were two conditions necessary for our faith to grow. What were they?

1. _____
2. _____

Read Hebrews 11:1-6. In what two ways does the author describe faith?

1. _____
2. _____

The words “evidence” and “substance” indicate absolute reality, yet faith believes in something that is not yet seen. What do you think the author of Hebrews means when he talks about faith in this way?

The Bible talks about a genuine – or “unfeigned” – faith. This indicates that there is a “fake” or “pretend” faith. What do you think might be the difference between real faith and fake faith? What would be some indications of real faith or fake faith?

Read Romans 10:17: “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

Where does real faith come from?

Does real faith start with us and what we want, or with God and what he said?

Discussion Point 1: Share your own story. Was there a time in your life when your faith was so strong that you no longer needed to see the thing you were praying for to know that it was going to happen?

Discussion Point 2: The writer of Hebrews lists a great company of people in the Bible who had faith. Some of those people “died in faith, not having received the promise.” This might seem strange to us today who have the idea that faith is about “getting what we need or want.” Does the Bible teach that not getting a prayer answered is always due to a lack of faith? Discuss the value of a faith that doesn’t stop believing even when it seems the answer will never come.

Discussion Point 3: Dr. Jerry makes the point that we can grow our faith. He said two key conditions were: 1. Using the faith we have already been given; and 2. Stretching our faith to believe God in greater ways for greater things. Discuss these two points. Could we call it “everyday faith” and “supernatural faith”? Discuss some ways in which God might challenge you to stretch your faith.

Power Point: When tempted by Satan (Matthew 4:4), Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3 from the Old Testament: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” Real faith is generated from believing God’s Word and acting on it. Sometimes that is the written Word we read in the Bible. Sometimes it is the spoken Word ministered by an anointed servant of God. Sometimes it is the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking directly to our spirits. Don’t limit

how God speaks to you. The more open you are to hear from God, the more faith will be generated in your life.

Prayer Point: Father, I pray with your disciples, “Increase my faith.” I want to walk with you in an incredible journey demonstrating the Kingdom of God. Help me to use the measure of faith you have given me and to be willing to take a risk to stretch my faith. Father, speak to me so my faith can grow, in Jesus’ name. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Determine to “hear the Word of God” – in whatever manner he wants to speak to you – to let that Word generate faith and to obey what you hear as an indication of your faith. Be willing to take a risk to be stretched.

Chapter 8

THE POSITION OF SERVING

Read: Pages 127-135 Miracle Ingredient 7 of 7: Mix in Some Compassion

Introduction: In this section, we discover the motive of miracles. In our biblical narrative, the servants were a part of Jesus' first miracle. This is significant because this miracle serves as a pattern for us. Jesus could have done all of this on his own and used the opportunity to declare who he was. There is no indication that he wanted any attention or credit for the miracle. Instead, he chose to use simple servants to work through. This should speak volumes to you and me. In fact, as far as we know, no one outside of Mary, Jesus, and the servants knew a miracle took place. The point is the power of compassion, humility, and servanthood. The miracle was all about the bride and groom and the master of ceremonies. It wasn't about drawing attention to Jesus, Mary, or the servants.

Points to Ponder: Dr. Jerry points out the motive behind Jesus' miracle: COMPASSION! He told Mary it was not yet his time. The miracle was not for him. He did respond to his mother's insistence – or should we say – faith! It was pointed out that the issue of running out of wine was

one that could cause a lot of embarrassment in that society in that era.

Read Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; and 20:34. What was Jesus' motive for ministering to people?

What does "compassion" mean?

What would it look like if someone had "compassion" on another?

Read Matthew 18:23-35. What motive does Jesus expect us to display toward our brothers and sisters in Christ?

Can we draw any conclusions from Jesus' use of the servants to cooperate with him in this first miracle? What might they be?

Read Philippians 2:1-11. In this passage, Paul uses the words compassion, humility, consolation, joy, comfort, fellowship, affection, and unity to instruct Christians to love and care for one another. He contrasts these words by saying, "Do nothing out of _____ or _____."

According to this passage, do we have a responsibility to minister to others?

Paul tells us, Jesus _____ himself; took on the form of a _____; and became _____ to _____. Is this a pattern God expects from you and me? Why or why not?

Discussion Point 1: Read Acts 8:9-24. Simon the sorcerer enjoyed quite a reputation as “a great one.” However, when the apostles came along and people were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit, he got jealous and wanted to purchase the power to lay hands on people and see them filled with the Holy Spirit. Simon’s motive was not one of compassion or service – he wanted to keep his reputation as some great person of God.

