

## How to Receive from God

I want to talk to you as friends tonight about a topic I am still learning about and a topic that I think I have only really received insight on over the last few years.

I want to talk to you about how to receive from God. By that I mean when someone is praying for you and everyone else around you seems to be getting wonderfully touched by God, which is what our hearts long for, how can you position your heart and your mind so that you too will receive an encounter with the living God. When I am talking about receiving from God I want to include not just those times when people are praying for an empowering in your life, but also those times when people are praying for healing in your life as well. Not only can we receive from God when people are ministering to us but we can also receive during the time of worship or even as we are just spending time with the Lord personally.

I have often been frustrated by having an anointed person praying for me and yet I don't feel anything. That has changed now but it was like that for years. Wayne Curham a powerfully anointed man who came to the Lord here in the old hall out the back many years ago, a man who has helped thousands of Christians in the persecuted church; a man who prays for people with dramatic results once came to help me at Raetihi. I had him there as a guest minister one weekday night. There were about 50 people in the church listening to him describing his love for the Lord and why we can trust God. Then he began to lay hands on us all. In that room of people about 48 of the 50 people spent significant time lying on the carpet. As he laid hands on them they seemed to be overwhelmed with the power and love of God and just went over, and stayed down for ages, faces smiling and lips quietly praising God. Only two people felt nothing, me and one other guy. You kind of think if he prays for me again I will just go down to encourage everyone, but I didn't. I stood there thinking, heck I am not aware of any sin in my life and I love the Lord I hope there is not something wrong with me. Has anyone else ever felt like that? There wasn't anything wrong with me; I just hadn't learnt how to receive from God.

What I want to do tonight is just share with you a couple of things that I have learnt and that I have heard Bill Johnston say previously, and I trust as a result, you too will be more able to experience a touch from God as well whether being prayed for, in worship or on your own.

1. **Don't get analytical but have the faith of a child.** Children trust and children are often on the bottom of the social ladder and can't control their situations.

It is interesting to note in the gospels when Jesus returns to his home village it says the people he grew up with complained; hey, isn't this the carpenter's son, aren't James, Joseph, Judas and Simon his brothers? Aren't his sisters still living here? Analyse, analyse, don't just trust, don't let Jesus take control and so what happens as a result? We read that Jesus could only heal a few sick people. Mark 6:1-6

*<sup>1</sup>Jesus left and returned to his hometown with his disciples. <sup>2</sup>The next Sabbath he taught in the Jewish meeting place. Many of the people who heard him were amazed and asked, "How can he do all this? Where did he get such wisdom and the power to work these miracles? <sup>3</sup>Isn't he the carpenter, the son of Mary? Aren't James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon his brothers? Don't his sisters still live here in our town?" The people were very unhappy because of what he was doing.*

*<sup>4</sup>But Jesus said, "Prophets are honoured by everyone, except the people of their hometown and their relatives and their own family." <sup>5</sup>Jesus could not work any miracles there, except to heal a few sick people by placing his hands on them. <sup>6</sup>He was surprised that the people did not have any faith.*

In churches in countries such as Argentina, Brazil and parts of Africa miracles are common place. The people may not be well educated or well off but they hear the gospel and with the trust and the humility of little children they just believe and miracles are just the norm. I have continually been shocked and amazed by brand new Christians when within a week of committing their lives to Jesus they can pray for a sick person and they get healed or they deliver someone of a demon and they are set free. They have had no training or experience. But like a little child they just trust and humbly believe and the result is a miracle.

One of the reasons I am sure that I found it hard to receive from God when people prayed for me was the fact that I liked to be in control and it was hard to let go and let God.

If you want to be great in God's kingdom Jesus said, learn to be the servant of all. Just trust and let the Lord take control. He will never force anything on you. He is always good.

2. **Don't compare yourself to others.** There is a real danger when we are looking to get a touch from the Lord to look around at others and say, "she's flat on her back", "look at the way he is shaking", "that sister just can't stop laughing with joy." "So if that is what getting a touch from God looks like, then why isn't it happening to me?"

What I have realized is that God knows what I need much better than I do. I don't even need to try to understand what He is doing in someone else. Its none of my business. If He knows you and I as well as I am absolutely sure He does then whatever way He decides to show His presence on us is up to Him. If falling down is what is best for me, then I am sure I will fall down. If shaking is best for me, then He will cause me to shake. Some people often cry when the presence of God is on them because God is doing something personal in their lives. I have come to realize that when God's presence comes upon me I feel peace, and joy, and an increased Love for the Lord and the words that then come out of my mouth are better than the ones I would have chosen.

