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## HOW TO PUT A BIBLICAL DEMAND ON THE GIFTS OF GOD

Last weekend, we had the privilege of experiencing three days of revival services with the ministry of a man and woman of God from Southern California. The presence of God was so rich when the wife (pregnant with child) ministered in song, worship, and prophetic dance, many of the men found themselves weeping. When the husband ministered through the Scriptures, many hearts were cut to the core, bringing conviction, and in several cases, repentance unto salvation. God also drew many backslidden to the Cross of Jesus Christ afresh, bringing them to repentance and restoration. It was truly a glorious time in God's presence.

During the preceding two weeks, the Holy Spirit called about 30 men to participate in a "team fast." They expected God to respond in a mighty way. They took 24-hour shifts in teams of 3-10 men, giving their meals back to God in sacrifice. The men met during meal hours and prayed for revival on the compound. Some men fasted several days in a row, asking God for a fresh outpouring of His Spirit to bring them closer to Jesus. They also prayed that the unsaved and lost would come to know the Savior. God honored this time of consecration. Several manifestations of God's power were evident in the services. The fire of God fell on several of the individuals who had been fasting and filled them with a fresh passion for Jesus. Others received deliverance from lust, anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, and various other works of the flesh. Others received breakthroughs in their physical health during this time of visitation. As I watched the people during these three days, I noticed that some of the least likely (in my eyes) to receive a miracle from God were the very ones receiving; and the ones (in my eyes) that were most likely to receive a breakthrough didn't seem to receive anything. While asking the Lord about this phenomenon, he quickened me to several passages of Scripture. He then reminded me of how people had responded to the preacher's invitation for prayer throughout the three days of services.

I began to realize that those who responded to the invitations for prayer (whether for salvation, deliverance, healing, or the fire of God to come upon their lives), received. Those who sat in their chairs like bumps on a log during these times received nothing. In effect, they "rejected the opportunity God offered them." (Lk. 19:44, LVB). The Lord reminded me that "It is because you do not pray that you do not receive" (Js. 4:2, NJB), and "knock, and the door will be opened for you" (Mt. 7:7, NRSV). He also reminded me of the woman with the issue of blood who sought to "touch the hem of Jesus' garment" that she might receive her healing. She "reached out to Jesus" and received her healing. Others were around Jesus, pressing in, but received nothing special from the Lord. I thought about the men in the services who "reached out to

Jesus” at various times during the weekend, and each of them received something from the Lord. I also thought about the others who sat idly by in their chairs, and walked away the same as they had come in.

How can Jesus be in the house and everybody not be affected? Then, the Scripture came to mind, “And the same gospel was preached unto us as unto them, but it profited them nothing not being **mixed with faith in them that heard it**” (Heb. 4:2). I remembered a teaching the Lord gave me a few weeks prior entitled, “**How to Put a Demand on the Gift.**” The Scriptures came alive in my heart as the Holy Spirit revealed how we can receive our transforming touch from the Master by simply “reaching out and touching the hem of His garment;” putting “a demand on the gift of God” to receive our own breakthrough from Jesus Christ.

We can learn a great deal from the following passage of Scripture about how to release miracles into our lives. It begins with learning the principle of “how to put a demand on the gifts of God.” We see it throughout the Bible. As we continue through this teaching, I believe you will see the same thing the Holy Spirit has revealed to me. He delivered me from a “churchianity” mindset to a “biblical” mindset of the Christian faith taught from Genesis to Revelation.

Let's learn what God has to say about “putting a demand on the gifts of God.”

In the crowd was a woman who had been sick for twelve years with a hemorrhage. She had suffered much from many doctors through the years and had become poor from paying them, and was no better but, in fact, was worse. She had heard all about the wonderful miracles Jesus did, and that is why she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his clothes. For she thought to herself, “**If I can just touch his clothing, I will be healed.**” And sure enough, as soon as she had touched him, the bleeding stopped and she knew she was well! Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, “**Who touched my clothes?**” His disciples said to him, “All this crowd pressing around you, and

you ask who touched you?” But he kept on looking around to see who it was who had done it. Then the frightened woman, trembling at the realization of what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and told him what she had done. And he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, healed of your disease” (Mk. 5:25-34, LVB).

