

Pentecostal Power: Consistent Signs and Wonders Among the People

Acts 5:12–16

Acts 5:12-16 New Living Translation

The apostles were performing many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. ... And all the believers were meeting regularly at the Temple in the area known as Solomon's Colonnade. ... 13 But no one else dared to join them, even though all the people had high regard for them. ... 14 Yet more and more people believed and were brought to the Lord—crowds of both men and women. ... 15 As a result of the apostles' work, sick people were brought out into the streets on beds and mats so that Peter's shadow might fall across some of them as he went by. ... 16 Crowds came from the villages around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those possessed by evil spirits, and they were all healed.

Introduction

Imagine walking down the street and people begin to rush toward you – not because they recognize you – not because of the position you hold – not because of your charismatic personality ... But because of something intangible – yet undeniable – is radiating from your life ... So much so – that the sick are being laid in your path – simply hoping that your shadow would come in contact with them as you passed by.

This is not some fairy tale ... This is not folklore ... This is a recorded event in history – an actual incident that happened in Jerusalem ... Catch this – when the Holy Spirit so fills men and women – their very being carries such a heavenly resonance – that they become a conduit of healing, deliverance, and life ... And let me remind you – this same Spirit that filled those believers didn't retire ... He didn't run out of signs and wonders to pour out today.

But the reality is – we do not regularly experience these same dramatic signs and wonders ... But why? ... And when we do experience them – they often seem sporadic in nature ... Why?

... The early church saw signs and wonders on a regular basis – to the degree where even a shadow could bring healing ... So, if the Holy Spirit didn't retire – nor run out of miracles or power to pour out ... And if God is no respecter of persons – and those early believers were no different than us ... Then what gives?

This reality became very personal for me this past week ... On Tuesday afternoon – I got a phone call from my fire chief telling me that one of our own was at the hospital and his condition wasn't good ... After that call – I headed straight to the hospital ... I immediately kicked into “pastor mode” ... On the drive to Portsmouth – I was praying in tongues ... I was declaring out loud, “Chris – you will live and not die” ... I did this for the entire 30-minute drive ... Unfortunately – Chris died shortly after I arrived ... He was just 42.

Already knowing I was going to be preaching from this text today – my mind immediately went to that question - - Why? ... I thought – I see miracles all throughout the Bible ... I know the words of Jesus – “the works that I do - you will do also, - and greater works than these” ... Without going into details – I can tell you – it was Chris' desire to live ... And then – another thought came to my mind – that we just experienced the untimely death of Elaine a couple of weeks ago.

It is in moments like these – we can get radically shaken – not just emotionally – but also spiritually ... I'll be honest – it has been an emotional week ... And because of that – I've realized that I've been out of sync and harmony with the Spirit ... Some would say, “well under the circumstances, that's normal” ... But the truth is – we are not called to live under the circumstances ... We are called to rise above them – to be the light in the darkness – to help give hope for those in need ... And this tension is very real – it's something we must wrestle with in this natural realm.

Transition

So, this morning – I want to approach this text with honesty and openness ... Because the truth is – there are moments when – what we read in Scripture – and what we experience in life –

don't always seem to line up ... And in those moments – our faith gets tested ... our emotions get shaken ... and our walk with the Spirit can feel out of sync ... So – I want to share some foundational principles that can help us navigate times like these ... And as we look at Acts 5:12–16 ... I want us to consider three key questions:

1. Why do signs and wonders – at times – seem to be inconsistent in nature?
2. Why do events like these – cause me – or us – to get out of sync with the Spirit?
3. And how can we quickly get back into alignment and harmony with the Spirit?

Why Signs & Wonders Tend to be Sporadic in Nature

Acts 5:12a Amplified Bible

At the hands of the apostles – many signs and wonders (attesting miracles) – **were continually taking place** among the people.

The apostles didn't perform miracles to show off – nor to draw attention to themselves ... They didn't set up a traveling healing and deliverance ministry – booking dates all across Jerusalem ... Peter himself made this clear:

Acts 3:12 New Living Translation

Peter saw his opportunity and addressed the crowd. “People of Israel,” he said, “what is so surprising about this? ... **And why stare at us - as though we had made this man walk - by our own power or godliness?**”

The apostles weren't performing miracles to prove they were apostles – or to validate their ministry ... Signs and wonders were simply the natural overflow of the Holy Spirit working through them ... Take Peter as an example ... He so resonated in harmony with the Holy Spirit – that his field of resonance expanded from his body and encompassed the very length of his shadow ... It wasn't the shadow itself – but the vibrational power of the Spirit flowing through him – that brought healing and deliverance ... People lined the streets – fully expecting that when Peter walked by – they would be healed ... [And as a side note](#) – this is the “greater works” Jesus' spoke of ... For nowhere do we read that Jesus' shadow brought healing.

