

This is tape number SHS319. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical references are quoted from King James Version

In 1 Corinthians 12:10, as Paul is continuing the list of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, he speaks about how the Spirit divides to each one of us severally as He wills of those gifts or manifestations. In verse 10 he said, “To another the working of miracles.” We have dealt with the gift of faith and the gift of healing and how these two gifts seem to be tied together. Actually, also tied with the gift of faith would be the gift of working of miracles.

A miracle is something that is humanly impossible but divinely simple. Difficulty always has to be measured by the capacity of the agent that is doing the work. When God is the agent doing the work, talk of difficulty is absurd.

Paul the Apostle said to King Agrippa, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” (Acts 26:8). It is no problem for God to raise the dead. He breathed life into Adam when he was just inanimate matter made out of mud. God breathed life into him and so, for God to raise the dead, as Paul was preaching about the resurrection of Jesus Christ—“Why should you think it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?”

The Bible, of course, is full of miracles and probably the biggest of these starts in the first verse. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Now if you can buy that, you should not have any trouble with the rest of the book because it gives to you the proper concept of God. He is wise, omnipotent, and powerful—creating the entire universe. A God who is big enough to do that is big enough to do anything.

Many people have difficulty in accepting miracles and it is because they do not accept God. They only think in the realm of the natural and natural phenomena. And they have excluded the supernatural from their thought process. Therefore, when you talk about a miracle they are naturally skeptical because they do not believe in God, and thus, they have to rationalize or deny all miraculous or supernatural manifestations.

There are those who say that the Bible is actually Hebrew mythology and that the authors were developing their heroes for the Hebrew people. In their mythology, they sought to establish those heroes who the people could look up to and admire. And so, Moses was one of those fabled Hebrew men around whom was built many stories of miraculous manifestations but in reality all of these manifestations can be easily explained as the result of natural phenomena, according to these skeptics.

In his book *Worlds in Collision*, Andreav Vilaskovski seeks to relate the plagues that came upon the Egyptians with a near pass of the planet Venus to the earth. And the dust and debris in the atmosphere turned the Nile River to a bloody red. And he seeks to explain away these miracles of God’s judgments upon the Egyptians as mere natural phenomena.

There were many miracles in the life of Moses and the gift of the working of miracles surely was something that Moses possessed. With the Egyptians in Exodus 7, as we mentioned, there was the turning of the river into blood, the flies the boils upon the Egyptians, and then the frogs. And you have to believe that God has some kind of a sense of humor with a plague of frogs as it talked about their frogs being in their beds. And can you image crawling into bed and having slimy frogs there in your bed. And how they would jump onto the kneading troughs and get into the dough that the women were kneading.

There was the miracle in Numbers 17 of God showing His approval upon Aaron as the high priest and his family. There was the water that came out of the rock when it was smitten by Moses. And of course the great miracle, that the nation always looked back to acknowledge as the sign that God was with them and that they were God's people, was the miracle of the parting of the Red Sea so that the children of Israel were able to pass through on dry land; the Egyptians, attempting to do so themselves, were drowned.

Now there are those who would try to explain, by natural phenomena, the parting of the Red Sea from Exodus 14. And they say actually it is not the Red Sea; it is the Sea of Reeds, which is quite shallow. And that oftentimes in the Sea of Reeds when the wind is blowing for a period of time it sort of blows the water back and it is only ankle deep. And in reality it is very shallow and thus, with this wind they were able to pass over in ankle-deep water. That does not explain how the Scripture said that the sea stood up on both sides. Also, it does not really remove the miraculous because if it was only ankle-deep water, it was quite a miracle that God could drown the whole Egyptian army in ankle-deep water!

The prophet Elijah seemed to possess this gift of working of miracles. You remember he prayed and it did not rain for the space of three years. This brought the great drought into the country. He prayed again and it rained. During this period of drought, he came to a widow and asked her give him something to eat. And she said that she and her son had only enough oil and enough meal to make some bread for themselves. They were going to eat it and then just die—starve to death. In 1 Kings 17, Elijah said, "Make some for me first." And she did and during the entire period of drought the meal in the barrel and the oil was never empty. It miraculously lasted through the whole period of the drought.