This woman knew the key to putting a demand on the gift of healing within Jesus. Broke and broken and growing sicker, she sought to touch Jesus’ clothes and was instantly healed when she did! This woman knew something that the others around Jesus didn't know. She knew how to “put a demand on the gift.” What thing had this woman done that no one else had? After twelve years of suffering, she stepped out in faith and put a demand on the gift, and was miraculously healed. Jesus responded, “Daughter, **your faith has made you well**; go in peace, healed of your disease” (vs. 34). Jesus’ response for those who step out in faith today and put a demand on the gifts of God for their own miracle is the same.

In Paul's letter to the Corinthian Church, he explains the reasons for the Gifts of the Spirit. “The Holy

Spirit displays God's power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church." (1Cor. 12:7, LVB). God has given the Gifts of the Spirit to meet the needs of the Body of Christ. If you have a gift (or gifts) from God, they are for the benefit of others. When someone comes to you requesting prayer, he is putting a demand on the gift within you. This pleases God and occurs throughout Scripture. Let's briefly look at some other examples.

A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession." Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said. He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." "Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour (Mt. 15:22-28, NIV).

The disciples had the **gift of exorcism** to cast out the demon in response to her demand on the gift (see Matthew 10:1), but they did not. She went straight to the Master to put a demand on the gift of God. At first, Jesus also refused to use his God-given gift in her behalf. When this woman refused to leave Jesus told her, "I am sent for Israel, not you." Nevertheless, she wouldn't give up. Jesus still refused to use his gift of exorcism in her daughter's behalf, telling her, in effect, "Yes, I have the healing power, but it's not right to take from the Jews and give to you." But, she persisted still! "Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." What a response, and what a **spirit of perseverance**. She agreed with Jesus, and then brought herself within the covenant of the house of Israel by placing herself beneath the table where the healing crumbs fall to the floor. She continued to put a demand on the gift of God, even though she had been told "no" repeatedly. Through her perseverance **and** her faith, her daughter was healed. This Gentile woman demonstrated how to "put a demand on the gifts" of God. Scripture records it for our example, that we might have the same kind of faith and **press through** the circumstances of the religious "no's" until we receive our miracle from our Father in Heaven. It is interesting to note that this is the only place in four gospels where Jesus told someone "no" to healing or deliverance. When one **perseveres in faith**, putting a demand on the gifts of God, Jesus heals anyway!

### **The miracle ministry of Jesus began when someone put a demand on the gift of God within Him.**

On the third day, in the town of Cana in Galilee, there was a wedding. Jesus' mother was there. Jesus and his followers were invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine!" Jesus asked her, "What do you want with me, woman? My time has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "**Do whatever he tells you.**" There were six stone waterjars sitting there. (Jewish people used them to make things pure.) Each waterjar could hold about 20 to 30 gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." They filled the jars to the top. Jesus said to the servants, "Now, pour some of this and take it to the master of ceremonies." They did it. He didn't know where it came from, but the servants who had gotten the water knew. When the master of ceremonies tasted the **water which had**

**been changed into wine**, he called for the groom. He said to the groom, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when the people have had plenty to drink, he serves the cheaper wine. But you have reserved the good wine until now!” **This was the first miracle that Jesus performed.** It was in the town of Cana in Galilee. Jesus revealed his glory, and his followers believed in him (Jn. 2:1-11, SIM).