So why are signs and wonders like this – so rare today? ... Let's not even address the shadow scenario ... Why are signs and wonders not continually taking place? ... Why – when I was declaring on the way to the hospital – were no wonders breaking out? ... Why – when I laid my hand on Chris' foot and prayed – was there no resurrection? ... The Spirit hasn't changed ... Angels haven't retired from assisting the saints in the working of miracles ... So, what happened?

I happened ... Did you catch what I said earlier? ... I said, after my call with the chief – I “kicked into pastor mode” ... And there lies the problem ... My natural training kicked in ... My years of experience in handling these situations rose to the surface ... And while some might say, “That's good – that's what people needed – a pastor at that moment” ... The truth is – they didn't just need a trained, experienced pastor ... That situation called for a *kainos* being – one resonating in complete harmony with the Spirit.

But the reality was – I allowed this natural situation ... the noisy hospital environment ... my own emotions ... my distracting thoughts ... to knock me out of full alignment with the Spirit ... My light was scattered ... I was shining ... I was ministering ... But the situation called for more than a flashlight ... It called for a laser ... A light so focused and in harmony with the Spirit – that the natural realm had no choice but to bow and submit to the Spirit's power.

Now hear me clearly – I'm not beating myself up ... I'm not blaming myself ... I'm not looking for reasons to live in regret ... My desire is to function as those early believers did ... And when I don't – I want to learn and grow – so the next time the outcome will be different.

Signs, miracles, and wonders constantly flowed through those early believers ... Not because they had something we don't ... But because they understood something we have yet to fully grasp and awaken too ... It is imperative – if we desire to live as they did – that we stay in sync ... in alignment ... in constant harmony with the indwelling Holy Spirit.

How do we Drift out of Sync and Harmony with the Spirit

As I experienced last week – trauma ... sudden loss ... grief ... can shake us out of alignment with the Spirit ... But it's not only the traumatic events of life ... It can also be simply the static and constant noise of this world – such as politics ... It can be thoughts of fear ... worries about tomorrow ... emotional turmoil ... In a nutshell – nearly anything in this natural realm can cause us to drift out of alignment with the Spirit.

Let me share with you some signs that you may be drifting out of alignment:

Physical conditions: Confusion of thought rather than clarity ... Heaviness of body rather than restfulness ... Emotional upheaval rather than peace ... Reactionary behavior rather than thoughtful response.

Spiritual conditions of misalignment:

Galatians 5:22 Amplified Bible

But the fruit of the Spirit [the result of His presence within us] ... is Love [unselfish concern for others] ... Joy ... [inner] Peace ... Patience [not the ability to wait, but how we act while waiting] ... Kindness ... Goodness ... Faithfulness.

Galatians 5:22–23 Easy English Bible

But God's Spirit causes us to live in a different way ... We love other people ... We are happy and we have peace in our minds ... We are patient, kind, and good ... People can trust us to do what is right ... We respect other people and we rule ourselves properly ... God's Spirit helps us to live in that way ... There is no law that says these things are wrong.

When these fruits are lacking in our lives ... when love feels distant ... when joy is absent ... when peace is disrupted ... when patience wears thin ... when kindness is replaced by irritation ... when goodness is overshadowed by selfishness ... when faithfulness feels shaky ... it's a clear signal ... You are drifted out of sync with the Spirit.

How to Return to Harmony with the Spirit

Please understand this ... Being out of sync is not a failure ... It is not a sin ... It is simply being human ... But it does reveal how deeply we have been programmed to function as mere human beings in this natural realm ... So, kick any condemnation to the curb ... Instead, let's look at some practical principles for how to re-align with the Spirit.

Recognize and Acknowledge that you are Out of Sync

Take an honest evaluation of your physical and spiritual condition ... For me, it wasn't hard to see that I was out of sync most of last week ... I lacked mental clarity at times ... My body was not restful nor at peace ... I had moments of emotional turmoil ... There was no doubt – I was out of harmony with the Spirit.