Through the prayers of Elijah, a child was restored back to life. And of course we remember the story of the challenge of the prophets of Baal there on Mount Carmel in 1 Kings 18, where they were to build their altars but they were not to kindle a fire on the altar. And the prophets of Baal were to pray to their god to kindle their fire and consume their sacrifice. And having prayed futilely all day long, with a little chiding and prodding, Elijah said, "Maybe your god's asleep. Maybe he is on vacation. Maybe you should cry a little longer." And Elijah was really watching them whip themselves into a frenzy. And when still there was no response, then just to rub it in he commanded that they dig a trench around his altar. Elijah commanded them to pour water all over the sacrifice and pour more water on it until the sacrifice was soaked and the water filled the trench. And then he prayed and God answered by fire, consuming the sacrifice and the altar itself, licking up the water round about. And the people were falling on their faces acknowledging that Jehovah was God. This was quite a miracle.

There was the miracle of the captains that were sent by the king with their fifty men to bring him into custody. And how they came out and said, "Oh thou man of God, the king has commanded that we bring you into custody." Elijah said, "If I am a man of God let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." And fire came down and consumed them. And so, this happened to three of the captains. The fourth had a little better sense. He came out and said, "Look I am a family man. Have mercy on me! I am only doing my duty. And would you mind, please, to come with me." These are the miracles that accompanied Elijah.

And of course, just before his death as he was being pursued and followed by Elisha, who had asked him for a double portion of the Spirit, Elijah said, "You have asked a difficult thing but if you are with me at the time of my departure you will receive it." When Elijah came to the Jordan River going over into the area of Moab in 2 Kings 2, he took his mantle and smote the river and it

parted and he walked through with Elisha following him. And then Elijah was translated into heaven and the mantle fell upon Elisha. It is interesting he asked for a double portion and there are twice as many miracles recorded in the life of Elisha as there was Elijah. It seemed that he did get the double portion. As he came back to the Jordan River he took the mantle and said, “Where is the God of Elijah?” and the river parted and he came across.

There was the multiplying of the oil in 1 Kings 17 with the woman who was poor. And the prophet said, “Well, how much do you have here?” And she said, “Just a little oil.” And he said, “Well go around to all your neighbors and borrow all of the pots that you can get. And then take from your little oil and fill up all the pots.” And she took the little oil she had and she filled all the pots and sold it and was able to survive on it.

Other miracles occurred when the spring in Jericho was healed in 2 Kings 2. The water was actually bitter and the people complained to Elisha and he asked for some salt. He threw it in and the water was healed. A child was raised to life. Naaman was cleansed of his leprosy. And of course the prophets were building a house down by the Jordan River and as one of the fellows was cutting down a tree with an ax, in 2 Kings 6, the ax head fell off into the Jordan River. And he came and he said to Elisha, “Alas, I borrowed it, you know.” And he said, “Where did it go in?” And he threw in a stick and the ax head made of iron did swim. And so these are marvelous miracles accompanying the life of Elisha.

Then as you move on in the Old Testament, through Isaiah there was that marvelous miracle of the healing of Hezekiah in Isaiah 38 when the sundial went backwards as a testimony that God was going to heal Hezekiah.

But then of course moving to the New Testament and the life of Jesus we have so many miracles. They began at the feast of Cana in Galilee when Jesus turned the water into wine. He healed the nobleman’s son from a distance. He raised the dead son of the widow of Nain. He raised the dead daughter of Jairus. And then finally, He raised Lazarus, who had been buried for four days, from the dead. He fed multitudes with the five loaves and the two fish. And then He walked on the water. These are marvelous miracles.

Now we know and understand certain basic laws of nature. We have observed these laws. We have codified them and classified them and described and defined them. And we have sought to understand some of the laws of nature: the laws of magnetism, the laws of electricity, and the laws of gravity. And we have sought to use these powers, to harness them, for our benefit. And for a long time without understanding the law of gravity, we knew that things just fall to the ground. We did not know why, but we knew that they did. And of course, as Newton observed the apple falling from the tree, he sought to understand gravity. And he began to measure the rate of speed and the increased rate of speed as the objects would fall to the ground from various heights. And he studied the acceleration of the speed as they were falling. And then we have the explanation of the attraction of mass by Einstein, as we began to understand the laws of gravity more.

