

A Supernatural Community on Solid Ground

Throughout the book of Acts, in almost every place where we see phenomenal church growth, we see it as a result of supernatural signs and wonders. There is no other game plan with God. We don't see growth in the early church after the elders put together a great church growth strategy. Jesus didn't stay in Jerusalem until you receive programs that will fulfill your church purpose. He didn't stay in Jerusalem until you put together a really beautiful Easter production to reach your community. No, he said, "stay in Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." The Holy Spirit must be our number one priority for our lives and churches. Seeing His power released through our lives to touch the sick, dying, oppressed, and lost must be our main purpose.

Throughout the book of Acts you see the same pattern: Miracles and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom. I think one reason we see the body of Christ shying away from going for the signs, wonders, and miracles is because of all the other baggage that has come with it. Let's face it there has been a lot of weird stuff done in the name of the supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and, because of this, Christian leaders many times have thrown out the baby with the bath water settling for dead, dry, religious "church" rather than the fresh, life giving, move of the Holy Spirit. However, again if we look through the book of Acts at each time church growth is mentioned it is a direct result of Holy Spirit supernatural phenomenon. It has happened after miracles of healing, manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and demonstrations of God's power. Look at Acts 2:41. It says in that verse, "and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." What was the cause of this? One hundred and twenty disciples of Christ with flames of fire resting upon their head in the midst of a mighty rushing wind of the Spirit speaking in tongues of men and angels. The people gathered and "wondered" and Peter preached the greatest 30 second sermon and three thousand were saved. Why? Because the supernatural manifestation backed up and confirmed that Peter was preaching the truth and it cut to their heart. By the way can anyone tell me where the scriptural bases within the Old Testament is, the only Bible the disciples had at that time, for having flames of fire manifest on your head? Is it possible that we can have manifestations of the Holy Spirit that aren't specifically found in the Bible but are ultimately in line with His purpose for being a wonder to draw people to himself and a sign we are heading in the right direction? Just a thought. As you go on through the book of Acts you see in Acts 4:4 five thousand saved as a result of a miracle of healing with the lame man at the gate Beautiful. Acts 5:12, "signs and wonders wrought among the people," and in verse 14, "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes." Let's go on. Acts 6:7, "the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly," and what was going on at that time? "Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." Acts 8:5-6, "Philip went down to the city of

Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did." The list goes on and on. Study it for yourself. Everywhere you see people coming to Christ and cities being turned upside down for the Kingdom you see miracles and supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power.

So, again why does it seem such a controversial thing within the body of Christ in the 21st century when we talk about these things or an evangelist or church is operating in this power, when in the 1st century church it was the norm? As I stated before, I believe it is because of all the extra stuff that has come along with it. If we are honest there have been a lot of abuses, strange things, and character flaws within those we have seen moving in the power. In response to the signs and wonders done by the apostles in Acts 5:12 the unbelievers had great reverential respect for the church. It says, "no man joined them, and the people magnified them." In other words, they knew that the believers were the real deal and because of the respect for the church and the presence and power of God they saw they didn't take joining with them lightly. They were either added to the church as a true believer that converted or they openly acknowledged out of godly fear that they weren't one of them. No half stepping here. The problem now a days is that, one, everyone is a "Christian" that you run into, or two, rather than being held in godly reverence and fear we, especially in the charismatic and Pentecostal circles, are more of a spectacle than something spectacular. Now understand, I don't mean this when it comes to those who have issues with the ways someone looks, their mannerisms, personality, boldness, or ability to push the envelope and shake up our nice little religious traditions. After all John the Baptist came out of the wilderness eating locusts and dressed in camel's hair. If the world, or even more so, the church, is going to gawk and mock at that, well "so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." To me, that isn't the issue. What is the issue and what has been seen in leaders and probably more so in everyday charismatic people is the flakiness, lack of stability and foundation, and character issues and failures. Let's face it we aren't operating in the level of the glory that the first century church operated in, and could it be that it is because we haven't proven that we could handle that level of glory. That we haven't laid the solid foundation and inner integrity to handle the weight of that glory within the body of Christ. Now, I have no problem with anyone, whoever they are, that is willing to go all in and press in for the supernatural power of God, but we have to know that we are going to be tested. We are no better than any of they that have had issues. We all need God's grace daily and our flesh is there to pull us down at any moment if we do not take heed. We all have the blood of Adam coursing through our veins.

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Thank You Partners for your Generous Support!

Last month we put the call out to anyone that could make a special donation to help us with our upcoming trips to Africa. We want to personally thank each and everyone of you that gave. Praise the Lord, we have completely set up our trip to South Africa and will be ministering in a number of churches over there. We thank you for believing in the vision God has given to April and I to see the world touched with fresh revival fire. If you are one of those that gave \$50 or more you will find a copy of the book Strengthening Yourself in the Lord by Bill Johnson enclosed.

