

Living the Supernatural Life - #6: The Gospel of the Kingdom

Testimony time: “what needs did God use you to minister to this week which became opportunities for His love and grace?”

Key Point of Review: **Every need you respond to is an opportunity for God to work supernaturally through you.**

1. We have been talking about living the supernatural life.
 - a. The Holy Spirit has been given to you and I so that we can experience the supernatural life on an everyday basis.
 - b. But there is a problem.
 - i. We don't walk (operate regularly) in the Spirit's leadership and control. And as a result we don't experience the supernatural life.
 - c. What happens next is sad.
 - i. We begin to think our abnormality is normal.
 - ii. Like a person who grows accustomed to an addiction, we begin thinking that this is the way it was “meant to be.” We allow our experience to inform our beliefs. And our beliefs transform our lives.
 - iii. What results is that our lives portray the denial of the power of God.
 - iv. As a result, many Christians become practical atheists who disbelieve in an active God.
 - d. I also think that we are uncomfortable with the Supernatural.
 - i. We spend a lot of time criticizing those who claim to operate in it as well as condemn the excesses we observe. (I sometimes think that this is a cover for our own failure to live in the supernatural realm).
 - ii. The truth is, we ought to be lamenting our own lack of supernatural experience and power.
 - iii. One writer said, “*Aren't you weary of talking about a gospel of power and seeing no demonstrations of it?*” (I am).
 1. He goes on to say, “*it is unnatural for a Christian to not have an appetite for the impossible.*”
 - e. The normal Christian life should consist of miracles, spiritual intervention and supernatural revelation.
 - i. These experiences provide a powerful sense of peace, joy, love and purpose because they testify to the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
 - ii. Yet many Christians have a notable absence of these things.
 - iii. I also think that many Christians lack an appetite for these things!
 1. Until just recently, I have to admit, my appetite for the supernatural had been dulled by the day-to-day demands of ministry. Walking in my own power, making my own decisions, leading under my ability...I lacked purpose and certainly lacked power. Then about a month before our church-wide fast, God spoke to me. In a dozen little ways, He pointed out the vacuum in my life where His power was meant to work. He called me to fast and pray, and to invite you all to join me. He made it clear that we could begin a journey of learning that we can and must operate in the supernatural realm on a regular basis. And I believe that God is going to show us how, and that each week, as we step out in faith to follow God we will see His hand! Amen?
2. Last week I shared with you a wonderful truth concerning the “Gospel of the Kingdom.”
 - a. Most of us recognize false gospels, like the “prosperity gospel” which emphasizes ME over everything else.
 - b. But do we recognize that we may be preaching a gospel that isn't biblical ourselves?

- c. I believe that the church has been preaching the “gospel of getting to heaven.”
 - i. That isn’t the gospel Paul was commissioned to preach. It isn’t in the bible. It isn’t the gospel you and I have been called to believe or preach. But it happens to be the one we have believed and are practicing.
 - d. Granted, eternal life, forgiveness and heaven **are** the benefits of believing and trusting in Jesus Christ.
 - i. But the gospel is far greater than those things.
 - ii. **The gospel is about the Kingdom (reign) of God come to earth.**
 - iii. That is good news. That is great news! And it should revolutionize how you and I understand, live and operate in the will of God.
3. **We have been put here to bring the will of God on earth as it is in heaven.**
- a. **Let me say something about the Will of God:**
 - i. Henry Blackaby in the study, “Experiencing God” noted that we all ask the wrong question concerning the will of God. We say, “what is the will of God for my life, my church, my family, my job, etc.”
 - ii. But we fail to ever get to the core question of what is God’s will (big picture).
 - b. **As long as my focus upon God’s will is about me, then I will rarely get to the place where I can know it.**
 - i. You see, we want God to shape His will so that I can have what I want.
 - ii. But God’s will is revealed to me so that I can conform my life to His will.
 - iii. In other words, what is God doing where I am? Once I know what God is doing, then I know what I need to do. **The focus must be on God & not on my life!**
 - iv. This is exactly what Jesus did. He saw what the Father was doing and did the will of His Father. He said, “I only do what I see my Father doing.” Jesus’ life embodied this truth, doing the will of His Father in every circumstance and situation. (come to Experiencing God for more info)
 - c. What is the will of God?
 - i. God hasn’t made His will secret. Some people figure it is a great puzzle to solve, or that His will is unknowable. Others simply take the short cut and pray “if it be your will.” Sometimes we split hairs over God’s general will and God’s specific will. And other times we act as if God’s will is inevitable so we become passive observers instead of active participants.
 - d. So what is the Will of God?
 - i. **God desires for the reality of Heaven to invade this sin torn world to bring it under His rule.**
 - ii. Recall Mt 6:9-10, *“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth and it is in heaven.”*
 - 1. It is that basic. It is that simple. That God’s dominion is realized in the right here, right now and not some futuristic, eschatological sense that we have to wait for until Jesus returns.
 - 2. Whatever is operating in heaven is what we are praying be brought to earth.
 - a. Things like joy, peace, wisdom, freedom from bondage, health, wholeness and all the other promises. We invite these heavenly realities into our lives and our encounters on earth.
 - 3. And what doesn’t belong in heaven, we know shouldn’t be allowed to operate here if the Kingdom is truly in place: sickness, disease, bondage, sin, injustice, and the like.
 - 4. To take this meaning a bit further, we are called to *“destroy the works of the devil”* (1 John 3:8) because that was one of Jesus’ primary job responsibilities! (that’s a sermon in itself!).