One of the great dangers of experiencing the supernatural power of God is to use it to promote you. It can be quite a heady thing to see God answer one of your prayers miraculously. It is easy to think, like Simon, that it is you who is the great one – not Jesus. There is also a problem with others exalting your ministry when you start seeing more miracles. Today many people pursue the miraculous for reasons other than compassion or service. This is a genuine problem every young minister must overcome.

What do you think? What is the danger of making the ministry about us more than Jesus? How can we make sure we keep our motives right? Do answers to prayer indicate we are more righteous or holy than others who don’t see them? Does seeing a miraculous answer to prayer automatically mean that God places his stamp of approval on everything in our lives?

Discussion Point 2: Discuss Philippians 2:1-4 and what it means for believers today.

Discussion Point 3: Read Galatians 5:6: “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.” According to Paul, love activates faith. What do you think? Would we see more miracles if love was the motivating factor?

Discussion point 4: Read all of Galatians chapter 5 and discuss what you feel are the key issues.

Power Point: Seeing others through Jesus' heart of compassion, rather than an opportunity for building our egos, makes a real difference in our ministries. As you develop love, faith, humility and a servant's heart, you will experience a greater outpouring of God's power in and through your life.

Prayer Point: Father, help me to be a servant. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Paul admonishes us in Philippians 2:5 to develop the same attitude that Jesus had when ministering to others. Spend some time this week reading and meditating on Philippians chapter 2.

Chapter 9

SEVEN KEYS TO GREATER FAITH

PART 1

Read: Pages 137-151 Where Faith Comes From

Introduction: In Chapters 9 and 10 we will be looking more closely at the subject of faith. In Chapter 9 Dr. Jerry discusses where faith comes from and in Chapter 10 he shares ways in which you can build your faith. Faith has its source in God and God alone. Some who have pursued faith have mistakenly assumed it was all about them and their certitude and confession. In this chapter, we find the real source of faith.

Points to Ponder: Read Romans 10:17: “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

What is the source of real faith?

Why do you think God's Word is the source of faith?

Read Matthew 4:4 and Deuteronomy 8:3. Do you think "God's Word" is limited to the written Word of God – the Bible – or something more? Why or why not?

Read John 10:27. Does God still speak personally to his people today?

Write down a couple of times where you believe God spoke to you. What were the results?

Read Romans 4:1: “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” Note that it does not say, “Abraham believed IN God.” It says, “Abraham BELIEVED God.” What is the difference between believing IN God and BELIEVING God?

In this chapter, Dr. Jerry discusses three points to give us a better understanding of where faith comes from and how it operates. Discuss these points.

Discussion Point 1: The Bible is clear that faith is a gift – at least in its initial stages. We are told that every man has been given a “measure of faith” (Romans 12:3b). Paul explains that faith is “not of our efforts, it is a gift from God” (Ephesians 2:9). He also teaches about the spiritual

“Gift of faith,” imparted to us at specific times through the Holy Spirit. Discuss what the word “gift” means and how it relates to the topic of faith. Have you ever been offered a gift that you refused to accept? Why or why not? Share about a birthday or Christmas gift that you got but never used. Remember that every gift that is given must be received and used or it is wasted. God’s creative miracles come through the interaction of the Word and the Spirit (demonstrated at the creation of the universe) and faith. Without these three ingredients, miracles don’t often happen.

Discussion Point 2: The second key to developing your faith is to understand that the Word of God is essential to faith. God’s Word is the source or headwaters of our faith. It is not faith in faith, but faith in God. It was noted that if God does not speak there is no basis for faith. This is the reason why there is such a satanic attack on God’s written and spoken Word today. To strip authority from the Bible is to rob people of the source of faith. We must settle the issue of the authority of God’s Word if we are to see more miracles. Discuss how the world (and even those inside the Christian faith) tries to deny the authority of the Bible. What can we do to make sure we retain the authority and integrity of the Bible in our lives and help others to do the same?

Discussion Point 3: Dr. Jerry discussed the “impartation of faith” in this chapter. What do you think? Can one believer impart or stir up faith in others? If so, what are some ways they might do this? Read 1 Timothy 4:14 and discuss what this might mean. Do you know Christians who constantly build your faith? What is it about them that is different?

Power Point: Faith comes by hearing from God’s Word. Therefore, choose to increase your interaction with the Word to grow your faith.

