

# Steps to Miracles

#0088

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—March 16, 1973

I have something interesting to read. It came from a friend of mine a couple thousand miles away, in a little self-supporting institution. This is just six days old:

“We came up to yesterday still lacking a few hundred dollars of having enough to pay our bills. There was nothing for the faculty allowance for February. They usually get thirty dollars a month each. This morning, a brother attended our church service and gave us a check for \$2,200 marked: ‘For Teacher’s Salaries.’ Oh, for more faith.”

That’s my text. Remember, that’s less than a week old.

Would you like to have an experience like that? These things don’t just happen; they’re *planned*. First, they have to be planned in Heaven. And if I had my life to live over again, I would not choose to miss seeing miracles of this kind. I have seen at least one thousand miracles in my life. And I’m not talking about the ordinary working of divine providence. I mean the unusual interpositions of God working. I rejoice that many other people are learning how to work with God to see Him work miracles. Would you like to see Him work miracles? Some of you are seeing it.

I’m going to study with you tonight the *road* to miracles. There’s a road to take to miracles just as there’s a road to take to Chattanooga or Atlanta or Nashville or Memphis. There is a road to take to *get* there. Someone might think it’s a *rocky* road; it *is*. Some might think it’s a *narrow* road: it *is*. Some might think it’s a *steep* road: it *is*. It’s *all* of those.

I read God’s invitation to us to enter into partnership with Him:

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” Isaiah 55:8–9.

God’s ways are not our ways; our ways are not God’s ways. If we are going to walk with God, we’ll have to walk a different road from the road we are *used* to. Which would you rather do: take *your* road or take *God’s* road? You see, our minds will have to be changed so that they learn to work with God.

God had a man once that He wanted to use to lead Israel from Egypt to Canaan. When Moses was 40 years old, he accepted God's invitation. He quit government service and started to work for the kingdom of Heaven. But he started to use the methods of earth to advance the interests of Heaven. He used his human reason, the methods he had learned in the military schools of Egypt. And he *meant* all right, he was perfectly *sincere*, but he made a flop.

It was a good thing he *did*. God took him out into the desert and swept that out of him. And, thank God, there amid the mountains of Midian, Moses learned God's ways. As the result, he spent the closing 40 years of his life in successful leadership of two million people from Egypt to Canaan.

It was a wonderful trip. But all the way along, God had to work miracles. When they got to the Red Sea, the waters were rolling. How were they going to get through? There were no boats. There was a menacing enemy army behind. There were mountains on either side. What could they do? God said to Moses, Tell the children of Israel to go *forward*. What an impossible command. But did it work? Yes. Do you know why it worked? Because they were doing what God told them to do.

Some other people tried it just a few minutes later, and they got drowned. So, just because you see somebody having miracles happen, don't conclude that you can do what they're doing and get the same results. God works miracles for those whom He chooses when they are doing what He has asked them to do. God told Israel to go through the Red Sea, but He never inspired the Egyptians to go in after them. That was a foolish mistake on their part.

Israel got out in the desert. Imagine trying to take two million people through a desert. Pretty soon, they ran out of food. I suppose there were many wise heads that wagged and thought that Moses should have thought of this before he ever left Egypt. He knew they didn't have enough bread to last across the desert. What were they going to do? Had Moses figured that out before he left? Who did? God. And at the right time, the manna fell, and it kept falling for 40 years, six days a week—twice as much on the preparation day, and none on Sabbath. Thus it was evident every week that this was not happenstance, it was a miracle. God was doing things for Israel.

When they didn't have water, God told Moses to strike the most impossible-looking place that you could think of—a hard rock. Out of that rock that he struck came water. And all through their journey, as they went from place to place, from the desert rocks the waters gushed out. God was working a miracle.

There were other miracles. And all this was to prepare them for the conquest of Canaan. When they got there at the end of the 40 years, the River Jordan was overflowing its banks. God could have led them there at a time when it would have been easier to ford the River Jordan. But He deliberately brought them there at a time when the river was overflowing its banks. Why? That men might learn how God does things. God delights to work miracles for His people.

See the promise God gave to Moses early in the trip from Egypt to Canaan:

“And He said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the LORD: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee” Exodus 34:10.

Don't you wish you could have lived back there and seen all that? I don't. I would rather be alive right *now*. “Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see.” And all that we have seen is but the prelude. Oh, if we will come into line, there is no limit to what God will do. But we have to learn how He works. If we are going to walk with Him the road to miracles, we must be prepared to take the steep, the rough, the narrow road, and not turn back.

There are a few words that helped me to understand the road to miracles. We will start with the word *vision*.

Jesus told His disciples:

“Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” John 4:35.

God is not working miracles just to satisfy our curiosity or to amuse us. He is not doing something on a stage while people sit and clap. No, He wants us to participate; He wants us to see a need and fill up.

That vision is to lead to a *burden*. A burden is more than a desire. It is a sense of mission, a recognition of a commission from God. Moses was given that burden there at the burning bush. God told him to go deliver Israel.

Jesus called His disciples. And you and I, as we see about us the needs of suffering humanity, as we see the sick and those tied up with habits that keep them from health and happiness and hope, as we see all these things, God puts a burden on us to do something about it.

That burden is to lead us to *prayer*. If we rush into the work without prayer, we may make Moses' mistake. We may use our own methods, or methods we have seen somebody else use. Jesus longs to have us come to Him in prayer.