Now we know certain laws. We have observed how they operate in our universe. But we do not know all the laws. And God is knowledgeable of laws of nature that we do not even know. As far as Paul the Apostle was concerned it would have been a miracle to see a 747 to take off from the ground—that huge plane with all of its cargo and passengers. The apostles would have said, “That cannot happen. You cannot get something that big into the air.” But we have learned laws of aerodynamics. We have learned how the air flowing over the airfoil creates a lift. And thus, by

the use of other laws, we are able to seemingly defy the law of gravity. But in reality there are other laws—we could call them higher laws—that do not negate the law of gravity, but when they are in operation they can seemingly defy the laws of gravity.

So God knows other laws of nature and laws in the universe that He is able to make operative. And as we behold the event we say, “What a miracle!” And we say that is impossible—that cannot be! Yet God is only using laws that He knows and understands, that we are not yet knowledgeable of. Maybe one day we will develop even greater knowledge of some of these laws in nature and we might be able to do other things that, at this point, we would look at and say, “It is a Miracle! It is Impossible!”

Now those men who do not believe in miracles, who are purely naturalists and only believe in the laws of nature as we understand them, they seek to take the miraculous or the supernatural out of the miracles of Jesus. For instance, William Barclay explains how Jesus could feed a crowd of five thousand men, plus women and children, with five loaves and two fish from a little boy.

Barclay tells us that in those days people wore robes and they had these long flowing sleeves with sort of a strap around the cuff or drawstring. And they would often carry their food—little bits of bread or cheese or whatever, in their sleeves. It is nothing miraculous. He has something up his sleeve! This was the idea.

And so, it was evening and the people were hungry and obviously had nothing to eat and no possibility of buying anything at that time of the day and in that wilderness area. When Jesus asked, “Well what do you have?”—everyone was so selfish. They were holding their sleeves tight and they were not going to give up their food. And then when they saw this precious little boy bringing to Jesus his five loaves and his two fish, they were so touched by the example of the little child they all untied their sleeves and pulled out their loaves and their fish. And so, they were able to gather up twelve baskets full of fragments after they had all eaten and were filled. So there really was not a miracle except that the people’s hearts were touched by the generous example of the little boy (cf. Barclay 103). Isn’t that sweet?

Barclay further explains to us that when the disciples were in the ship, the wind had actually blown them much closer to shore than they realized. And when they saw Jesus walking towards them, they thought He was on the water because of the waves and it just looked like He was walking on the water; when in reality He was walking on the shore. They had almost beached their little boat. And so it really was not a miracle at all. It just appeared that He was walking on the water (cf. Barclay 105).

And thus, they seek to explain away the miraculous element of the Bible. The only reason why you would need to do that, or seek to do that, is because of your concept of God. Somehow your concept of God is very narrow and very limited in thinking that God can only operate within the laws of nature that we presently know and understand. Not recognizing that God is the one who created and formed the laws of nature. And I am certain that if time should tarry and we continue to advance in our scientific developments, we are going learn a lot more about nature and laws of nature. And in the future we will be doing things that at our present state of knowledge we would have said, “It is impossible! It is a miracle!” But as we learn more of these higher laws, we will be amazed and astounded at what is possible.

Now this gift of the working of miracles, it would seem, is one of the requirements for apostleship. When Paul was writing to the Corinthians defending the title of apostle, he said to

them in 2 Corinthians 12:12, “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.” So Paul is pointing to the miracles that were done through his ministry while he was there in Corinth. And he used those as a badge to attest to the fact that he was an apostle. And thus, it seems that it was one of the requirements of apostleship in the early church to have this gift of working of miracles.

But the gift of the working of miracles did not seem, in the early church, to be limited to the apostles. When Paul the Apostle was on the way to Damascus to imprison those who were calling upon the name of Jesus, he had his encounter with the Lord. The Lord spoke to him and called him into the ministry—into following Jesus Christ. And as a result of this encounter with Jesus, he was blinded and had to be led into Damascus.

Now there was a certain disciple of Jesus in Damascus whose name was Ananias. He was not an apostle but just a disciple. In Acts 9, the Lord spoke to him and told him to go to the street called Straight, to inquire at the house of Simon for this fellow Saul. “Because,” the Lord said, “he is praying.” And Ananias said, “Lord, I have heard about this fellow, how he has really wrecked havoc in the church in Jerusalem. And actually he has been sent here to Damascus to imprison those who call on Your name.” In other words, “Are You sure, Lord?” And the Lord said, “He is a chosen vessel unto Me. I have shown him the things he is going to suffer for My name.”