Prayer Point: Father, I know that every good gift and every perfect gift comes from you. I choose now to receive everything you have for me – including the Gift of Faith. Help me to settle the issue of the authenticity and authority of your Word and to understand that you will do what you say you will do. It carries your character and nature. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Actively seek out someone you know who is operating in the anointing of the Holy Spirit and spend an hour with them. Talk to them about the anointing and ask them to pray for you. (Remember that the power comes from the Spirit and not the person.)

Chapter 10

SEVEN KEYS TO GREATER FAITH

PART 2

Read: Pages 153-168 Things You Can Do to Build Your Faith

Introduction: In the last chapter we discovered that faith initially comes to us as a gift through hearing the Word of God. We also learned that faith can be contagious – it can be imparted, encouraged, and matured by others. We all have a “measure of faith” to start with. In Chapter 10 Dr. Jerry shares four ways you can build your faith level to see more miracles in your life. The first tool Dr. Jerry recommends is praying in tongues. While this is a controversial subject, it is also an important one for us to get right in understanding and practice. (If this is a relatively new or questionable subject for you, Dr. Jerry deals more specifically with the biblical side of tongues in Chapters 11 and 12. You may want to jump ahead to these sections and come back here later.)

Points to Ponder: When talking about people’s faith, Jesus used phrases such as “great faith,” “oh you of little faith,” and “faith as a grain of mustard seed,” to indicate

levels of faith. Have you ever considered that there are various levels of faith? Have you ever specifically tried to grow in faith? Are you willing to seek God for a greater level of faith in your life? What are some things you can start doing TODAY to grow your faith?

Key number 4 was using the Gift of Tongues or, praying in the Holy Spirit. Read Jude 1:2 and 1 Corinthians 14:4. What does the word “edify” mean?

Many Christians are taught to look to a spiritual leader for “edification,” but here Paul tells us we can edify ourselves anytime and anywhere.

Some have likened praying in the Holy Spirit, and the resulting personal edification it produces, to the alternator on a car. A car has a battery to start it, but once it starts, the alternator provides the electricity to run the car and recharge the battery. If the alternator doesn’t work properly, it won’t be long before the battery runs down and the car won’t start. Some Christians live their entire Christian life this way – going to church on Sunday to get a spiritual jump-start – then running out of spiritual

charge by the end of the week, only to have to have another jump-start on Sunday again. How does the analogy of the car alternator make you think differently about these subjects?

The next principle for growing your faith was to take steps of faith. Dr. Jerry shared the story of David and how he used his previous experience of faith in God to win the key battle with Goliath. Read Romans 10:17. What are some of the answers to prayer or other faith encounters that you have experienced and how have they impacted your own faith?

Dr. Jerry recommends asking for more faith as a way of stretching and increasing your faith. Have you done this or thought about it? What are some areas that your faith needs to grow in right now? Jesus taught his disciples to “ask, knock, and seek” and they would receive more of the good stuff (Holy Spirit). We often just ask for “things,” but we can and should also use faith for spiritual matters too. We should all increase our faith in the area of ministering to others. List three people you would like for God to use you to minister to.

1.

2.

3. _____

The last key to increasing faith was persistence and perseverance. Faith doesn't give up. Keep in mind that faith does not start with what you want or need, but with what God has said he would do or we could have. Like Abraham, faith BELIEVES God. Read the story of the widow and the unjust judge in Luke 18:1-8. Write down the key parts of the story that speak to your heart.

If you go to the doctor nowadays, they ask you to rate your pain on a scale of 1 to 10. If there were a persistence and perseverance scale to rate your faith, what level would you be at?

Are you satisfied with that? If not, what can you do to change things?

Discussion Point 1: Dr. Jerry talked about the importance of motives in faith. He quoted James 1:5-8 about why prayers were not answered. He also discussed the fact that some people want to see miracles for the wrong reasons: they want the attention, like Simon the sorcerer who we talked about in the last chapter. Discuss some false motives Christians might be tempted to have and ways to overcome or avoid them.

Discussion Point 2: Read John 15:1-17. This was Jesus' last opportunity to instruct his disciples as they were heading out from the last supper, through the countryside, on the way to his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus used the occasion to teach them about their purpose in bearing spiritual fruit and how they could increase from bearing fruit to more fruit to much fruit. Part of that involved spiritual pruning, but part of it involved asking for the things we needed to bear spiritual fruit. There was a promise that whatever we need to bear "much fruit" would be given us, no questions asked. Discuss some things you should be asking for on a regular basis in the process of bearing fruit.

