Acts Lesson 29 Handout

Acts 9: 32 Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all parts of the country, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda.

33 There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. 34 And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed.” Then he arose immediately.

Miracles don’t happen every day. If they did, they would be called “regulars” not “miracles.”
Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in His name [identifying themselves with Him] after seeing His signs (attesting miracles) which
He was doing. 24 But Jesus, for His part, did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all people[and understood the superficiality and fickleness of human nature], 25 and He did not need anyone to testify concerning man [and human nature], for He Himself knew what was in man [in their hearts—in the very core of their being].

John 3 Now there was a certain man among the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler (member of the Sanhedrin) among the Jews, 2 who came to Jesus at night and said to Him, “Rabbi (Teacher), we know [without any doubt] that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs [these wonders, these attesting miracles] that You do unless God is with him.”

Matthew 24:24–26
24 “For false christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 “Behold, I have told you in advance. 26 “So if they say to you, ‘Behold, He is in the wilderness,’ do not go out, or, ‘Behold, He is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe them.
God alone is exalted - not a man or woman.

Self-promotion vs. promoting God’s message.

Selfish ambition vs. pursuing God’s calling.

Corporate manipulation vs. casting God’s vision.

Building my own platform vs. allowing God to build a platform for me, if He so chose.

There is no showmanship.

From Faith in Faith to Faith in Christ
By: Peter Glover
Mark Haville’s is an extraordinary story. Converted into the Pentecostal/Charismatic church he quickly came under the spell of the Word-Faith teaching of men like Kenneth Copeland. But things did not stay that way for Mark... Still in his mid-20’s, Mark became an itinerant minister travelling the country earning large sums of money through his ability to perform ‘signs and wonders’.

Remarkably, he has renounced his former life, his beliefs, and his practices as a Word-Faith minister and is now speaking out boldly against the beliefs and practices of the current Signs and Wonders movement.

“How did you first get involved with Word Faith teaching?”

MH: I was given lots of tapes and books by Kenneth Copeland which everyone was into at my church in North London. I believed that my Christian experience could validate my faith. It convinced me that what I was in was real. I was impressed by the numbers involved, their interest in the media, publications, the money and the general trappings of success – it bred the belief in me that biggest must be best.

“How did you use what you saw in this material?”

MH: Basically, I copied it. I learned gradually to do what all these speakers like Copeland, Cerullo, Benny Hinn and others do. They manipulate audiences and individuals simply by the power of suggestion. They call the result ‘signs and wonders’. They are deluded. Gradually, I too had learned the process of controlling meetings and inducing hypnotic techniques through suggestion in churches. I did many of the so-called signs and wonders.
“You maintain then that you were able to induce an atmosphere that was conducive to hypnotic suggestion?”

MH: Absolutely. The techniques are no different to those used by any practicing hypnotist. First, the people in these meetings are already coming with high expectancy – they want it to be God. Second, you need to create the right atmosphere – hence the long periods of singing certain types of songs to make people feel relaxed and warm.

“Will it affect everyone at the meeting?”

MH: No, not at all. If you do not believe that it is God that is doing these things in the meeting, there is no way you will fall down. But remember, I am the one running the show. Just like any good hypnotist, I will be ‘working’ the audience. I can tell which ones are the more suggestive by asking certain questions. I can then bring people forward, having gotten them into a very relaxed and accepting state. You have to remember, people who come really want to believe that God is at work. By telling them to stand in a particular place I am strongly influencing their belief that by standing where I have told them – on that exact spot – something is going to happen. By telling them someone will stand behind them, because we wouldn’t want them to get hurt if they fall, it is all heightening the sense of anticipation and suggestiveness. The rest is easy.

“You seemed to find it difficult to watch yourself on screen.”

MH: Yes, I find it very hard knowing how I unconsciously deceived good people into believing that the Holy Spirit was at work when it was common or garden hypnosis. But at the time I suppose I did believe, however incorrectly, that these things were the activity of God. But the reality is, I learned these techniques by watching others, and anybody can do them given enough training. They are psychological techniques – nothing else.
“What caused you to look again at what you were doing and believed?”
MH: In a nutshell – the Scriptures themselves. I decided that I wanted to learn the Scriptures in the original Greek and I began to realize that what I believed didn’t match up with what the Scriptures actually taught.

