

Cooke, TonyMiracles and the Supernatural Throughout Church History

27. Chapter Eighteen: Practical Takeaways

The closing chapter turns the book's history of miracles into practical instruction. It asks how believers should actually live in light of God's supernatural work, guarding against imbalance in either direction—thrill-seeking on one side, dead caution on the other.

Key takeaways

- Keep the 'prime directive': Jesus commanded us to preach the gospel and make disciples, not to chase revival or miracles. Signs follow believers; believers shouldn't follow signs.
- Love outranks gifts. You can have prophecy, faith, and tongues and still be 'nothing' without love. Pursue both love and gifts—never one while neglecting the other.
- Don't devalue the 'ordinary' works of the Spirit. Revivals are seasonal; between the peaks, keep doing the basic duties—preaching, kindness, humble service. Dorcas was known for making coats for widows.
- Even 'helps' is listed among the spiritual gifts. Being spiritual often shows up in obscure, behind-the-scenes service, not visible platforms.

- Balance and extremes both have a place: you need the extremist to start a move of God and the balanced teacher to keep it on course. Wisdom knows which is needed when.
- If God uses you powerfully, stay humble. Every gift is a free trust given for others' benefit, not self-promotion. Pride has destroyed many God once used.

Passages worth keeping

"We need the extremist to start things moving, but we need the balanced teacher to keep them moving in the right direction."

Donald Gee's synthesis—the chapter's answer to the tension between zeal and moderation.

"It doesn't matter if you speak in tongues if you are mean in English."

Sharp reminder that gifts are no excuse for a poor character.

How it connects

Gee's principle echoes throughout Scripture: Jesus' own family thought He was mad (Mark 3:21), and Festus called Paul insane (Acts 26)—yet their 'extremism' was Spirit-driven zeal held together by heavenly sanity.

Scripture referenced

- **Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19-20** -- The Great Commission—preach the gospel, make disciples—the church's true mandate.

- **John 13:34-35** -- The Great Commandment; love marks us as Jesus' disciples.
- **1 Corinthians 13:1-3** -- Gifts without love amount to nothing.
- **1 Corinthians 12:28** -- 'Helps' listed among the spiritual gifts, alongside miracles and healings.
- **2 Timothy 4:2** -- Preach the word in season and out—faithful duty regardless of the spiritual season.
- **Acts 9:36-39** -- Dorcas, known for kindness to the poor, honored for 'ordinary' works of love.