So Ananias came to Paul and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me unto you that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” And so he laid hands on Paul and Paul received his sight and was filled with the Holy Spirit. And so here is a disciple exercising the gift of miracles.

Philip, one of those who was chosen to wait on the tables, went to Samaria to preach Christ and many believed and were baptized when they saw the miracles that he did. And then also Stephen was one of the other of the seven men who were chosen to wait tables in the early church. We are told concerning Stephen in Acts 6:8, that he was full of faith and power. And as we said, the gift of faith seems to be related to the gift of working of miracles. I think you have sort of a “trinity” of gifts: faith, the gifts of healing, and the working of miracles. I think they are all three tied together. Stephen was full of faith and power and he did great wonders and miracles among the people. So, although it was necessary to have this gift if you were to take the title of apostle, there were others who had the gift who obviously were not considered apostles in the early church.

Now I believe that there are incumbent dangers to one who would possess the gift of working of miracles. And I think the first danger would be the using of the gift for your own personal benefit. And this is pretty much what Satan suggested to Jesus in the temptation. In Luke 4, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness and there He fasted for forty days. And afterwards He was hungry. Satan came unto Him and he said, “Since You are the Son of God...” The King James says, “If you are the son of God,” but the case is not in the indicative but rather in the subjunctive case, and so it properly translates as “*Since* You are the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread.” In other words, use Your miraculous powers to satisfy Your own physical needs. Use Your powers in order to just satisfy the flesh. And you remember Jesus refused to do so. He said, “It is written, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Father” (Matthew 4:4).

We note in the Old Testament when Naaman the leper was cleansed and realized that he was cleansed and saw the miracle, he returned to the prophet Elisha and sought to give him rewards and gifts because of the miracle of his healing. But we note that Elisha refused to accept any remuneration or any of the rewards or benefits from Naaman for the miracle that he experienced.

I think there is a danger in having the gift of the working of miracles. The danger is in taking personal glory unto yourself for what God has done. Because if a person sees a miracle and you seem to be the instrument through which that miracle was accomplished, people are very ready to put you on some kind of pedestal. They look up to you in awe as some kind of mighty man of God. And there is a danger in accepting that adulation and that wonderment and awe of the people.

It is a very embarrassing thing when God uses you as His instrument and people seek to extol or exalt you. I really have been blessed of God. Yes, to a great extent I admit that. But I have actually had people come up and sort of touch me and say, “Can I touch you?” And I say, “Pet my dog. He appreciates it.”

When Peter was going into the temple there was a man who was born lame who was seeking alms. And Peter said, “I do not have silver and gold, but what I have I will give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise to your feet and walk” (Acts 3:6). And he took him by the right hand and lifted him to his feet. Immediately he received strength and he began to walk. He began to run—running through the temple. And the people said, “Look, is that the lame man who has been out there all these years? It sure looked like him. How is it that he is walking?” “We do not know. Let us find out.”

And they followed him out to Solomon’s Porch where Peter was still standing. And he grabbed hold of Peter and began to hug him—probably even kiss him. So as all the people gathered because of the lame man’s response towards Peter, they related the miracle of this man walking to him. And Peter looks up and all of a sudden all these people are looking at him, saying, “Wow! What is this?”

And Peter said, “Ye men of Israel, why marvel you at this?” This was sort of a rebuke. “You see, you are the men of Israel. You are the men who worship the God of Israel, who is a God of miracles. So why should you marvel that God should work a miracle? I mean after all, He is the God who created the universe. Why should you marvel at this? Why should you look on us as though we, through our own righteousness, have done this good deed to this lame man? Why are you looking at me like I am so holy or righteous?” And he pointed them immediately to Jesus Christ. “This was done through the name of Jesus Christ, whom your rulers crucified. And it is through the faith of Him that this man stands here before you whole.” So the people were ready to exalt Peter for the miracle. Peter had enough wisdom not to take the glory from the people. Modern day evangelists would have passed the offering plate.