Christ was our example when He was here. Carrying out His Father's work, He spent much time in prayer. He knew that in our humanity, it would be impossible for Him to carry out His mission unless He sought the Lord earnestly. Can we do less? Oh, that God may teach us the power that there is in prayer.

I want you to see a wonderful promise on prayer:

“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” Matthew 21:22.

Prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock Heaven's storehouse where are treasured the boundless resources of omnipotence. This was the key that opened up the storehouse, and this wonderful miracle a week ago happened. This is the key that Moses used again and again in the exodus. When Israel was thrown into panic at the Red Sea, Moses cried to the Lord. When they murmured when the food ran out, Moses cried to the Lord. When they asked what they should do for water, Moses cried to the Lord. Prayer is one of the essential steps in the road to miracles. Those who skip this step will never reach the top. There is *more* to miracles than prayer, but there are no miracles *without* prayer.

The way we learn to do things is by *doing* them. The way we learn to meet problems is by *having* them. The way we learn to swim is to be *in* the water. Some of you are having problems. What are you doing with those problems? Are you merely saying? What shall I do? Or are you saying, "I wonder when *they* will get around to solving my problems," whoever they may be? This is what many in Israel did back there in the days of the exodus. They were always wondering when *Moses* was going to do something. Is there some human being or some committee that you are looking to, to solve your problems? Oh, it's a wonderful thing to learn that you can go to God and lock yourself in with Him in the closet of communion, and there in the secret place of prayer, you can win victories that no human being can interfere with. You and God are a majority when you are on your knees and claiming His promises.

I trust that the abundance of opportunities and facilities and means that God has brought us to and brought to us shall not defeat God's purpose in teaching us to pray. Wouldn't it be too bad if God had to cut off the food so we'd learn to pray? Wouldn't it be too bad if He had to give us drought so we'd learn to pray? Wouldn't it be too bad if He had to cut off the supply of money? God may cut down our supply of this or that or the other thing that we have tended to rely on. But in every difficulty, we are to see a call to prayer. That is what these difficulties are for.

The next step after prayer is *effort*. There is a shorter way to spell effort—W-O-R-K. The same Jesus Who was our example in prayer was our example in effort. Hear Him as He says to His disciples:

"I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" John 9:4.

Jesus was no hermit cut off from the needs of suffering humanity. His sense of need led Him to prayer. But there in prayer, His soul was urged to go out and go to *work*. This is the kind of prayer that you and I are to enter into with Him. Unless our prayer experience leads to effort, it is sterile. Prayer is designed to prepare us for earnest effort in soul-winning and in practical things in solving the problems of life. The mechanic may meet a problem with an engine. He may pray. But does he stand there wondering when the angels will come and assemble the gears? No. Having prayed in faith, he goes to work. The farmer prays. But as he prays, he goes to *work*. So with soul-winning and with every other experience.

But now we're headed for a miracle. Do you know why we need a miracle? Because the thing we are trying to do is bigger than any human effort can surround. I feel sorry for the man who has a job as small as he is. Oh friends, I thank God that He has challenged you and me with a task far beyond our capacity. He is calling us up that road to miracles.

But there is another step before we get to the miracle. When God has inspired us with a vision, and laid upon us a burden when in earnest prayer we have sought Him about that task, and then put all we have into doing the work, then comes the acid test—the call to *sacrifice*.

Do you mean that, after I have worked hard for something, then I must give it away? Do you mean that, after I have toiled and sweat, then I must take the money that I have earned or the food that I have grown and I must share it with others to the point where I myself am poor? This is what Jesus did. He invited His disciples to share that with Him. They shared His frugal fare, we are told, and like Him were sometimes hungry and often weary. He said to them all:

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” Luke 9:23.

Oh friends, we are not yet ready for miracles until, on top of prayer and effort, we take the step of *sacrifice*. God is not working miracles for lazy people. Neither is He working miracles for people who are industrious but keep what they earn. God is working miracles for people who will work as though it all depended on them, and then sacrifice. Then and only then expect God to work a miracle.

That's the road to miracles. There is something that underlies the whole thing—*love*. It is love that leads us to lift up our eyes and look on the field. It is love that lays on our hearts a burden to help others. It is love that summons us to prayer, and leads us to claim the promises that God's name may be honored, and His work extended. It is love that leads us to effort. It makes the burden light. It makes the yoke easy. Toil becomes a delight to the one whose heart is filled with love. It is love and love alone that can turn sacrifice into joy. This is the love of a mother for her child. And greater than the love of any mother is *God's* love for you and me.

It is that love which we are to receive from Him and impart to the needy around us. It is love that inspires every upward step. And when God finds human beings that will take with Him these steps, He delights to crown their ministry with miracles, one after the other. This is what He did for Moses. This is what He did for Elijah and Elisha. This is what He did in the ministry of Christ here on earth. This is what He did in the ministry of the apostles in the early church. This is what He is waiting to do in an unprecedented manner in the closing hours of human history as the remnant church enters upon the final triumph.

Friends, shall we walk with God? Would you like to see miracles? Financial miracles? Miracles of healing? Miracles of solving human problems? Miracles of saving souls? Oh, there is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, by putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit.

Would you pick out mountains for a highway? Most engineers choose to go *around* the mountains or *through* them. Do you know why? Yeah, it's *difficult*. Some mountains are impossible, from the human standpoint. But listen to the thoughts of God made audible:

“And I will make all My mountains a way, and My highways shall be exalted” Isaiah 49:11.

Mountains are difficulties—problems, obstacles, impossibilities. God says, If you will come with Me and put everything else aside, you and I will scale the mountains and make them the highway of miracles.

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