

Ducks in a Row

From The Immediacy of Miracles: Toward a Better Understanding of the Elephant in the Room

By C. D. Hildebrand

The title of this chapter could have been, “God Helps Those Who Help Themselves.” We often ask God for a miracle and then try to figure out what we can do to make it happen. Perhaps we subtly think that God can’t do the miracle we need until we get everything in order. We *should* take steps toward better health, work hard to provide for our families, and try to improve relationships, but most people can do this naturally.

God *does* help those who help themselves, but He is an expert at helping those who *cannot* help themselves and even those who aren’t doing a very good job at helping themselves. Sometimes we face situations that we cannot fix. We have tried and planned, and it seems no matter what we do, we make no progress.¹ We need a miracle—for God to do for us what is impossible for *us* to do.

Even knowing this, some of us start planning.

Now, God might indeed speak a plan into our minds—that’s a miracle in itself, but might our propensity toward figuring things out and making things work sometimes get in His way?

When we were newly married, we needed a car. We figured out how much we had to spend but couldn’t find a car for that amount. So we prayed and asked God to help us. To our amazement, a sister in our church who had no way of knowing that we needed a car (because only we knew) called us and told us that she believed God wanted her to sell us her car for a certain amount. That amount was the exact weird amount we had available. We were completely amazed.

When we bought our first house, we had only a tiny down payment, and could only pay a very small amount per month. We found out about a house for sale near the campus where we did ministry. We were able to get into the house for the amount we had to put down and for the amount we were able to pay. It truly was a miracle for us.

Later, my uncle, who was an experienced electrician, sent a crew to bring electricity into our garage so that we could hold campus meetings there. All of these were miracles of God.

When God miraculously opened a door for us again to do ministry in Chico, California, my mind went into planning mode. Anyone who knows me well knows that God made me a planner and organizer, but this time, He spoke something different to my heart.

¹ For a detailed study on these types of situations, read [Overcoming the Overwhelming](#) by C. D. Hildebrand

“Cathy, I want you to put your hands in your pockets on this one, and I will show you what I can do.”

I was ready to get all the ducks in a row for a successful ministry in Chico, but God had other ideas that we couldn't imagine, which He showed us and which we carried out. Many people there were ready for the gospel of grace, and all we had to do was teach the truth, and He did the rest. It was beautiful to behold, and this became a pattern. Teach the truth. Let the Holy Spirit do the miracles. What rest!

1 Corinthians 15:10

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

It is natural for us to want to do what we can. God doesn't oppose that, but let us not have it in our minds that He **only** helps us when we get all our ducks in a row first. But when we truly and simply rest in His ability and willingness to help us, we can live without the pressure of trying to fix things ourselves. When we are at peace in our minds, we can more clearly hear Him guiding us, and to our amazement, He does for us those things we cannot do for ourselves. Before we know it, we are on the other side of the problem and even in a position to help others. Paul understood this.

One perfect example in Scripture is the woman with the issue of blood. We read that she had spent all her money on physicians but had only grown worse—she'd done everything she could. Perhaps some of us have felt this way after going from one doctor or dietician to another seeking to find wholeness in our bodies, but even after thousands of dollars and so much time, we aren't much better. Like this woman, we feel we have run out of options. But she said to herself that if she could just touch the hem of His garment, she would be healed, and she did. Her faith in Jesus' ability and willingness to heal her brought about the supernatural help she needed, and she was immediately and completely healed.

Let us not wait until we have no other avenue but Jesus to help us. Let us begin with Jesus and go from there.

Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, ⁴⁴ came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

⁴⁵ *And Jesus said, “Who touched Me?”*

47 Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

48 And He said to her, “Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”

Luke 8:43-45, 47-48



Devotional Study Guide Journal

1. Describe a situation in your life in which God did something for you that you could not have done for yourself.
2. What situations are you facing now that you realize need supernatural breakthroughs? Do you catch yourself thinking that before God can help, you must get “all your ducks in a row”? Can you think of how you might “let go and let God”?
3. God wants us to specifically make our requests known to Him. What are your specific requests? Ask Him. He will guide you.