Discussion Point 3: Discuss the issue of tongues. In advance, designate one or more people to share their experience with praying in tongues.

Power Point: Praying IN the Holy Spirit (however you understand that) is powerful. The Spirit reveals the will of God to us, prays for us when we don't know how to use the right words, and empowers us to live for and serve God.

Prayer Point: Father, I come to you now in the mighty name of Jesus and ask you to increase my faith in general and in these specific areas: _____,
_____ and
_____. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Make a decision today to increase your faith by practicing the seven steps that Dr. Jerry has outlined in Chapters 9 and 10.

Chapter 11

THE POWER OF PRAYING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Read: Pages 169-187

Introduction: This chapter discusses what some Christians consider to be one of the most controversial subjects in the church world. Dr. Jerry has shared his personal strategy of praying in the Holy Spirit (tongues) as much as possible, and some of the resulting miracles he attributes directly to praying in tongues. The truth of the matter is that it does not need to be controversial at all. With a proper, balanced understanding of the Scriptures, most Christians can come to see this beautiful gift as an important and necessary part of the Spirit-filled life. Dr. Jerry discusses several arguments that people have for not speaking in tongues.

Points to Ponder: The Bible uses the word “TONGUES” to refer to the fact that Christians in the early church prayed or spoke messages in languages they had never learned, by the power of the Holy Spirit. This terminology can actually add an unnecessary element of

weirdness to the subject. The word “tongues” in the Greek language simply means “languages.”

There are several things a Christian must make a decision about concerning the gift of tongues and its proper use. Before someone can determine if they want the gift of tongues – or even believe in it – they need to answer some questions from a biblical perspective.

Does the Bible teach that the early Church spoke in languages they did not learn naturally, by the power of the Holy Spirit, or was it simply an issue of traveling ministers needing to preach with an interpreter, as is often the case today in world missions?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. Paul tells us that these gifts were _____ by God (verse 6) and _____ of the Holy Spirit (verse 7).

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1. Paul mentions the languages of _____ and _____ and indicates it is possible to speak in both.

Read 1 Corinthians 14:2 and 14:4. Paul says when a man prays or speaks in tongues he is speaking to _____ in _____. He also says a person _____ himself.

Read 1 Corinthians 14:13-14. Paul says that the person speaking in a tongue (a language he didn't learn naturally) should pray that he could interpret. This would make no sense if he were talking about being bilingual. There would be no need to pray to interpret his own words; he would simply speak in the language of his hearers to start with.

Read 1 Corinthians 14:14-15. Paul indicates we need to pray and sing with the _____ and the _____.

Who does Paul say is praying when a person speaks in a tongue?

According to your understanding of these verses, does the Bible teach that the early church was instructed in the use of a supernatural gift of tongues? Why or why not?

Does the Bible teach that there is a practical and useful application for the gift of tongues?

Read Acts 1:4-8 and 2:1-4. Jesus said they were going to be _____ with the Holy Spirit, and receive _____ to be _____.

What happened in 2:1-4?

Read 1 Corinthians 14:4 in a few different translations. What do you get out of this passage?

Read Romans 8:27-28. What does it mean to have the Spirit make intercession for us?

Does God want to give you the gift of praying in tongues? Why or Why not?

Do you want God to give you the gift of praying in tongues? Why or Why not?

Discussion Point 1: Does the Bible teach that tongues are limited to a few people or that it is available to every Christian? Read 1 Corinthians 14:5. Paul says he wanted them all to speak with tongues. Do you think Paul is preferring one gift over the other, or is he admonishing them to use these gifts in their proper place?

Discussion Point 2: In 1 Corinthians 14:18-19, Paul says he “thanks” God he speaks with tongues more than any of the Corinthian believers, but in the church, he would rather speak five words of understanding. If Paul wasn’t speaking in tongues in a service, where was he speaking in tongues “more than them all”?

Discussion Point 3: There is a lot of confusion about the gift of tongues because the Bible indicates there are TWO applications of the gift. When we try to make every verse that mentions tongues fit one application or the other, it doesn't work. One application of tongues is the personal gift that Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 14 when he tells Christians to pray in the Spirit and sing with the Spirit as an act of personal worship and edification. The other application is tongues combined with the gift of interpretation of tongues that is equal to prophecy in the church. One application edifies the individual believer and the other edifies the church.

