

SUPERNATURAL: Understanding the Supernatural

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If you had told me back in the days when I was dealing drugs that I would be a pastor one day, I would have said, "That's crazy!"—especially since I didn't even know what a pastor was. If you had said that I would be married to a wonderful, godly woman, with a family that is like a Hispanic Brady Bunch, I would have said, "That's crazy!" When I went to prison and was sharing a cell with members of the Aryan Brotherhood, if you had told me that one day I would be leading a ministry to set captives free—whether their captivity is physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual—I would have told you, "That's crazy!" When I was trying—and failing—to fill the void in my life with drugs, alcohol, sex, violence, money, and being a big shot, if you had told me that I would one day be filled with love, joy, peace, hope, kindness, and faith, I would have said, "That's crazy!"

When you know my story and understand where I came from and where I am now, you might say, "That's crazy!"

But I would say, "No, that's God!"

The whole "That's crazy! No, that's God!" thing started because there was a season of my life when my story was unfolding, and I recognized that it was all by the grace of God—all of it. These amazing things happened both to me and to others, and I would always say, "That's crazy, man." Then one day, the Lord told me, "No, that's Me. What you're calling crazy is Me. You're just doing things that are out of your

comfort zone, so you think it's crazy, but the reality is it's how I originally intended it in My plan, the one that was perfect before the fall of man."

God's Ways Are Not Our Ways

Have you ever heard someone say, "That's crazy!" when you shared a dream, a vision or a calling from God? Maybe you have even thought, "That's crazy!" yourself about something the Lord revealed to you. Perhaps you've shared a testimony of the supernatural at work in your life, and the response from others was, "That's crazy!" Just because something throws you for a loop doesn't mean it's crazy. Our human minds often struggle to grasp the ways of God because His plans can seem impossible or even irrational from our limited perspective. But what we may call crazy is often just the manifestation of God's extraordinary work in our lives, the manifestation of the supernatural.

Isaiah 55:8–9 says, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." As a follower of Christ, you must recognize that God's ways are higher than your ways, and His thoughts are higher than your thoughts. When God moves in your life, it is not always going to look like what you expect. In fact, it frequently doesn't look like what you expect. But that doesn't mean it's crazy. It just means that God, who is immeasurably more than our human minds can fathom, is at work in your life.

First Corinthians 1:25 says, "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." God's instructions may not always make sense to you, but His plans are perfect. Your role is to trust and obey, even when others think it's crazy, even when others think it's foolishness. Sometimes God calls you to do things that others don't understand. He calls you to do things that are contrary

to human logic. But what appears irrational, when done in obedience, may actually be an act of faith that leads to your deliverance. It may be an act of faith that leads to a miracle. Jesus told us that what is impossible with man is possible with God (Luke 18:27).

As a follower of Jesus, you need to accept the truth that God's ways are not your ways. You need to accept the truth of God's Word, not just in your head but in your heart. You need to understand what it means to die to yourself. You need to totally depend on God and be empowered by the Holy Spirit. Those are the things that activate the supernatural in your life. Everything is better in Christ, so understand that what people may call crazy is often a manifestation of God's extraordinary work and the Holy Spirit's power in your life.

Chasing Miracles or Chasing Jesus?

One big difference between Christianity and every other religion is that every other religion is dependent upon what you have to do to get closer to God. In Christianity everything is about what God has done and continues to do to get you closer to Him. Throughout the entirety of the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, we see God reaching out to us to reconcile us to Himself, to draw us close so that we can live an abundant life in His unmerited grace. What is unmerited grace? It is what God gave us in Jesus Christ before the beginning of time.

The Gospel of John says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. That light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it," (John 1:1-5, CSB).

So where is Jesus in this? Jesus is the Word. "The Word became

flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14, CSB).

God has been reaching out to us since creation. He gave us the amazing Garden of Eden where the first people, Adam and Eve, lived and walked with God. But mankind messed things up by stepping out from under God's grace and taking matters into our own hands. As a result, God sent Adam and Eve out of the garden.