5. Granted the ultimate fulfillment of the Kingdom of God will be at the return of Christ, but God is interested in setting up His kingdom in each person's life, one life at a time, one day and one encounter at a time.
4. **Let me illustrate this by talking about "Proving the Will of God"**
 - a. I love this passage, Romans 12:2 which I used to think was about knowing the will of God for ME. Duh. This passage is actually about making known the will of God to the world!
 - b. *'And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may PROVE what is that good and acceptable will of God.'* (Romans 12:2)
 - i. Has it ever occurred to you that your job on this earth is to prove (demonstrate practically) the will of God? In other words, to show other people what God is like?
 - ii. Most people don't know what God is really like. (do they?).
 1. They don't know how God works and they certainly don't know what is inside God's heart for them.
 2. Do you know what is in God's heart for you?
 - a. He doesn't desire to harm you but to bless you, to show you His love, to make you whole, complete and beautiful. He doesn't need you to earn His love, but to receive His love. God's heart for you is enormous, He loves you more than you can grasp or think, despite any failures and despite your unworthiness. In fact, it is precisely because of your unworthiness that God loves you. He loves you in spite of your flaws. He sees the treasure that is inside of you, the treasure that He alone can bring out and polish and show off to all of creation. He sees the beauty in you that life has tried to tarnish and destroy.
 3. Our job, as the people of God, is to demonstrate that the reality that exists in heaven can be manifested right here, right now. We not only love the loveless, but we care for the needy, we demonstrate the love of God to those who need it.
 - iii. **We must stop being people who only believe the right things about God. We must also be those who put the will of God on display for all to see!**
 1. We must make it possible for people to realize, "Oh, so that is what God is like!"
 2. Things like healing, deliverance and restoration do much more than just provide immediate relief of a problem...they give people a demonstration of who God is.
 - a. What happens when this becomes our mission? People are set free, bodies are healed, darkness is pressed back in people's lives, and the rule of the enemy is broken over people.
 3. As you listen to the testimonies of God at work in the daily lives of our congregation, do you hear "this demonstration of who God is?" I certainly do!
 4. **I HAVE A VISION – of not being able to walk through Walmart or Giant Eagle without seeing a Christian praying with or over someone else. When we take our faith to the marketplace, to the neighborhoods, when we take our faith and our God to our places of employment, you can be sure the Kingdom of God will penetrate and change our community!**
 - c. Why then are we not doing this? Could it be that we are too busy putting our gifts and talents to work as we see fit and missing the opportunities to see God at work?
 - i. God's calling for us is much bigger than just keeping us busy until He calls us home.
 - ii. **God commissioned you so that you can demonstrate the will of God on earth as it is in heaven.**
 - iii. God wants to use you and I so that our world might become a place that is saturated with God's power and presence.

- iv. Can you imagine a vacuum cleaner salesman coming to your door and trying to sell you something without demonstrating it to you? They give you a tract detailing all that it can do and then walk away. We can tell people how great a product we have...but God has called us to **SHOW** it!
 - 1. Yet this is precisely how we have presented the gospel. We have shown it to be a message but failed to demonstrate its power.
- 5. What do we need to do?
 - a. **I would like to suggest that perhaps we need a mind change.** The bible calls it “**repentance.**” It is a change in our thinking and direction.
 - b. We are used to that word meaning come to the altar and weep. But it is much more simple than that. It means to turn around, change your thinking about something, and change directions.
 - c. God desires that you and I change the way we think about His kingdom. He desires that we see this world and His plan from HIS perspective and stop looking at it from our own.
 - d. He desires that you and I live from HIS World (Heavenly) toward this world. In so doing, we begin to see the Kingdom of Heaven displayed in our lives and our worlds.
 - i. Recall the evangelical favorite verse, John 3:3, “*Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.*”
 - ii. He wasn’t just talking about the “entry to heaven” that comes with the spiritual rebirth, he is talking about seeing the Kingdom DEMONSTRATED and PROVEN – we will see the kingdom of heaven break into the earthly realm in a supernatural manner! That is the norm for the Christian...that is the standard for our lives.
- 6. Let me close with a final challenge.
 - a. I believe that most Christians have repented (changed their direction and mind) enough to be forgiven, but not enough to “SEE” the kingdom of God at work.
 - b. These folks go part of the way, they meet Jesus and rejoice, but stop there. (that’s the problem with the “get to heaven” gospel).
 - i. They cross the river but never take the promised land.
 - ii. It is not enough to get across but never fight for the territory that God promised His church.
 - iii. God designed us to experience the miraculous and to partner with Him through the supernatural realm.
 - iv. Unfortunately, it is a privilege and responsibility that too many of us have either feared or ignored.
 - c. The gospel without power is not good news.
 - i. It is only a doctrinal exercise.
 - ii. (1 Cor 2:4-5) “*my preaching was not with persuasive words of human wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*”
 - iii. Paul is critical of those who had no power to go along with their preaching.
- 7. As I sum up, let me say that just because God doesn’t heal someone or show up in some earth-shattering manner, doesn’t mean you aren’t operating in the supernatural realm. Every time you hear God, pay attention to His work and respond to a need which is an invitation to let His power work...you are operating in the supernatural life. Inevitably, you will see things happen that you can’t explain. And that will cause you to worship and praise God all the more!

Matthew 4:23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

Matthew 9:35 Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Matthew 24:14 "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Mark 1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Luke 16:16 "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. "