In Acts 14 when Paul was in Lystra, there was a lame man about forty years old who had never been able to walk. And as Paul was preaching—and we will get to this gift of discernment—Paul discerned that the man had enough faith to be healed. And he said, “Brother, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. Stand up and walk!” And the man stood up and walked. And all of the people there in Lystra said, “The gods have come down!” And they ran up the street to the temple of Jupiter. And they got hold of the priest and they said, “Man, what are you doing here? Jupiter is down the street! He brought Mercury with him.” And so the priest came dragging an ox down the street. He was going to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas right there.

Now the whole human rationale would say, “Alright! We have them in the palm of our hand. We will let them think that we are gods and we will sort of manipulate them. We will ultimately get them around to the Lord. But in the meantime we can live a pretty good life.”

There is a danger any time God uses you as His instrument to do His work of love and grace in another person's heart and life. People want to respond to the instrument, many times, rather than to God. They are so grateful for what God has done, they want to reward the instrument that God used. And thus, unless a person had really come to the place in their own life where they do not have personal ambition or personal desires for glory, one of the worst things in the world would be for God to give to them the gift of working of miracles. It could absolutely destroy them. It is not an easy gift to have.

Now does God work miracles today or did all of the miracles cease with the last of the apostles? That seems to be an argument that has occupied the theologians for many years. But it is my firm conviction in answer to the question, "Does God work miracles today?"—the answer is an unqualified, yes! Salvation is a miracle.

In Mark 10 when the rich young ruler came to Jesus seeking the way of salvation and when he finally went away sorrowful, Jesus then turned to His disciples and He said, "How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of heaven. Really it is easier for a camel to go through an eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Peter, in astonishment said, "Lord, who then can be saved?" And the answer of Jesus was, "With man it is impossible."

So if a miracle is something that is humanly impossible, then salvation is a miracle because it is humanly impossible for any man to save himself. So to say that the days of miracles are over would be to deny that people could be saved today. No, the days of miracles, thank God, are not over. God is still working miracles today.

Are there people today who have the gift of the working of miracles? It is possible. I personally do not know of any who have the valid gift. That is not to say that there is not a valid gift in operation today. I think I came close and perhaps met a person who had the gift of the working of miracles when I was in New Guinea. She was a very simple native girl. And as they began to relate the stories of the prayers of this girl and the things that God was doing through her prayers, it was quite possible that she had the gift of working of miracles. It was quite an astounding testimony that was given to us of how God had used her in praying for people who were blind and they were able to see! And there was one miracle after another. But she was a very simple, plain, native, New Guinea girl.

I do believe that it is possible for people to have the gift of the working of miracles, but I also believe that there is a lot of fraud as there are those who would like you to think that they have the gift of working of miracles. And this is always tragic to me. Charlatans will use deceptive means to cause people to think that they have powers that they really do not possess. And they seek to deceive people into thinking that they have a great power of God in their lives and the working of miracles. Now, so often these men who do these things have a rationale. They say that it helps increase the people's faith. It is that old argument that the end justifies the means. But you will never find any scriptural support for such an argument in regards to such deception.

One of our assistant pastors who is also a writer (a columnist) went to one of these healing meetings back in Philadelphia. And the first person in the healing line was an elderly man. And as they brought him up he had an oxygen tank and the tubes and so forth in his face. And so the evangelist made quite a thing over the oxygen tank and the tubes and so forth. And then he prayed for him and took the tubes out and took the tank away and he said, "Now run up the aisle." And the man ran up the aisle and ran back again. And he said, "How you feel?" "Oh, I feel great!" Everybody was excited—the place went wild.

And so after the service, this friend of mine who was a reporter asked this couple as they were going to their car, “Wait a minute, I need to talk to you about what happened tonight.” And the lady said, “Oh, does [and she named the evangelist] he want us to run it for tomorrow night too—the oxygen thing and all?” He said, “No, no, I was just wanting to interview you about your husband.” It turned out that it was just a rented thing because it was staged. They said, “Well, he was really healed earlier, but they wanted to stage it again for the people in order to build their faith.” You see, that is fraud.

And unfortunately there are a lot of fraudulent things that are done. And as I say, they use the excuse, “Well we are building faith in the people so that they can see God work.” But I cannot buy that. I do not think that God needs gimmicks. And I just cannot buy using gimmicks in the name of God. God can do it and He does not need us to put on acts or whatever.

I would love to see the gifts of the working of miracles in operation here at Calvary Chapel. Through the years of our ministry here there have been many miracles. There have been miracles of healing—marvelous miracles. There have been miracles that we cannot deny and would not deny. But I do not believe that we are anywhere near approaching the church in Acts. And I would like to see us get a little closer. I do not know that we ever will.