Purposefully Re-Sync your Being

Take some time to get alone with God and be still ... Psalm 46:10 reminds us, “Be still and know that I am God.” ... Stillness exposes the areas and reasons for disharmony ... Let me use myself again as an example ... After my phone call with the chief, I automatically kicked into “pastor mode” ... I started praying in tongues and making declarations on the drive to the hospital ... But what I really needed to do at that time was to be still – to quiet myself – so I could see and hear in the Spirit ... In retrospect – I allowed the situation to dictate my response ... Rather than staying in harmony with the Spirit and letting Him direct my response ... Again – this is not condemnation – it is a learning experience ... I learned how easy it is for me to default to “pastor mode” ... But now I understand I need to develop the ability to shift into “Spirit mode.” – and function as a Kainos being

Breathe – Meditate – Pray

Slow your breathing down and focus upon it ... The Spirit is literally breath ... Visualize yourself inhaling the Spirit ... This simple practice relaxes your body and clears your mind.

Then meditate on your oneness with Christ ... You may even want to declare out loud: “I am in You ... You are in me ... We are one ...” ... Continue meditating until you sense peace rising inside your being.

Finally, pray – in tongues or in English ... But here’s the key: you are not asking / praying for “what to do” ... You are seeking guidance as to “how to radiate” ... You don’t need direction for action – but alignment for being and resonance.

Take Away

So – what did we discover? ... Signs and wonders are sporadic – because our alignment with the Spirit is sporadic ... This is not a sinful act to be condemned – it is a reality that must be identified – and then reprogrammed ... Just as I have been trained and conditioned to kick into “pastor mode” ... I now want to be trained and conditioned to kick into “kainos mode” ... In fact – I want to live the rest of my days on this earth in kainos mode ... How is this possible?

It will take a complete renewing and rewiring of the mind / soul man – by His Spirit – in order to walk this kainos lifestyle out daily ... And I believe each of us – who have had a true Pentecostal experience – already carry the impartation of this desire within ... The real question now is this - - Do you want this kainos lifestyle so deeply – that you are willing to do whatever it takes to walk in it? ... Are you willing to walk away from what this kingdom offers – in order to gain all that His Kingdom offers? ... Because you cannot serve two masters / kingdoms ... You cannot fully function in this realm as a human being - - and expect to fully function as a kainos being in His realm at the same time.

I have learned many things through the untimely deaths of Elaine and Chris ... But the truth I believe we all need to walk away with today is this: **If you are out of alignment and harmony with the indwelling Holy Spirit – you cannot expect to see biblical manifestations in your life** ... Again – this is not condemnation ... This is not rebuke ... This is a sobering lesson learned through these tragic experiences.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 Amplified Bible

Do not quench [subdue, or be unresponsive to the working and guidance of] the [Holy] Spirit.

John 15:5 Easy English Bible

I am the vine, and you are the branches ... You must continue to live in me and I must continue to live in you ... Only if you do that will you make plenty of fruit ... That is because you can do nothing without me.

Kicking into “pastor mode” is quenching and being unresponsive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit ... Kicking into “pastor mode” was removing myself from the vine – not living in Him – causing me to become ineffective ... Any situation in life – that causes you to kick into “self-mode” – “I’ll handle it mode” – will throw you out of sync with the Spirit and cause you to be ineffective in the matters of the kingdom ... Our human effort – no matter how well intentioned – will never produce the power of God – to flow through our life – to bring about signs and wonders.

Let me leave you with this verse and thought:

Romans 8:19 Modern English Version

The eager expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Creation itself is waiting for something ... Not another religious program ... Not more human effort ... Not religiously educated – trained – and equipped human beings ... Creation is groaning for the sons of God to manifest their true identity ... But here is the underlying truth: We will never manifest as the sons of God through the flesh ... nor through religious training and experience ... The manifestation comes only when we fully grasp who we are – a new creation – a kainos being ... And as that new creation being – we must live in constant alignment with the Spirit ... in harmony with the Spirit ... resonating with the frequency of the Spirit ... That is when manifestation will happen ... That is when the signs and wonders of Acts 5 will cease being stories from the past – and will become present day realities.

Closing Prayer

Father – today I have shared some weighty and sobering truths ... Truths learned through deep pain and loss ... Yet out of these tragedies, I ask that You bring forth life and revelation ... Help us to truly grasp the importance of living in constant alignment – in sync and in harmony – with the Holy Spirit who dwells within us ... Lord, may we no longer lean on the flesh – on worldly training – or on our own experience ... But teach us to live as kainos beings – new creations – moving and walking in the rhythm of Your Spirit ... I lift before You all who mourn the loss of Chris Brown ... Comfort their hearts ... Wrap them in the peace that passes all understanding ... And I also lift before You all who are grieving over the loss of Elaine ... May Your Spirit bring them comfort – strength – and hope ... Lord, as we leave this place, we make a choice ... We choose not to live in our own strength – but in resonance with Your Spirit ... Guide us, shape us, and transform us ... Until the day we walk fully as sons and daughters revealed in Your glory ... In Jesus' mighty name – Amen.