At first, Jesus wanted nothing to do with this temporal need for wine for the wedding. Jesus effectively said, “This isn't my ministry—turning water into wine so people can keep drinking at a wedding...what do I have to do with this. The time has not come for me to perform miracles.” **His mother persisted. When a demand was put on the gift of God within him, Jesus responded by meeting the need of the hour and miraculously turned water into wine.**

### **PUTTING A DEMAND ON THE GIFT OF INTERCESSION**

As Jeroboam approached the altar to burn incense to the gold calf-idol, a prophet of the Lord from Judah walked up to him. Then, at the Lord's command, the prophet shouted, “O altar, the Lord says that a child named Josiah shall be born into the family line of David, and he shall sacrifice upon you the priests from the shrines on the hills who come here to burn incense; and men's bones shall be burned upon you.” Then he gave this proof that his message was from the Lord: “This altar will split apart, and the ashes on it will spill to the ground.” The king was very angry with the prophet for saying this. He shouted to his guards, “Arrest that man!” and shook his fist at him. Instantly the king's arm became paralyzed in that position; he couldn't pull it back again! At the same moment a wide crack appeared in the altar and the ashes poured out, just as the prophet had said would happen. For this was the prophet's proof that God had been speaking through him. “Oh, please, please,” the king cried out to the prophet, **“beg the Lord your God to restore my arm again.”** So he prayed to the Lord, and the king's arm became normal again (1Ki. 13:1-6, LVB).

The hand of the wicked king withered up when he stretched it out to harm the Lord's anointed. This wicked king immediately put **a demand on the gift of intercession**, requesting healing for his withered hand. It doesn't even record that the king repented first! The wicked king understood the principle of putting a demand on the gifts of God within God's servants. In response, **God restored his hand.** May God give us at least as much faith as this wicked king or of the persistent Gentile woman to put a similar demand on the gifts of God to receive our miracle from heaven.

### **PUTTING A DEMAND ON THE GIFT OF CIVIL AUTHORITY**

Much to our surprise, Scripture says God has ordained gifts of civil authority to anyone we help vote into office (whether they are saved or unsaved). “There is no government anywhere that God has not placed in power” (Rom. 13:1, LVB). Whether believers or non-believers, they have God-given authority. Jesus told a parable of a woman who had persistent faith and went to an **unjust judge** to put a demand on his gift of civil authority. At first, he wouldn't avenge her of her adversary, but then he said, “...because this

widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!" (Lk. 18:1-6, NIV). Jesus used this object lesson to build our faith concerning our heavenly Father, saying, "And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. **However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?**" (Lk. 18:7-8, NIV). Will we be exercising our faith by also putting a demand on the gifts he has placed in his servants on the earth so our needs can be met; or will he find us wallowing in defeat, not recognizing our day of visitation (Lk. 19:44). Prisoner, keep appealing. Trust God to overturn your case or grant mercy for an early release. Don't give up! Your breakthrough is coming.

### **PUTTING A DEMAND ON THE SUPERNATURAL BLESSING**

Jacob wrestled with an angel of God all night. The angel, at the break of day, knocked Jacob's thigh out of joint and said, "Let me go" (Gen. 32:22-26). But, Jacob wouldn't let him go until putting a demand on the **gift of blessing**. "But [Jacob] said, **I will not let You go unless You declare a blessing upon me**" (vs. 26, AMP). It was not until Jacob put a demand on the gift of God that he received supernatural blessing from the angel of the Lord. "And He said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob [supplanter, Schemer, trickster, swindler], but Israel [contender with God]: for you have contended *and* have power with God and with men and have prevailed" (vs. 28, AMP). May God grant us the faith to act likewise. May we be bold enough to put a demand on the gifts of God and change our fate and the fate of others. Whether it be from sickness to health, demonization to liberation, the death penalty to total freedom, or a total character change from habitual liar and deceiver to a man of God with integrity and honor.

### **THE RELIGIOUS FOLKS WILL OPPOSE YOU**

Applying these Biblical principles of putting a demand on the gift of God will be met with opposition from the religious folks. People may even call you rude or out-of-line, telling you to sit down and quit bothering the preacher. A blind man named Bartimaeus could see this clearly on his way to Jesus for a miracle.