The Lord said to the church at Philadelphia in Revelation 3, “You have a little strength.” And I think we probably qualify as the church of Philadelphia. And we have a little strength but not much. I do not believe that the days of miracles are over. I believe that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And I do not believe that there is any scriptural evidence that would lead one to believe that God would remove this gift of working of miracles from His church.

And again I would not be ready to fault God for us not having this gift of the working of miracles. I would be willing to accept the fault and the blame. I do not believe that I would be able to handle the notoriety that would follow having the gift of the working of miracles. And personally, I do not know of anyone in this congregation who would be able to handle the notoriety that would come as the result of the working of this gift. Perhaps there is someone. I would pray that there would be. I know I am not the one.

And thus, I see it as our weakness and not as God’s reluctance. And if a person would come up to me and say, “Well, I am really praying and seeking for the gift of the working of miracles.” Honestly I would, in my heart, question his motive. Why would he want that gift? Our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked. Who can know them? I know that for years I wanted the gift of the working of miracles, but I know in my heart of hearts, that I always thought if I only had this gift—my how the people would be attracted! The church would be full. I would not have to work at Alpha Beta Market to make a living. That was my motive.

Will we see this gift in operation before the Lord comes? It is possible. I know I for one want to be open to it. And if God should see fit and the Holy Spirit should sovereignly will that this gift be in operation in the church, I for one would rejoice and be glad. Whether or not it will be manifested is in His hands and not in ours.

It is a valid gift and I do not believe that God has ceased working miracles. As I said, we see so many miracles. Salvation is a miracle of God and we see that by the hundreds. Transforming lives

is only something God can do. It is a thrill to me, when I see a life transformed by the Spirit of God.

We have been up at our new youth camp again this week, being blessed to the extreme. We have watched God working miracles in the high school kids up there this week. I thank God every day for this facility that God has enabled us to provide for the young people. I only wish that each of you could come up and spend a little time there to see how God is using this facility in touching hundreds of young people.

Last night as we spoke to the kids and then we called those who wanted to make a full consecration and commitment of their lives to Jesus to come down around the fire and join me. Watching over three hundred kids just come down weeping and surrendering their lives to God. What a thrill! What a blessing!

I taught them the chorus—and you would have to have been a long time in the Lord to know this one—

Only to be what He wants me to be, every moment of every day.  
Yielded completely to Jesus alone, every step of this pilgrim  
way. Just to be clay in the Potter's hand and willing to do what  
His will commands. Only to be what He wants me to be every  
moment of every day. (*Only To Be What He Wants Me To Be*)

We stood around the fire with these kids and with our hands lifted, singing it to the Lord. "Lord, I only want to be what You want me to be every moment of every day." They were yielded fully, completely, to Jesus alone. Oh God is working in marvelous, miraculous ways there in the camp and in that we rejoice.

These kids are so on fire up there. You should have heard their testimonies around the fire last night. You should hear them challenging each other. It is beautiful. I mean, some of these kids I was ready to just hand the Bible and say, "Go for it!" as they challenged each other. It has been an exciting time.

It is a miracle—what God is doing. The fruit and the results that are going to come from this—I will tell you that only eternity will be able to tally up what God has done. My heart is full. My cup overflows. God is good.

Shall we pray?

Father, we come to You tonight and acknowledge our faith in You. We believe that You are the Creator of this whole universe and also the sustainer. And we know, Lord, that You are God and there is nothing that is too hard for You. With Abraham we know that You are able to do that which You have promised. And we thank You, Lord, for Your promises. Lord, we desire to see Your work and Your hand working in our midst. We desire to see the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. And Lord, those things that are in our lives that would hinder the flow of the Spirit or restrict the flow of the Spirit, Lord, we ask that You would work in removing them. For Lord, it is our desire that Your Spirit flow forth from our life like a torrent of living water,

unrestricted. Just a full rich flow. And so, Lord, we commit now ourselves to You. We present our bodies as instruments through which You can do Your work. Fill us until we overflow with Your Spirit. And Lord, let Your love just flow forth out of our lives, touching the needs of those around us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**WORKS CITED:**

Barclay, William. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Volume 2. Revised Edition. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. 1975.