Discussion Point 4: Some have used 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 to prove that "tongues have ceased." Read this passage and discuss it. Has spiritual knowledge and revelation vanished away? Have all biblical prophecies failed, or are there yet some to be fulfilled? Is this verse really speaking about something Paul said would have happened nearly 2000 years ago? Is it perfectly clear that Paul intends to say that tongues have already ceased, or does it have to be interpreted that way?

Discussion Point 5: If there are those in your group who speak in tongues, have them testify about the difference it makes in their lives.

Power Point: Praying in tongues is a source of power and personal edification that is available to every believer 24/7/365. Tap into that power source regularly to keep yourself built up in the Spirit.

Prayer Point: Father, I thank you that every gift that comes from you is good, perfect, and necessary. I want to receive everything you have for me and I don't want to refuse any good thing you want to give. I open my heart and ask you for more of the Holy Spirit, and your Word says you won't give me something bad. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: If you have not been baptized in the Holy Spirit, or received the gift of tongues yet, begin to ask God to fill you with his Holy Spirit. If you have been, then purpose to use the gift of tongues more frequently in order to add spiritual power to your personal life and ministry to others.

Chapter 12

RECEIVING THE INCREDIBLE GIFT OF TONGUES

Read: Pages 189-202

Introduction: In this section, Dr. Jerry shares some personal stories and some biblical instruction for asking for and receiving the gift of speaking or praying in other tongues. One thing he points out is that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is God's promise to every believer in every age. We also learned that the Holy Spirit is the one who imparts the various gifts – including the gift of tongues – to every believer according to his will. Dr. Jerry made the point that many people seek the gift of tongues without really seeking the giver of the gifts – the Holy Spirit himself. This could be one reason why some people seeking the gift of tongues don't receive it. Just as we cannot be saved apart from a personal relationship with the Savior, we cannot experience spiritual power without a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Points to Ponder: In Acts 1:1-8 we read the story of Jesus' instructions to the disciples. They were to “wait in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father.”

What was THE PROMISE of the Father?

What were they told they would receive?

What were they to be?

In Acts 2:1-4 we read the story of the day of Pentecost. This was ten days after Jesus told the disciples to wait for the promise of the Father. Here we discover the fulfillment of God's promise to baptize his people with the Holy Spirit. What three things happened in the upper room?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What was the outward indication they had received the promise Jesus told them to wait for?

In Acts 2, Peter and the other newly Spirit-filled apostles preached messages that were heard in various languages. When the people were convicted, they asked the apostles what they needed to do. In Acts 2:38-39, Peter gives them a plain answer. What two things were they told to do?

1. _____

2. _____

What did Peter promise them?

Who did Peter say the Promise was for?

Is this promise for you, too?

Discussion Point 1: Read the other three stories in the book of Acts about believers who were filled with the Holy Spirit: Acts 8:5-9 and 12-17; Acts 10:44-48; and Acts 19:1-6. What is common to these stories? What is different about these stories? What can we conclude about

the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on believers? Should we expect everyone to receive the Holy Spirit and the Gift of tongues the same way?

Discussion Point 2: Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. Paul talks about nine gifts of the Holy Spirit and calls them _____ of the Spirit. What is a “manifestation”? Who is being made manifest when someone uses one of the gifts of the Spirit – including speaking in tongues? In this passage, who is to benefit from all the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

Discussion Point 3: We discussed in the last chapter how the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues is a controversial issue in the church. Why do you think this is? What are some of the reasons why people would not want to be filled with the Spirit and speak with other tongues?

Discussion Point 4: Dr. Jerry points out that receiving any gift from God, be it salvation, healing, blessing, answer to prayer – or the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues – is a matter of faith. As we have already learned, faith comes from hearing God's Word. Where is your faith level at right now in regard to the baptism of the Spirit and speaking in tongues?

Discussion Point 5: Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoken in tongues?

_____ If no, why not?

Power Point: Jesus said that God made a promise through the ages to Christian believers – the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. When that promise was finally fulfilled we find the disciples speaking in tongues and doing other miraculous signs. The world has not changed – we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the powerful spiritual manifestations today as much as the early disciples did. We cannot fulfill the Great Commission without the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer Point: Father, I come to you and ask to be filled (refilled) with the Holy Spirit. I need the power to live for and serve you. Lord, I believe that all these things are available to me through faith. I want all your promises fulfilled in my life. (Now add your own prayer as you feel the Holy Spirit leading you.)

Action Point: Get filled and stay filled with the Holy Spirit. Start each day by acknowledging the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in your life, asking him to use

you and manifest himself through you each day in a way that would glorify God and touch the lives of people all around you.

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