

e-CWiP interactive apostolic ministry training

Class 102

Doing the Stuff: An Introduction to Ministering in the Supernatural

Session One Pulpit Notes

Doing The “Stuff”

As we begin an exploration of supernatural ministry, let’s look at three foundational scriptures:

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I am going to my Father.”
(The words of Jesus Christ, John 14:12)*

“Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells in mount Zion.” (A quotation from Isaiah 8:18, quoted in part in Hebrews 2:13, where it is said to be prophetic of Jesus Christ.)

“And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give.’” (The words of Jesus Christ to the “70,” Matthew 10:7-8)

Answering John Wimber’s question: “When do we get to do the stuff?”

What is “the stuff?” This is our question...

- Who was John Wimber?
- New convert from the Righteous Brothers

- He was saved and on fire, reading the New Testament and the accounts of the miracles of Jesus and the Church
- After a series of boring church services he spoke to the elder in charge and said, “When do we get to do the stuff?” “What stuff?” “You know, the stuff in the Bible! The healings and casting out demons, you know, the stuff!” “We don’t do that anymore!” “What do you do?” “Well, we do what you saw this morning.”
- Wimber thought a moment about that one and said, “*For that I gave up drugs?*”

Even as a baby Christian, John Wimber knew that there was something wrong with a Swiss Cheese Christianity, full of holes. We read the Book of Acts and we read the stories of great revivals and we know we have holes in our experience of God and in our ministry. If we aren’t careful, we’ll carry on like that our whole lives and never wonder if there isn’t more God wants us to experience and more God would have us to do for Him.

In modern society we have many churches which are making a great impact. But in the Book of Acts, I see not just a Church of great impact, but a Church of *undeniable* impact.

In a court of law, the greatest and most powerful testimony comes from your enemies. If you can get your opponent to say something in your favor, or if you can find that he actually made a favorable statement about you at some time in the past, that is extremely powerful testimony. You can win your case like that!

What is the testimony of people who don’t know the Lord about the church today in America, and what was the testimony outsiders gave about the first church – the one we

read about in Acts? I write a blog called Pray Connecticut and when I wrote an article about Connecticut becoming more evangelical I got some interesting comments. Here are some excerpts of what people said to me:

- *Just what we need, more ignorant "evangelical christians".*
- *I can't tell thus far from what I've read in your blog, but I would really love to know if you're in the crowd of evangelicals who want to make America an official 'Christian Nation' (i.e., religion in schools, fundamentalist legislation) or the kind of Christian who promotes a secular government. I'm just trying to sort Christians into 'enemy' and 'friend' piles at the moment, and I want to know what's behind your blog.*
- *I think the real issue is the inane belief that if we post a couple Ten Commandments on a building and force kids to robotically regurgitate some prayer or pledge, the World will be right....all I know is that my Religion is considered a farce to the Protestant Evangelical mainsteam. SO let's keep them as far away from politics as possible!*
- *Hey, man, I don't knock Christians because I am one. But let me tell you, what we don't need in CT or anywhere else -- is more insular, closed places that promote Jesus as some kind of Americanized freak.*

How do people in New York and Connecticut think about the Church of Jesus Christ in the year 2009? Prophetically, the Song of Solomon (6:10) gives us a picture of the Church:

“Who is this woman who looks forth like the dawn, as beautiful as the moon—as pure as the sun, as awesome as an army with banners?”

Is this how they think of us?

It seems that at best, many times they can take us or leave us. By contrast, that first church had the Presence of a Living God among them - Isaiah 12:6 tells us to cry aloud and shout, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you!

People may question what we have at times, but what I see in the Book of Acts was an undeniable presence of God working in those Christians and with them and through them. Let's look at what they had:

- Undeniable signs from Heaven – Acts 2:6:

“And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.”

- Undeniable miracles – Acts 4:13-14:

“What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.”

- Undeniable boldness – Acts 4:19-20:

“So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge.’”

- Undeniable power in prayer – Acts 4:31:

“And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.”

- Undeniable revelation – Acts 5:3:

“But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?’”

- Undeniable authority – Acts 8:5-8:

“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.”

- An undeniable experience of God’s nearness: prophecies; dreams; visions; trances; angelic visitations; the voice of the Lord, appearances of the Lord Himself.

These factors combined to add up to undeniable results!

Remember what I said about the testimony of your enemies... what did their enemies say about them? Take a look!

"...and look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine..." (Acts 5:28)

*And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.
(Acts 6:10)*

"These who have turned the world upside down have come here, also." (Acts 17:6)

Looking in the mirror of the Book of Acts

It's hard to look into the Book of Acts and see ourselves reflected in that mirror. Most of the time, at least in America, church life has not reflected the possibilities of church life we see in Acts.

