

Are We Really Called to Walk in the Supernatural?

We all have painful questions that we plan to ask God when we enter heaven. Even so, I believe that a day is coming very, very soon when we will see more and more churches embrace the supernatural. I have a picture in my mind of two college students talking. One says to another, "What do you mean you go to a church that never sees our Father's works manifest? I haven't heard of a church like that in 10 years."

Some of you reading this probably think that I am out in left field to suggest something like this. I would have thought the same thing a few years ago, but now I have seen and heard too much to think it is impossible. I am not talking here about the testimony of someone who lives in a country that I cannot pronounce. I am talking about a friend who is a dentist and sees the Kingdom manifest in his office on a regular basis as he prays for the broken. I am talking about countless others like him. These are normal, everyday people who are not famous, nor do they care to be.

I love stories of the saints of old who saw the impossible. Yes, I know that Hebrews 11 tells us of saints who never saw their Goliaths struck down. Trust me, I hear that. Keep reading and you will find that I am not a pie-in-the-sky person who thinks everything on planet Earth is nice and tidy. The people who never saw victories are heroes in my book, but just as I do not ignore them, I also cannot throw away the stories of those who actually did see the impossible happen.

How in the world did Shamgar kill 600 Philistines with an ox-goad? I have no idea, but if the impossible is possible, I want to do it, too. The Bible tells the stories of tons of Shamgars: Esther, Moses, Abraham, Deborah, Ehud, Peter, Noah, Aaron, Mary, John, Barnabas, Stephen and Timothy are but a

small sampling of the people who saw God make the impossible happen through them.

I want to be like them. I want to see impossible things become possible in my life. I get excited when I read about Elijah calling down fire or Peter telling a dead child to wake up.

Now, granted, not one of us is Abraham or Moses or Elijah. But before we jump to the conclusion that we are not qualified to do amazing things like opening blind eyes, we need to take a closer look at how truly messed up many of our biblical heroes were.

I was encouraged my whole young adult life to consider the faith of Noah, and how he built an ark in the midst of scrutiny and criticism. But no one ever told me that Noah got off the boat and got drunk, and then got naked. (Imagine that felt-board lesson in Vacation Bible School.)

Or take Abraham. He is the father of millions and has been commended by generations for his faith. Yet if you examine his life closely, you find that he was no goodie-two-shoes. Abraham lied about Sarah being his wife to save his own hide—not once but twice.

And what about Peter? Peter is the one with whom Jesus entrusted the church after He went to be with His Father. Yet when you look at Peter's life and see his impetuosity and his intermittent lack of faith, you have permission to attempt what Peter attempted.

Let's be honest. If Peter's shadow could make someone whole, then perhaps through the power of the Holy Spirit we are capable of more than we think. If people's inadequacies could keep them from moving in power, then no one but Jesus would do great things. Perhaps it is possible to be as tangled as a tackle box and still see the impossible happen.

Our Turn

Those heroes are gone now; it is our turn. That is why I get excited when I hear stories of people just like you and me who are seeing the same things our heroes saw. These are everyday people walking through their own normal problems with tiny faith and producing huge outcomes.

Think about this: Many of us who think that the impossible is not within our grasp are the same people who believe that one day we will leave our bodies and shoot off into heaven. How can we be sure? We believe this by faith. Then why not use that same type of childlike faith to say, "God, we have no idea how this all works, but we want to see You do fun, weird, miraculous stuff through us." Jesus continues to show me that I will miss 100 percent of the shots that I never take.

Again, I am not saying this as someone without pain. My journals are full of questions and hurt. Henri Nouwen was my literary mentor for a long season. I have agreed with Philip Yancey and preached that we all have our disappointments with God. But I cannot help asking why so many of us live our lives without the victories that our biblical ancestors experienced. If we say that we are children of a Father who props up His feet on the moon, then might our lives resemble something close to supernatural?

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