They went into Jericho. Jesus, his followers, and a large crowd left Jericho later. There was a blind man named Bartimaeus (the son of Timaeus). He was sitting beside the road. He was a beggar. When he heard: "It is Jesus from Nazareth!" he began to shout, "Jesus! Son of David! Please help me!" Some of the people told him to be quiet, but he began shouting even louder, "Son of David! Please help me!" Jesus stopped there and said, "Call him." So they called for the blind man. They said to him, "Be strong! Get up, Jesus is calling for you!" The blind man threw his robe aside and jumped to his feet. He went toward Jesus. Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to Jesus, "Rabboni, I want to see again!" Jesus said to him, "Go. You are made well, because you believed." Immediately the man was able to see again. He began to follow Jesus on the road. (Mk. 10:46-52, SIM)

When blind Bartimaeus heard it was Jesus, he cried out, putting a demand on the **gift of healing**. Then came the opposition from the religious folks! They told him to “Shut up!” Now, Bartimaeus had two choices: (1) he could reject advice of others, and press through to Jesus to put a demand on the gift and receive his sight, or (2) he could yield to the advice of the religious folks and remain as blind physically as they were spiritually. Bartimaeus chose to press through to Jesus, paying no concern to what others might say or think. He called out to Jesus for mercy all the louder. He put a demand on the gift for his healing (vs. 48). Then it happened. Jesus heard the voice of faith. He heard someone putting a demand on the gift. His persistence paid off. They led him to Jesus and he was healed instantly!

Recently, preaching this sermon for the first time, a strange thing began to happen. Men of different faith communities began to show up at the prison chapel to listen in. The Holy Spirit was so strong in the room that not one moved in their seats. The revelation of God hit them like arrows of wisdom. At one point, I looked up, witnessed men standing in the doorways, the vestibule, and crowded throughout the room. I thought, “What is happening here, Lord? Where did these people come from?” Then I heard the Spirit of God say, “I drew them to hear my Word.” A Scripture came to mind where Jesus said, “And when I am lifted up...I will draw everyone to me.” (Jn. 12:32, LVB). I continued to preach Jesus and the message of reaching out and touching the hem of His garment, putting a demand on the gifts of God. At the close of the message, the Holy Spirit encouraged me to have the men (Believers) pray for one another, putting a demand on the gifts of God within each other. God's presence filled the room in an even thicker way. God began to release his miracle power into the lives of those who stepped up in faith, requesting prayer, putting a demand on the gifts of God. The service ended, but the work of the Lord had only begun.

Since that day the men have begun to put a demand on the gift of intercession in each other, “confessing their faults to one another and praying for one another that they might be healed” (Js. 5:16). Requesting the prayer of agreement (Mt. 18:19), the laying on of hands (Js. 5:14-15), deliverance (Mk. 16:17), and the various other gifts God has given to the Body of Christ for such a time as this. We have had the privilege of discovering dozens of gifts present within the various prisoners, and have been putting a demand on them for the glory of God. Men with worship and minstrel giftings have been coming forward as called upon. Men with legal gifts have begun to help liberate others from overbearing sentences, using their gift at the typewriter in the law library. The Holy Spirit is activating teaching and preaching gifts, the Spirit of prophecy, administrative and counseling gifts, as well as gifts of wisdom and intercession. Men are coming off the sidelines onto the playing field and scoring touchdowns (with their God-given gifts) for Jesus, advancing God's Kingdom.

## **CONCLUSION**

Have you put a demand on the gifts of God lately? “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church” (Js. 5:16, KJV). Do you need someone to agree with you in prayer? Call a friend from your local congregation. Put in a prayer request at Church. Mail in the prayer request from this newsletter to HEART Ministries, and we'll pray with you, releasing Heaven's will into the earth by the power of the prayer of agreement (Mt. 18:18-20), so that God's will is done in earth as it [already is] done in Heaven. Don't be

deterred by the religious folks. Cry out all the louder, like the formerly blind Bartimaeus. Receive your miraculous breakthrough today.