I'm not trying to beat us up for falling short of the very high bar those men and women set for us. However, if there is any real possibility of beginning to do what they did and live as they did, we owe it to the Lord and we owe it to the world to learn how... and then we need to get busy doing it! My daring question tonight: **is it time to think seriously about the possibility that our powerlessness is a sin?**

- **A Tale of Two Pulpits** – I believe the Lord spoke to me and told me something frightening: those first century saints would not be qualified to fill our pulpits... and we are not qualified to fill theirs.
- **What does God expect our ministries to look like?** I suggest we look again at the verses which reveal the undeniable impact of the first church for the answer.
- **Our challenge:** to move ourselves and the Church at large away from the expectation of powerlessness and into a living faith. How do we do that?

Tearing down strongholds that keep us from supernatural ministry

First, we need to **renew our minds about what is possible – and what God expects from us.** In e-cwip 101 we heard about the spirit of revelation and wisdom in the knowledge of Him... those concepts apply to this area as well. We need God to open our eyes and change our thinking about some things in order to move successfully in supernatural ministry.

Second, we need to **grapple with what the Word actually says – and doesn't say!** Jesus told some people who were highly educated in the Word:

“You go astray because you don't know the Scriptures, nor the power of God.”

(Matt. 22:29)

This brings me to the next point... you may be saying, OK, I get it, the church should move in God's power, and I would like to move in God's Power myself. But I have a question...

Am I qualified to do the works of Jesus?

Sometimes Christians don't even attempt to pray for the sick (or do anything supernatural) because they don't think they are qualified to do so. But Jesus made a most remarkable statement in John 14:12:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater [works] than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

Some have suggested that these greater works are not supernatural at all. However, if we look at the context, including the preceding verse (John 14:11) we will see that He clearly is speaking of His works of power. In that verse, Jesus said we would do the works He had been doing.

Can all believers be used?

In another well-known verse, Jesus again refused to limit supernatural ministry to the apostles, but said that all believers could be used in these things. In Mark 16:17-18 he said:

And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they

drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Is there proof that others besides the twelve did these things?

Did God use others besides the Twelve in supernatural ministry? Did anyone else heal the sick or do signs and wonders? Sometimes people say, well, those were the apostles, you know, and I'm not Peter in case you hadn't noticed. Let's look:

Luke 10 – the story of the 70 being sent out. Clearly a larger group than the 12. It actually says in the Greek “seventy others.”

And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. (Acts 6:8)

And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed [with them]: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. (Acts 8:6-7)

Long time therefore abode they [Paul and Barnabas] speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. (Acts 14:3)

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. (1 Cor. 12:28)

He therefore [unknown person or persons] that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, [doeth he it] by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? (Gal. 3:5)

For every member of the Body...

In Acts 2:17-18, the gift of the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh, including sons and daughters, young people, old people, people of every economic group:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

In 1 Cor. 12:7, Paul lists nine manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power which can potentially be given to any saint for the common good – not just to a few super-saints:

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man...

What did the early Church pray for?

How did the first Christians pray? The New Testament Church specifically prayed together that God would heal the sick and do signs and wonders as a means of proclaiming the Kingdom of God:

And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. (Acts 4:29-30)

But assuming I am qualified, do I have the power to do the works of Jesus?

How could I possibly do what Jesus did?

Even if you're convinced that you're "eligible" to do what Jesus did, you may still wonder whether you have the **ability** to do what He did. You may ask, "How can we do what Jesus did? After all, Jesus was God!" That's true, of course, but it is fairly clear that Jesus did not use His divine power to heal or do miracles. Instead, He ministered as a man anointed by the Holy Spirit and walking in perfect obedience to the Father. Peter explained that Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit and flowed in the power of His Father:

That word, [I say], ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power [the Greek word dunamis]: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. (Acts 10:37-38)

And Jesus Himself attributed His power to the working of the Father within Him:

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. (John 14:10)

If Jesus were using His divine power – the power He has within Himself because He is God – to heal the sick, He could not have told us that we would do the same works that He did (John 14:12, see above).

Jesus has promised that same power to His Church, which means, to you.

The Lord promised that we also would have the presence of the Holy Spirit and the power (*dunamis*) of God operating in our lives, just as He did:

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued [clothed] with power [dunamis] from on high. (Luke 24:49)

But ye shall receive power [dunamis], after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

If you have been filled with His Spirit, you are not only eligible, but also very able to do what Jesus did. Ask God for a fresh filling of His Spirit today, and remember that God, who cannot lie, said this:

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall [your] heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

(Luke 11:13)

Tonight, how dry is your glass? Acts 4:31 says that they prayed they were all filled again; Ephesians 5:18 commands us to be continually getting filled by the Spirit of the Lord! So let's pray together for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit!