

## God's Supernatural Power Draws Men to the Gospel

Acts 5:12-21 <sup>12</sup> Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. <sup>13</sup> None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. <sup>14</sup> And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, <sup>15</sup> so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. <sup>16</sup> The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

<sup>17</sup> But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy <sup>18</sup> they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. <sup>19</sup> But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, <sup>20</sup> "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life." <sup>21</sup> And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.

### ❖ Generosity and Deceitful Greed

- We see the early church functioning in unity and generosity
- **We also see some in the church that:**
  - Failed to Recognize the power of the Holy Spirit
  - And failed to keep themselves set apart from the world.
- **We see God step in:**
  - And God Himself takes Ananais and Saphira out of the church...
  - No second chances, nothing.
  - God ends their life.
- **And when He does...**
  - Fear strikes the church...
  - The people of the church realize God is here
  - **They know God as love and mercy through His Son Jesus...**
    - But they also see He is:
    - Mighty and powerful
    - And He takes the Purity of His church seriously...

### ❖ The Church is the Bride of Christ...

- **God is Jealous for the Love of His Bride**
  - Ananais and Saphirra had found lovers...
    - And their love was Money
    - And a name for themselves
  - They could have infected the whole church with this focus on self
- **We See Paul Speaking of the marriage relationship**
  - And He is telling men and women how they are to love each other...
  - Because their marriage is to be a representation of the love of Christ toward the church
  - He says in Eph:
    - Ephesians 5:25-28 <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

- **Ananais sin threatened the purity of the bride**
  - So God quickly took him out of the picture
- **What a Lesson for Us today!**
  - Do you ever consider your own sin...
    - Do you ever consider how your sin and corruption can infect the people around you
    - And how you can be responsible for others seeking this world more than Christ
  - Or... Are you someone who helps those around you grow closer to your God and King?
    - It is important to ask yourself these questions
- ❖ **Lets Look Back a little more before we move forward...**
  - **If you remember in Acts 4:23-31**
    - The believers are gathered together to exalt God in prayer and praise...
    - This is after they had been arrested and told not to preach in the name of Jesus
  - **They pray to their Sovereign God...**
    - They address Him in prayer saying...
      - **Sovereign Lord**
        - ◆ They see their God as one in total control over all things...
        - ◆ The air they breathe, the climate they live in
        - ◆ The leaders of the nations
        - ◆ Nothing can hinder Him from doing His will...
    - **They acknowledge that Israel and the Gentiles gather against Jesus...**
      - But it was according to His plan...
    - They themselves had seen God as Sovereign even in their own arrest...
      - And how God put them in a place to preach the gospel to the Leaders of the Temple
  - **They continue their prayer...**
    - And they ask God to give Boldness to continue to speak His Word...
    - And they say... **While you stretch out your hands to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy Servant Jesus.**
      - So, they are praying for God to continue healing and doing signs and wonders
      - God confirms He is hearing by causing the place they were praying in to
        - ◆ Shake with the power of the Holy Spirit
  - **Skip past Luke's defining of how the early church functioned in unity**
    - How they were generous and continued to testify
    - Then we see Luke get a little more specific in explaining the workings of the early church
    - He gives that great example of Barnabas and the horrible example of Annais and Saphirra.
  - **And we are now back picking up from the prayer prayed by the disciples...**
    - As they prayed for God to move through healing, signs and wonders...
    - Vs 12 confirms this to be happening...
    - VS 12 confirms that God has heard their prayer and is moving in a mighty Way...
- ❖ **1) Signs and Wonders**
  - **<sup>12</sup> Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico.**
  - **The apostles were doing miracles there at the temple...**
    - The same place they were told not to teach in the name of Jesus
    - And here they are under this covered walkway
    - **And they were performing signs, wonders and miracles...**
      - We do not know what all they were doing, but we see from the rest of the chapter

- That there were a lot of people being healed
- **Signs and Wonders Were being performed**
  - God is continuing to do many mighty and great things through His servants...
  - They are testifying of the resurrection...
  - **So, Now we have three witnesses that Jesus is the God of all creation and Savior of the World**
    - The apostles are bearing witness
    - The Holy Spirit is bearing witness
    - And the Signs, healings and Wonders are bearing witness that Jesus is who they say He is
- **Purpose of Signs and Wonders...**
  - **Vs 14... More than ever believers were added to the Lord**
  - So the end purpose was that people would come to know Jesus as Lord
  - **These “Miracles” are not sufficient to bring a person to Christ...**
    - To have a person get saved... Rather, they draw men to the gospel whereby they are saved
- **God Has Graciously Shown Man Miracles to Draw them to Him Through the Gospel...**
  - Today the workings of miracles are very Applicable to You... Very Important to you...
    - For Believers, it should increase our Faith...
  - For those that have yet to give their Life to Jesus through True Repentance and Faith...
    - God’s use of Miracles is to help bring you to God, through the gospel...
  - **Miracles are like:**
    - You are in a boat... and it is headed toward a huge water fall...
    - And someone is out there flagging you down, to get your attention...
    - And they may be waving a flag or something like that so you will listen to them...
    - And you notice... and you hear them say... your boat is headed toward a cliff...
    - So, you paddle to the shore and kept from harm...
  - When God does these things... He does them to grab people’s attention...
- **What About Miracles, Signs and Wonders and Healings...**
  - Do they happen today...? Because maybe I need one so it will help me believe...
  - Well, I do believe they happen today... But you may or may not have encountered one
- **But... You do Have the Witness of God’s Word...**
  - **You have Jesus throughout the Book of John**
    - Raising people from the dead
    - Healing lifelong lame men
    - Giving sight to the blind
    - Casting demons out of people
    - Knowing what people are thinking
    - Creating food out of nothing...
  - **And as you read the Bible you see that His enemies did not deny His power...**
    - They just called it Satanic... or did not understand it...
  - **There are even miracles and the resurrection of Jesus mentioned in books outside of the Bible...**
    - Books that were simply histories of the time...
- **So count yourself as one who, although you do not get to see some of them...**
  - **you have heard of them**
  - And that was enough for many people that came to Jesus...
  - They heard about a great healing that occurred...
  - And they came and **heard the gospel and give their life to Jesus...**
- **Others:**

- Would see the miracles and still deny the power behind them...
- So, do not be foolish and think that you must have sign to believe...
- Listen to the Holy Spirit today as He confirms the truth
- That Jesus is Lord of all heaven and earth, came to die, and rose from the dead...
  - For your sin, and for your life

➤ **BE CAREFUL:**

- Do not glance over the mighty works of God in the Bible...
- When you hear them preached on...
- Consider yourself in relation to the type of being that can do such things...
- **Consider yourself**
  - Your responsibility to this God that can do anything He wants...
  - If these things are true... what should your response to this Jesus be?

➤ **In Every Instance of something Supernatural that I have noticed in the Word...**

- Something about God has been made known...
- We namely see Jesus declaring Himself and His nature over and over in the book of John
- **And here in the book of Acts... every Supernatural moving of the Spirit**
  - Would be accompanied by people getting saved...
  - And they were getting saved from death and hell
  - Because they were hearing the gospel of Jesus spoken to them

➤ **There are Christians who believe the miraculous sign gifts have ceased and are no longer in operation**

- And there are many that believe only the apostles could do them
- They think that they are gifts that have died out long ago...
- And they miss out on the glorious way God exalts His power so the gospel is heard and believed
  - And We must be very careful when we tell people what God can or can not do...

❖ **2) Many Were Afraid to Join the Believers**

- <sup>13</sup> **None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem.**
- **Verse 13 seems like it is conflict with verse 14...**
  - None of the rest dare join them
  - Joined who?
    - ◆ The apostles and all the believers that gathered there under Solomon's Portico
- **Then in verse 14 we more than ever believers being added...**
  - But it is not a contradiction... We have to follow the story in context

➤ **Why didn't they dare join them?**

- Because Luke does not say... The people were afraid of the leaders...
  - And that did happen often... And still does today
  - **People worry about what man thinks more than God**
    - ◆ They care about the response of their family and friends...
    - ◆ So they trade eternal life for their own pride...
    - ◆ Be careful you do not do the same thing!

➤ **VS 13 is likely in response to the Discipline of Ananais and Sapphira**

- Word had spread... and it is possible that many that were thinking of attaching themselves
  - Changed their mind...
  - They realized, those Christians are for real...
  - You do not fake it for long with them

➤ **So, whereas before there may have been many curious people that decided to come into the church**

- There could have been a number of false believers, or curious people within the church
- And this is not unprecedented...
- There were many that John said believed Jesus...
- But later we see their belief was not a saving belief
- **So, I think we are seeing that people were not haphazardly joining the multitude of believers...**
  - If they did not truly believe they did not dare join with them...
  - Yet, they held the Christians in very high regard...
  - They saw the power, they saw the witness of the Christians...
  - And they thought much of the Christians...
- **But, this did not hinder God's plan of salvation for His children...**
  - You would think... God takes someone out because of their sin...
  - People would just stay away from that church...
  - And we see it as partly true...
- **But, God had even greater plans... to weed out all of the false believers...**
  - Those unwilling to give up their whole life...
  - Those fakers of belief in Jesus...
  - Those that came so they could make sure they had all their bases covered...
- **We see the result of the apostles preaching and doing the signs and wonders...**
  - People keep getting saved...
  - As a matter of Fact....

### ❖ 3) God Saves Even More People Than Before

- <sup>14</sup> **And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,**
- The purpose of God healing and showing signs and wonders... Salvation of men and women
- **People were seeing the power of God through the Apostles...**
  - They had prayed that these healings and signs and wonders
  - Would be done through the name of Jesus...
- **So they are exalting Jesus as God is healing people...**
  - The apostles and other believers are not taking any credit for what is happening...
  - They are pointing people right to Jesus
- **Men and Women were being saved...**
  - What a marvelous verse...
  - We see God working through human men, to bring His children into His Kingdom
  - **Fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children...**
    - Adulterers and chronic liars
    - Thieves of all kinds were being saved
    - Blasphemers... Those with hateful thoughts...
    - Murderers were being added to the kingdom of God
- **He continues to do the same thing today...**
  - All of us have the power within us to help add believers to the Lord...
  - What? We have power within us?
    - That sounds a little too Star Wars ish to me you say...
  - **Paul tells us in Romans 1:16**
    - **For I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God to all who believe...**
    - If you have been saved... and you have a correct knowledge of the gospel
    - You have a power from God unlike any on the earth
      - ◆ And it can take a person held tightly in the grip of sin and death and deliver him to God...
      - ◆ And notice I say the power is from God...

◆ The Holy Spirit is working in and through you when the gospel is spoken

- **God saves people through the witness of the gospel**
  - And you can be an active part in seeing people escape death
  - What an amazing privilege

❖ **4) Many People Were Drawn to the Gospel Because of Healings...**

- <sup>15</sup>so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. <sup>16</sup>The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

➤ **So verse 15 and 16 are just a very straight forward set of verses**

- They tell us what is happening...
- The power of God was so great... that people from all over were coming to the apostles
- They were laying their sick friends and family in the streets...
- **They were hoping that Peter's shadow would fall on them and they would be healed**
  - Luke never says his shadow ever healed anyone...
  - So do not take that from the text...
  - That is likely some eastern religious thought about power in a person's shadow...
- **And they were coming from all over...**
  - Not just Jerusalem...
  - So we see the Word of the Gospel and the power of healings has spread into other towns

➤ **An Amazing Statement...**

- **And they were all healed...**
- They were bringing sick people and people with unclean spirits (meaning demon possessed people)
- **And they were all healed...**
- **WoW... God was not turning anyone away...**
  - The mercy of God was being shown to people through His servants the apostles

➤ **God has answered their prayer...**

- If you look back to ch 4 and their prayer after their arrest
  - And we have already made mention of this...
  - They prayed specifically that God would stretch out His hand and do these things
  - Through the name of His Servant Jesus...

➤ **Which leads me to a question that some may have...**

- **Should we pray like this?**
  - Should we ask God to perform healings, or signs or wonders...
  - And the reason for the hesitation we may think, is that Jesus was unhappy with some
    - ◆ That asked for a sign...
    - ◆ And He called one group an evil and adulterous generation because they asked...
    - ◆ But notice, their motives were not like the apostles...
      - Their motives were... show me something... prove it to me..
- **The apostles' motive was the same motive as God...**
  - That people would come to know Jesus...
  - They had no other reason for praying...
  - They did not want the glory for themselves...
  - They wanted help proving to people that Jesus is who He says He is...
- **So they prayed for signs...**
- **And we should pray for God to move as well...**
  - And we should pray it earnestly and consistently and expectantly

- **So Here is an application**
  - Because we may wonder... how does this apply to us?
  - **The Early Church saw great things because they knew God intimately**
    - They spent time with Jesus everyday... They were in fellowship with Him consistently
    - They believed and trust in His power and might...
    - They were obedient to Him in their actions
  - **They expected God to move and to exalt His name...**
    - They knew they could go to Him with their prayers and He would hear them
  - **This is lost on us today...**
    - We do not pray because we do not expect anything from God.
      - ◆ We do not expect anything from God, because we are not in close fellowship with Him...
      - ◆ Therefore, we do not even ask for God to move...
      - ◆ Or maybe we are afraid He will not do what we have asked
        - And those that heard us pray will think our God does not hear and is not real
    - **Or when we do pray, we ask it with little or no faith...**
      - ◆ Just something we do because we think we should
- **We need to get to know God better...**
  - And expect that God can and will move in great ways...
- **So Let us not be afraid that God will not answer our prayers...**
  - Let us step out on Faith and begin to ask God to move...
  - **Let's be like Shadrach, Meshac and Abednego before they are thrown into the fiery furnace**
    - They said their God could deliver them...
    - But even if He did not, they would still not bow to the golden statue
- **One Specific Prayer we will pray is for the area of Talisheek**
  - We go out there next Sunday...
  - And we will be inviting people in the area this week...
  - Could we see God revive many in that area?
  - Will people come?
  - **Let's not just pray generic prayers:**
    - Where we just say, whatever your will is God...
    - That is often a mask for a lack of faith
  - **Let us specifically pray for the Holy Spirit to move in great power**
    - And that God will move in the hearts of the people to get them to come
    - And when they hear the gospel their hearts will be changed and they will be saved
  - **Let us pray for us to SEE God move in a mighty way...**
    - That we can all see and document and rejoice over...
- **Let us pray that the Word gets out around town**
  - And the Spirit moves throughout the whole area as people tell of the wonderful things God is doing
- **When We come across sick people**
  - Let us pray for their healing and expect God to do it according to His will
  - Let us pray that God will do something unexpected to draw people to the gospel
  - Like a light draws a moth

## ❖ Invitation

- Pray for God to do great things...
- Respond to Jesus today... to His call to forsake all things and Follow Him
- Follow Jesus today