

Eternity Daily Bible Study - No. 349
Series: The Primal Church - Acts Chapters 1-8
Verses: Acts 2:19-21
Topic: An Age of Wonders And Salvation
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[St. John's Passion series, John chapters 12-21, now available as a free ebook, all 60 studies arranged as 2 months of daily devotionals. <http://www.aibi.ph/eternity/>]

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Acts 2:19-21 MKJV And I will give wonders in the heaven above, and miracles on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke. (20) The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before that great and glorious Day of the Lord. (21) And it shall be that everyone who shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Peter announces the Church Age, which would begin in prophecy and end with the moon becoming as blood. In between there would be: wonders in the heaven above, and miracles on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

The Church Age was meant to be extraordinary, an age of salvation and miracles, but we have settled for "just ordinary". There is little that happens in churches today that did not also happen in temples and synagogues before the advent of Jesus, before the power of the cross and before the new life of the resurrection and the demon-breaking power of the ascension of Jesus Christ.

Surely Jesus did not come to build more synagogues? Did Jesus die just so we could have more sermons and lectures and ethical harangues and rules and nice songs and heart-warming rabbinic stories? Is the new life just another moral change, like going to Alcoholics Anonymous?

Does not it sound more plausible that God sent His Son to bring miracles and signs and wonders and an age full of Spirit and power and glory and salvation?

If what we have now is what God intended then Jesus did not need to die on the cross. The synagogues and temples would have made people just as good and just as happy as the average Christian church does today. Perhaps more so.

Jesus was not like Buddha. Jesus was much more spectacular. He did miracles all the time. He introduced a Kingdom of God in which spiritual power was freely available to all who asked for it and the apostles could, years later, write down promises about moving mountains with perfect truthfulness and equanimity.

Part of the reason I am doing this series in Acts is to arouse a burning thirst for a better way of being Christian. We have lost the supernatural life of Christ in our midst. What will it take to get it back?

Miracles seem to have been common in the early church – even in the most backward of churches such as the Galatians: Galatians 3:2-5 MKJV This only I would learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing of faith? (3) Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, do you now perfect yourself in the flesh? (4) Did you suffer so many things in vain, if indeed it is even in vain? (5) Then He supplying the Spirit to you and working powerful works in you, is it by works of the law, or by hearing of faith?

We have grieved, quenched and injured the Holy Spirit in our midst, we have exalted man and diminished Christ, we have loved the world and spurned the cross. We have let our disillusionment and our doubts overwhelm our faith in God and we have lived as selfish individuals instead of in loving Spirit-filled communities.

The fire and thunder are gone and Musak and elevator music fill quiet respectable sanctuaries.

No-one would bother to persecute the average American or Australian or English church. It threatens nothing, it does nothing, it accomplishes next to nothing. Apparently it costs \$300,000 to add a single baptized believer to a church in the USA. Enormous effort, zero result. In the last few years 5 million Christians in the USA have gone from “active” to nominal Christian or unbeliever status.

Where is the power, the sacrifice, the zeal, the faith?

We have turned Christianity into another “seven steps to personal success”. We have focused it on ourselves and on our desires. We have fed the flesh and starved the Spirit.

Where is our inheritance in God, and in His power? Where is the fire of Pentecost? Where is the promise of Joel? “And I will give wonders in the heaven above, and miracles on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke. “

Blessings,

John Edmiston

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