In the first part of this series we talked about the source of miracles, miracles in history, modern miracles, and what makes a miracle possible. In this installment we'll look at the importance of letting go of control over our miracles, the promise of miracles, no monopoly on miracles, and the sacred nature of miracles. There are also two great talks referenced for further reading at the bottom of this article.

At the end of the previous article we talked about the importance of using belief and faith to qualify for a miracle. But faith is not enough. If we have faith, but still try to control the timing and outcome of the desired miracle then we will be sadly disappointed by the outcome of our petition. When it comes to the timing and method of granting miracles, we absolutely have to learn to let go.

Learning to Let Go

Learning to let go of personal control and just letting the Lord be in charge seems to be a part of the recipe for a miracle. Perhaps I am the only one with control issues, but this is the hardest part for me. When I search my soul I find that I have very definite expectations as to how I want the Lord to do something or when I want Him to do it. I have a problem with just letting Him be in control.

The problem with us wanting to be in control is that we do not have the bigger picture in view when we set up our expectations or demands, but God does. We may decide that we are going to exercise our faith by doing the following things A, B, and C. But the Lord sees what we need and realizes that A will set us on the wrong path to getting what we want, and C is not what we should ultimately be doing, so he provides us with alternate opportunities instead.

This is a polite way of saying that our plans are frustrated by setbacks and obstacles. We can fight these or we can look for ways around them, seeking to be guided by the Spirit as we continue on our path. The Lord is trying to direct our path by steering us in another direction that is more beneficial to us, but we have to be willing to continue to be faithful and uncomplaining when things don't work out the way we want them to.

How often have we had a setback that proved, in the long run, to be in our best interests? How often does one disappointment lead to opportunities in the future that were great blessings in our lives? These are the quiet miracles that you don't hear people labeling as miracles. But isn't that exactly what they are? The Lord is working wonders in our lives on a daily basis as we keep His commandments and seek to be obedient to the whisperings of the Spirit.

I reiterate, it is important for us to let the Lord be in charge of things. We can exercise faith all day long, but if we also want to be in control of the outcome and the timing, we will usually find ourselves gravely disappointed with the end result. The only thing that we can give the Lord that is purely ours to give is our agency, our "desire for or sense of control." But by giving that to the Lord and letting Him be in charge of our lives, He shows us just how much better our lives can be.

Promise of Miracles

In a CES fireside talk given by Elder Dallin H. Oaks in May of 2000, he points out that "miracles are not available for the asking." The Lord knows when intervention is in our best interest and when it is not. We have no way of knowing that, so we have to trust that He will do what He can when it is in our best interests for it to happen. In Doctrine and Covenants 42:48 it says: "It shall come to pass that he that hath faith in me to be healed, and is not appointed unto death, shall be healed." We are still told to call the Elders in to bless the sick, but we cannot command the Lord to do something that is not in our best interests, which is knowledge only God has.

Sydney S. Reynolds, First Counselor in the Primary General Presidency gave a talk in general conference in 2001 and shared this story:

> One day I was frantically trying to complete some assignments and prepare for a trip. I had just been down to the laundry area of the dorm to move my clothes from the washer to the dryer. Unfortunately, all the dryers were in use, and they all had many minutes to go. I went back upstairs discouraged, knowing by the time those dryers finished, I had to be on the road. I had barely returned to my room when I felt prompted to go back downstairs and check the laundry again. Foolishness, I thought—I had just been there, and I didn't have time. But because I was trying to listen, I went. Two of the dryers were empty—and I was able to meet all my commitments. Could the Lord possibly have been concerned about smoothing my way in such a small but, to me, important matter? I have learned since

> through many such experiences that the Lord will help us in every aspect of our lives when we are trying to serve Him and do His will.

This story shared by Sister Reynolds illustrates how seamlessly the Lord works small miracles into our lives, if we will only listen to the Spirit and follow His promptings. Notice how she had to willingly give up control of the situation (over which she had no control anyway) before the miracle was able to be given to her. She "knew" there were no dryers available because she had just looked at them. But she was willing to follow the seemingly contradictory counsel of the Spirit. That is why she was able to accomplish what she needed to do.

No monopoly on miracles

Miracles are the privilege of anyone who puts their trust in God, and relinquishes control to Him. If you look in the New Testament at those who followed Jesus around from place to place you will realize that many, if not most were not baptized members of His church. It was their faith that allowed Him to work miracles in their lives.

The Lord will work His wonders in the lives of all his children, of any religion, as long as they believe he can and will help them. The same rules still apply, all miracles will be done in the Lords own time and in the Lord's own way, but grant them he will to all who believe.

The sacred nature of miracles

As I mentioned earlier, miracles, especially the major miracles, should be treated with great reverence. Elder Oaks in his CES talk says this:

> Although we are generally counseled not to speak of sacred things like the miracles we have witnessed, there are times when the Spirit prompts us to share these experiences, sometimes even in a setting where our account will be published. The miracles written in the scriptures were obviously intended to be shared, usually to strengthen the faith of those who already believed. Modern servants of the Lord have also felt impressed to describe miraculous events to strengthen the faith of believers. Many have been published.

Think back in the New Testament at all the times that amazing things happened to Mary, the mother of Jesus. What it says after each occurrence of something wonderful is that she "pondered in her heart." Miracles are sacred. They are not meant to be advertised. When we openly discuss that which is sacred and should be safeguarded in

our hearts, we soil the experience and ruin the good it can do us. These experiences are meant to bolster our faith and strengthen our resolve to be obedient to the Lord.

Miracles are also meant to strengthen our faith. The other day I was reading in the Book of Jacob in the Book of Mormon. In Jacob 4:6-8 it says:

> 6 Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea.
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> 7 Nevertheless, the Lord God showeth us our weakness that we may know that it is by his grace, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things.
>
> 8 Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God.

What a wonderful and humble man! He used the witnesses he had received through the little miracles of answered prayers in his life to strengthen his faith in the Lord. Eventually he says that their faith became so strong that it seemed almost natural to be able to command the trees and mountains, and even the waves of the sea to obey them through their priesthood.

I encourage you to read both articles I have linked to the bottom of this article. They are filled with wonderful information about miracles and how they work in our lives. I will close with this quote from Sister Reynolds:

> We do not always understand the reasons behind the tests that come with mortality. But our faith has grown, and perhaps yours has too, as we have watched loved ones, friends, and people we know only by reputation endure with faith in the Lord the most severe trials. They, too, know the God of miracles and witness in their extremity that whatever the future holds for them, the Lord knows them and loves them and is blessing them. They are sealed to Him and to each other forever, and they are willing to submit their wills to His.
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> How have they come to such a point? How do we access the quiet miracle that the Lord works as He transforms us, His children, into worthy heirs of the kingdom of God? I believe it is made possible because “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John

3:16). I believe it comes as we yield to the enticings of the Spirit, put off the natural man, and are filled with the love of God (see Mosiah 3:19).

Additional Resources:

Miracles – Elder Dallin H. Oaks Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

A God of Miracles – Sydney S. Reynolds, First Counselor in the Primary General Presidency

Click the link below to

print a PDF copy of the article.

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