



God's Pecking Order

"Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? But earnestly desire the greater gifts."

—1 Corinthians 12:27-31a

*Uh...is this right? **Teaching** is a greater gift than doing miracles? Than **healing**? Are you kidding me?*

Then why is everyone so excited about the latest "healing crusade"? Or finding out how much money the television healer needs to continue using his gift? Is Paul actually telling us that a lowly Sunday School teacher of grade school children is **greater** than someone that can part the Red Sea or open the eyes of the blind?

Yes, yes he is.

What did Jesus do **BEFORE** he fed the 5,000 or the 4,000? He healed the sick.

But what did He do even before he healed the sick? He taught them.

Earthly miracles and physical healings do not guarantee long-term, eternal results. If those for whom such things are performed continue to live a life of sin as before, if their hearts are never given to God, if their behavior and ways proceed uninterrupted and unchanged, the

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miracles and healings are only temporary solutions. Ultimately they die the second death, forever apart from God. Miracles and signs can't transform a heart that rejects God's teaching.

In Christ's own ministry, as He saw the spiritual condition of those in physical need, He always addressed first the spiritual issues leading to eternal destruction in those who would take the temporary cure at the price of their eternal soul. Like Esau selling his birthright for a bowl of stew, they cared nothing for eternity, only the here and now. Jesus loved them more than that; He loved them enough to first teach them so that their eternal healing was assured before proceeding to the cares and needs of this present life. The "temporary" was not as important as the "eternal".

Yes, the gift of teaching is greater than miracles.

On the journey from Egypt to Canaan, the Israelites saw more and greater miracles than anyone until Christ's earthly ministry. But they were also given God's Word through Moses. And because they did not live what they were taught, none of the signs and wonders of parting waters, the daily miracle of being provided food, etc., etc. overcame the disobedience of their hearts and minds to that which was greater than the signs: God's Word.

One of the miracles by which you'll recognize spiritual maturity reaching fruition within your own life is when you seek and cherish and love your teachers more than these others. If we truly understood and acted on the knowledge that God has provided a myriad of servants in this present life that are far greater than workers of miracles or healing, we'd probably treat our teachers much differently.

Some think we should give our undivided attention to someone that performs signs and wonders in Christ's name. This is true. But someone greater than a miracles worker stands before us every day. God's wisdom is that at every church service, every Sunday School,

every Bible study or group meeting, there is someone present that is far greater in the kingdom of God: Your teacher; because God's Word is the greatest of all powers, able to provide the miracle of eternal life..

Concluding Note: Even **IF** the Benny Hinns of this world were not charlatans and were actually true workers of miracles and healings, by God's own designation they would still come in 4th and 5th behind teachers.

How will you now respond?

In His Love,

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