But God never gave up reaching out to us. In fact, His plan to restore us to right relationship with Him was there in the very words He spoke to the serpent who deceived Eve: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). God already had a plan to send Jesus to die on the cross for our sins so that our relationship with Him could be restored to how He intended it to be—intimate and authentic—without the consequences of sin that separated us from a holy God.

God wants to have an authentic relationship with you. You are His child. He loves you. I think one reason many believers are missing out on the supernatural in their lives is that they are not in an authentic relationship with their Creator. Instead of pursuing intimacy with God and getting to know His will and His ways, they are chasing the wrong things. They are chasing events. They are chasing experiences. They are chasing goose bumps. They are chasing signs and wonders. They are chasing miracles. But if you truly want to experience the supernatural in your life, you need to be chasing Jesus. When you chase Jesus, the supernatural follows you.

The supernatural is a by-product of relationship. It is a by-product of intimacy with the Lord. When you are pursuing a relationship with Jesus, the supernatural happens naturally. And Jesus wants a relationship with you. That is worth

repeating. Jesus wants a relationship with you. He wants you to spend time in His presence. He wants you to spend time getting to know Him through worship, through prayer, and through reading His Word. He doesn't want a casual, surface-level relationship with you, as if you were just an acquaintance. He doesn't want a Sunday-morning-only relationship. He wants a deep, authentic, heart-level, everyday relationship with you.

In John 15:15 Jesus told His disciples, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." Jesus wants a friendship with you. The Creator of the universe wants to be your friend. And He doesn't want the kind of friendship where you just say hi to each other when you happen to cross paths. He wants the kind of friendship where you know each other's hearts.

Obviously, Jesus knows your heart because He knows everything. But the question is, Do you know His heart? You may come to the Lord and ask Him for new tires for your car because with your limited perspective new tires seem like the biggest issue in your life. But I imagine God is thinking, "Is that all you want? Tires? I already knew about the tires. But I want to share My heart with you. I want to tell you what is going on in heaven right now. Do you want that too?"

Jesus said, "All that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." Jesus wants to reveal the heart of the Father to you. He wants to reveal the love of the Father to you. He wants to reveal the will and the ways of the Father to you. He wants to reveal the plans and purposes and promises and perspective of the Father to you. That's the beauty of having a deep, meaningful relationship with God. But you can't get to know someone's heart if you never spend time with them, talking to them and getting to know their thoughts and their feelings and the things that move them.

If you have been chasing miracles instead of chasing Jesus, you need to know the truth. The truth is that signs and wonders always follow the believer. When you're submitted to the Word of God, accepting that it has final authority in your life, when you are living by faith, when you are being led by the Spirit, signs and wonders will follow—so much so that you will be the sign that will make people wonder.

An aspiring artist once decided to leave a lucrative career to pursue painting full-time, even though he had never been formally trained. People thought it was a foolish decision, especially since the art world is notoriously competitive. Yet years later, the artist's work was celebrated globally, and his story became an inspiration to many. This mirrors the kind of faith that produces the supernatural in your life. It mirrors the kind of faith that trusts in God's promises, even when it seems impossible that those promises will be fulfilled. It is the kind of "crazy" faith that you are called to as a child of God.

God doesn't just do the unexpected—He delights in doing the impossible. Sometimes what seems chaotic or illogical is God creating something new in your life. When God calls you to something that seems crazy, you need to remember that it's not crazy; it's God. His plans may defy human logic, but they are always rooted in His love, wisdom, and power. God's calling in your life may seem risky or unwise by worldly standards, but He sees the full picture and leads you to success according to His will, His way, and His timing. Trust in Him, follow His lead, and watch as He does the impossible in your life.

So, the next time you hear someone say, "That's crazy!" about what God is doing in your life, respond, "No, that's God."

Juan Martinez, lead pastor of *Get Wrapped Church* and founder of *Love Live Lead Ministries*, is a revivalist passionate about reaching the lost and broken. A radio and TV host featured on TBN and CTN, he's a popular conference speaker and author.

His new book, That's Crazy—No, That's God!, is available now at .