3. **Rest**  
**Hebrews 4:9-13**

*<sup>9</sup>But God has promised us a Sabbath when we will rest, even though it has not yet come. <sup>10</sup>On that day God's people will rest from their work, just as God rested from his work. <sup>11</sup>We should do our best to enter that place of rest, so that none of us will disobey and miss going there, as they did. <sup>12</sup>What God has said isn't only alive and active! It is sharper than any double-edged sword. His word can cut through our spirits and souls and through our joints and marrow, until it discovers the desires and thoughts of our hearts. <sup>13</sup>Nothing is hidden from God! He sees through everything, and we will have to tell him the truth.*

All of Hebrews has this theme running through it; that Jesus our High Priest has done it all, achieved for us forgiveness, grace and blessing. Nothing else needs to be done; nothing else needs to be sacrificed. I love serving God and doing things that honour Him but when you and I are just

still and know that He is the Lord, when we stop doing and recognise that “it is finished.” That also shows real faith and opens our hearts to receive from Him.

Interesting to me in this passage, rest, being at peace with God, trusting in His finished work is followed by verses that speak of our ability to receive ministry from God through His Word. I have found that to be true. When I am still and secure and just acknowledge that He is Lord He speaks to my heart through scriptures that I have studied. This life transforming encounter with the Word happens after I am still and at rest.

4. **Believe that whatever He is doing in you or giving to you is good.**

**Luke 11:9-13**

*<sup>9</sup>So I tell you to ask and you will receive, search and you will find, knock and the door will be opened for you. <sup>10</sup>Everyone who asks will receive, everyone who searches will find, and the door will be opened for everyone who knocks. <sup>11</sup>Which one of you fathers would give your hungry child a snake if the child asked for a fish? <sup>12</sup>Which one of you would give your child a scorpion if the child asked for an egg? <sup>13</sup>As bad as you are, you still know how to give good gifts to your children. But your heavenly Father is even more ready to give the Holy Spirit to anyone who asks.*

I will never forget the first time I felt the power of God on my life. I was about 18 years old. I had seen this vivacious young lady in the AOG youth group and when I heard they were having a camp I suddenly saw my opportunity to win her love and was eager to go to the camp to learn about spiritual things, not.

On the Saturday this gorilla like Aussie minister said that all Christians need the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life and if we hungered for and wanted the power of God on our lives come forward... I did... fell...embarrassed... couldn't get up...just began to worship... enjoyed his presence... English turned to tongues.

At the end of the day it was as simple as ask and receive and what I received wasn't quite what I expected but when I just received God lit such a fire of enthusiasm for the Lord in my life. Often after someone is baptized here we pray for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, they say they feel nothing but then during the week they phone me and say I was worshipping the Lord while vacuuming or while driving and the English suddenly changed to a prayer language they had never learnt. Wow.

5. **Take time to enjoy whatever He is giving to you.**

You and I need to become very sensitive to when we feel the presence of the Holy Spirit come upon us. When you feel God manifest Himself on you physically, recognise what happens uniquely in you and take time to enjoy it. I have found that the more I enjoy what God is doing in me and on me; the more likely it is that he will give me more of the same.

I am ever so conscious throughout the day and in times of worship or prayer or preaching that this power and joy comes on me. And it's the presence of the Living God. Sure He is always with me and in me but there is an anointing that He will impart to each one of us throughout the day or when we are receiving prayer and we need to recognise it and enjoy it. If you are focused on getting home to make dinner or that huge power bill you have to pay or the argument you just had with your spouse you probably won't even be able to recognise the presence of the Lord on

you and enjoy Him. Things change in your body, in your thinking and in your attitudes when that anointing comes and so when it does just enjoy Him and let it flow.

Bill Johnson says and I absolutely agree that when you focus your heart and mind on just loving the Lord, thanking Him for His goodness and grace to you that will very quickly bring you into and help you stay in His presence where you can continue to receive from Him.

Catherine Marshal once wrote a book that was called "Worship the Golden Bridge to God's presence" and I have always found that to be absolutely true.

When you begin to feel His presence on you, and he begins to impart healing and joy and vision to you, just love him back and stay in the moment, just enjoy the Lord and He will keep giving to you.

- Don't be analytical let go of control and trust like a child would trust.
- Don't compare yourself to others, God knows what is best for you and His work in you will be a personal work.
- Rest in His finished work. Be still and Know that He is God.
- Believe that whatever He is doing in you and giving to you is good.
- Then just recognise and enjoy what He is imparting to you. Steward the presence of God. Let Him give to you and while you do keep your mind and your heart full of praise for Him.

Your experience may be different from everyone else but this I know, you seek, you knock, you ask and you will receive. God is so good and He just loves to bless you personally!