

Is the Seer Anointing a Natural Gift or a Honed Skill?

That Robin Williams Movie

We just watched a cool movie again the other weekend, *August Rush*. There are some great spiritual messages in that film! The young musical prodigy hears things nobody else hears and writes them down. It's amazing, and everyone is blown away by the beautiful rhapsodies and symphonies he's captured and put on paper.

The little boy says the music is all around us and asks his mentor, "Can everyone hear the music?" His mentor replies, "Not everyone is listening."

That's the revelation. The spirit realm is all around us. Can everyone hear God's voice? Yes, but not everyone is listening. Can everyone see angels? Yes, but not everyone is looking. The more we listen, the more we'll hear. The more we look, the more we'll see.

Gift of Seeing?

I received an email after a Charisma angel article came out that said, "Wow, I wish God would give me your gift of seeing. God, are You listening? I just really want that vision imparted to me!"

While I appreciate her desire for spiritual gifts, a cultivation of skill is also required to properly unwrap and activate the gifts we've already been given. The Bible says "because of practice [we] have [our] senses trained" (Heb. 5:14 b, NASB).

Now I know that every good thing comes from above, so I'm grateful and thankful He's given me spiritual eyes to see. But here's the thing: What's the biggest difference between me and Michael Phelps?

He swims, and I know how to swim too. Granted, he's got some natural gifting and God-given ability. But in addition to that, and possibly just as important if not more so, is time. He has basically lived in a swimming pool for the last two decades. He's spent his whole life training, practicing and working that gift.

What about Arnold Schwarzenegger? He has the same number of muscles in his body as I have. Sure God's given him some gifting or bent, but he also lived in the gym. He invested time in body building, because that's what he valued. That's what was important to him.

Gift of Snowboarding?

I can't say to God, "Well, if You want me to be an Olympic gold medalist snowboarder, then tomorrow morning I should wake up and supernaturally have all the right muscles developed, all the important jumps and tricks magically in my repertoire and skill set."

We know it doesn't work that way. We know they have to practice, and they have to fall. They make 10,000 mistakes, 10,000 tries and attempts and crashes and fails. And then, after hours and hours of time and life put into it, breaking their bones from trying and trying before they mastered their sport, they win the gold medal. Then, they're the best they can be.

It's the same way with things of the spirit. Looking. Listening. It gets easier the more you do it. And it's OK to mess up. I use the snowboarding analogy because I have messed up with that. I've fallen trying to stretch myself and go outside my comfort zone and do something I wasn't sure I could

do, snowboarding. And what happened? I broke my back. Literally, a fractured vertebra. So do I give up? Do I never snowboard again? Of course not.

The Bigger the Risk, the Greater the Glory

My husband, Leo, is a perfect example of this. He was born and raised in Zambia, so growing up in South Central Africa didn't afford him many opportunities for winter sports. Good thing he came to university in the beautiful winter wonderland that is upstate New York! My brother Josh and I got to introduce him to all kinds of fun things like sledding, ice skating and best of all, snowboarding.

That's one of the things I love about my husband. It seems like lots of times we're tempted to stop learning new things or cultivating new skills once we've grown up. If we haven't learned something by the time we're adults, often we don't ever bother trying. Not Leo! He's constantly learning and growing. And he always goes all in.

Well, in case you've never tried snowboarding, I'll enlighten you. It involves falling. A *lot* of falling.

But with Josh's awesome teaching, some lessons on the slopes, a couple instructional DVDs and a ton of time playing on the hills, now Leo's one of the best riders out there. Why? Because he tried. And he practiced. And he fell and fell and fell again—just like anyone who learns to snowboard does. He got a bloody face. He got bumps and bruises. But he was humble, persevering and didn't give up.

And now? Now it's really pretty breathtaking to watch him carve his way down the side of a mountain. He's actually a better rider than I am, because he doesn't mind falling. He loves going fast, easily rides switch, and enjoys black diamonds (the most narrow, steepest trails). He's amazing!

Multiplying Talents (Matthew 25)

I hope it's easy to see how all these examples in the natural translate to our cultivation of spiritual giftedness and multiplying the skills God has given us. We might be tempted to say, "Oh, healing? That's Randy Clark's gift." "Oh, hearing God? That's Mark Virkler's gift." "Oh, seeing in the spirit? That's Charity's gift." But the only way any of us have gotten good at anything is through practice and time and training.

Just as Leo watched snowboarding DVD instructors, we have video training on hearing and seeing in the spirit. Might you make a mistake? Might you be stretched so far you don't quite get it perfectly right the first time? Sure! Is that okay? Yes! A million times, yes.

If we don't try, we'll never learn. If we don't take time to practice, it will never get easier. If we don't take the initiative to cultivate the skills necessary to move in the realm of the supernatural, it will forever remain out of reach.

You can do this. It's not just special gifts bestowed on a few. These are skills that can be learned by everyone. *You* can see the invisible. *You* can hear the sounds of heaven, and *you* can walk by the spirit every day of your life.

We're going to spend forever in eternity basking in Jesus' loving presence. Seeing the compassion in His eyes. Hearing the laughter in His voice. Heaven is too awesome to wait around until after we've left earth to experience it. By living into the spirit realm now, forever can start today.
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