“For instance?”
MH: In 1 Corinthians it didn’t say we would be given spiritual gifts on demand, but as God wills. I had always been taught that, with enough faith, if you were ‘anointed’ and prayed enough, you would manifest the relevant gifts. I could see that God really didn’t work that way.

Romans 1:16 says: "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation."

1 Corinthians 1:22-23 Paul says, "Jews demand signs, Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified . . . the power of God . . ."

1 Corinthians 1:18 The "word of the cross is . . . the power of God"

Matthew 12:39; 16:4 says: Thus Jesus himself said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign"

Acts 9:33 There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. 34 And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed.” Then he arose immediately.
35 So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

Acts 9:36 At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.

37 But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.
38 And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed.
If He heals – awesome.

If He doesn't heal – that should be awesome too.

SOURCE: Recovering From Word of Faith – Abigail and Dolley readers as a new believer I was starving for all things of God. If you have followed this blog or are friends with me on facebook you know that I always have something I am passionate about. I am almost always researching something and I try to find out as much as I can about a subject. My Mom teased me about this trait this Summer and I realized that there are a couple major themes I usually adopt: Faith, Gardening, Health/Weight Loss/Cooking, and some times Politics. Thus, it is no surprise that when I recommitted my life to the Lord that I would dig in deep and I did! Unfortunately, in my hunger to learn everything about this wonderful life in Christ I began watching Word of Faith preachers on INSP (pre-internet world!).

I was enthralled! I could pray for healing and be healed. I could pray, I believed God for healing. I could invest in God’s kingdom and reap exponential awards. I could confess and speak things into existence because God promises in His Word and He HAS to do it because that is who God is! I read books, I taped shows, I confessed the Word, I prayed, I gave, I believed, I made terrible financial decisions based on “faith”.... I was sold out and so on fire for the Lord I was tough to be around.

Then, I got sick. I prayed. I believed God for healing. I
did not receive that sickness into my body. I exercised incredible faith. I did not get better. Sitting in the Emergency Room one night about 6 weeks into this mysterious illness, I looked at my husband and complained that I was doing everything I was supposed to do and I was still sick! Something was very wrong with this picture and I gave up on the Word of Faith movement in that moment.

What I did not realize was that I was now very spiritually damaged. As a new believer, I indoctrinated my soul with lies. I set up ways of thought, beliefs, and actions based on the words of greedy liars disguised as preachers. In many ways, I had black highways paved through my soul. My thoughts and prayers raced across the false roads. When I abandoned the Word of Faith movement, I abandoned the Word and Faith and the Hope that comes with being a true believer. Subconsciously, I embarked on the rest of my faith life where God’s promises were tainted. Having Hope seemed like a Mountain Top Proclamations. Expending my Faith was ruined.

It was 15 years after the fact that I realized that I still carried the damage. Reciting scriptures of God’s promises ran over those dark highways in my soul and reached my heart with unbelief and no power. I did not even realize it. As I began to dig into it, I realized that only God can heal me of these spiritual scars.

How many walking wounded are there right now? How many new believers are sucked into this false doctrine and scarred forever? How many huge houses went into foreclosure because vulnerable Christians were believing God for the money to pay for their mortgages? How many sick people are not seeking medical treatment because they are believing God for divine healing? How many people completely fall away from the faith as seeds sown in shallow ground?
I have been a vehement critic of the Name it and Claim it movement. I left a church home over a dispute about it and never looked back. I hate the doctrine and what it does and there is a special place in Hell for the wolves in sheep’s clothing that deceive God’s people and line their pockets with the proceeds. Beware.

Matthew 21:22 You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it.”

1 John 5:14
14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

And turning to the body he said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. 41 Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.
42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.
43 So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with Simon, a tanner.