REVIVAL RESOURCE

OUR GIFT TO YOU



Prophetic Worship by **Alberto & Kimberly Rivera**. This couple is one of the most anointed prophetic worship leaders we have ever come across. If you have never heard any of their worship CDs you are in for a treat. The album we have enclosed in this month's newsletter is *Soaking—Live at GC* and is also a free download on their website www.rainingpresence.com. It is our prayer that this CD we are sowing into your life will lead you into a rich season of worship in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Ministry Reports

Miami, FL — Emmanuel Church led by Pastor Humberto Cruz in Miami, FL held a week long revival conference from August 4th through the 8th. The speakers for the conference included Tom Scarrella, Gabriel Kost, Angel Nunez, Oscar Aquero, Guillermo Maldonado, and yours truly, Ben Naughton. I preached in three of the morning services and gave a message that the Lord spoke to me called "On the Banks of the River Jordan." I spoke on how this generation is the Joshua generation with the spirit and power of Elijah. It was a call to the youth and those that are young in heart and hungry for God's presence. It was about how we've heard for years about this upcoming generation but now we are literally on the banks of the Jordan ready to cross over into the promises of God to see revival

I think the main thing to emphasize is, yes we need the power of God and all the supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit operating in the church and through each member of the body of Christ, as uncomfortable as that makes some feel, but at the same time we need to couple that with an Apostolic foundation that will bring stability. I believe one of the main problems in some of the charismatic movements and streams has been that, yes the glory and presence of God has been awesome, but [there it always](#) seems like those treading out there have been on shaky ground, not having much stability or security. Again, I'm not trying to make this a blanket statement because I know that there are many wonderful generals of the faith that are impeccable leaders blazing the way and bringing about solid communities of charismatic faith as well as being pillars within the body of Christ. But I think the bottom line is that we need more of them.

So, how was the early church able to operate in this? What type of foundation did they have to be able to handle the weight of God's glory on their lives while still remaining solid? I believe the key is found in Acts 2:42-43. It says that, "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many signs and wonders were done by the apostles." I believe that where we need to get to is a place where we have the supernatural manifestations of the glory of God, with sign, wonders, miracles, and demonstrations of God's power coupled with the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. It was the apostles that laid down and taught the foundations of faith and supernatural living out of the Word of God. Notice the people continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. They studied to show themselves approved and were day in and day out in the Word and its teachings. Taking it to another level it was the apostles that brought the mentoring or fathering that taught the parame-

ters of how the people were to live out the doctrine in their daily lives, how to exercise their spiritual gifts, and how to flow in the supernatural. This was the apostles' doctrine. Notice it also says they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. This isn't just mere friendship, but true fellowship with fellow believers and the apostles that brings accountability. In verse 46 it says they went house to house breaking bread. Take note that it didn't say the people hopped from church to church. They were a community of knit relationships that were there for one another. We must get to a place that has the solid foundation of the Apostolic doctrine, sound teaching, study of the Word, and accountability to keep us anchored down as we launch out into the deep and higher realms of prophetic revelation, manifestations of the glory, and supernatural signs, wonders, and miracles.

Cape Coral, FL—On August 17th I preached the Sunday morning service for First Church of God in Cape Coral, FL. Though it was predominantly an older congregation I held nothing back and declared we must follow the presence of God and not our religious traditions. I told them the Holy Spirit must be our #1 priority and the people received the word with joy and excitement.

Today we have a lot of things going on in the body of Christ. God is taking His people to new and higher dimensions of His glory. He is revealing himself to this world through His people with miracles of power, signs, and wonders, but with that can come a lot of other "poofy" stuff if we do not stay grounded and a lot of reproach if we do not keep our integrity. If precious gem stones and gold dust manifest as I preach a prophetic word from solid study of scripture and we see people healed and set free bringing them to saving faith in Christ, then bring it on with all its glitter. If people are taken into trances and angelic visitations occur while worshipping God and staying true to His word, then let the revelation come. But lets focus, especially those that are leaders, on becoming pillars of faith that people who are longing for the supernatural can come to in order to find security, stability, and apostolic structure to experience these areas of faith. Let's seek to couple even more so the wonders and signs with the apostolic doctrine and be a supernatural community on solid ground witnessing to the world. — BN

BNM Itinerary

<i>Centro Cristiano en Gracia y Espiritu</i> Miami, FL	9/6 - 9/7
<i>Oasis Revival Ministry</i> South Africa	9/13 - 9/14
<i>Saints of Service Church</i> South Africa	9-19 - 9/20
<i>First Assembly Cornerstone</i> Ft. Myers, FL	9/28 9&11 am
<i>Fire on the Prairie</i> Clarkfield, MN	10/3
<i>Clearwater Christian Church</i> Eau Claire, WI	10/4 - 10/5
<i>New Jerusalem Church</i> Miami, FL	10/ 25 - 26

Check our website for recent itinerary updates - www.BenNaughton.com



Ministry Needs:
MiniDV Camcorder—\$350
Laptop Computer—\$800
Firewire Card & Cable—\$100

Prayer Points

- Anointing and Open Heavens for Sings, Wonders, and Miracles
- For the Fires of Revival to be released in each church we minister
- Necessary finances to come in to do all God is calling us to do
- Hedge of Protection around Ben & April
- Ben & April to have greater intimacy with the Lord

Our Love Gift to You

For your **love gift of \$50 or more** this month, April and I want to sow into you the book [The Deeper Christian Life](#) by **Andrew Murray**. Andrew Murray was a leader in the revival in South Africa in the 19th century. Many of his books have become Christian classics and this book will surely lead you into that deeper relationship with the Lord your heart desires.

