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Miracles and the Supernatural Throughout Church History

25. The Supernatural and Associated Pitfalls

This chapter warns about the dangers that surround supernatural ministry. Real spiritual power is a sacred trust from God, meant to serve others and glorify Him — not to feed ego, raise money, or draw a crowd. The author walks through common pitfalls and how to keep Jesus, not the miraculous, at the center.

Key takeaways

- Shun ego and showmanship. Simon the sorcerer wanted the Spirit's power to be admired and even tried to buy it; Peter rebuked him harshly because God's gift cannot be purchased.
- Avoid gimmicks and 'prophetic appeals.' Relics, anointed oil, prayer cloths, and special offerings that promise a blessing for a set donation are spiritual trafficking — reject them.
- Refuse to manipulate people or take money dishonestly. Hagin said no amount of money was worth jeopardizing the anointing.
- Never let people worship the minister. Paul and Barnabas stopped the crowd at Lystra, insisting 'We are merely human beings — just like you.'

- Don't abuse a 'point of contact.' Hands or oil don't heal — God does. Israel turned Moses' bronze serpent into an idol; look through the point of contact, always to Jesus.
- Don't limit God to one method. Jesus and the early church healed many different ways so people would look to Him, not a formula. Naaman almost missed healing over his preconceptions.
- Jesus sometimes said no to miracles. He refused signs demanded to 'test' Him and did no miracles in unbelieving Nazareth. Miracles bear witness to Him but were not His main purpose — He came to seek and save the lost.
- Don't make physical manifestations the goal. Falling, shaking, weeping, and laughter appear throughout revival history, but they are effects, not the purpose. Seek God Himself, not the phenomena.
- Discernment is essential. Test the spirits; do all things decently, in order, and to edify. Sincerity matters — no hyping or pressuring people to act 'spiritual.'
- Don't neglect vital ministry areas. A strong gift alone won't sustain fruitful ministry — character, integrity, people skills, and diligence still matter.

Passages worth keeping

“May your money be destroyed with you for thinking God's gift can be bought!”

Peter's rebuke of Simon — the anointing is never for sale.

“It doesn't matter how high people jump in church if they can't walk straight when they land.”

The test of a genuine move of God is transformed, obedient lives — not emotional intensity.

How it connects

The thread tying every pitfall together is idolatry of the gift over the Giver. Whether it's Simon's ego, the bronze serpent, or an obsession with manifestations, the corrective is the same: look to Jesus, not through the miracle to yourself. Major on the majors — exalt Christ, reach the lost, teach the Word, make disciples.

Scripture referenced

- **Acts 8:9-24** -- Simon the sorcerer tries to buy the Spirit's power; Peter's rebuke
- **Acts 14:11-15** -- Lystra crowd tries to worship Paul and Barnabas, who refuse it
- **Numbers 21:9 / 2 Kings 18:4** -- The bronze serpent as a point of contact that Israel later idolized
- **2 Kings 5:1-14** -- Naaman's anger over Elisha's method nearly costs him his healing
- **Mark 8:11-13** -- Jesus refuses to give a demanded sign

- **1 Corinthians 14:33,40** -- God is not the author of confusion; do all things decently and in order