

If Jesus Hasn't Changed, Why Isn't He Moving Like in the Past?

More than once I've led a team of evangelists in a series of crusades in Madras/Chennai, India. The last time I was there, the magnitude of the people's needs was totally overwhelming. Every kind of sickness and disease imaginable was represented in the vast crowd that thronged to hear the Word of God.

It was amazing to see the response of these precious souls receiving the greatest miracle of all: the born-again experience. However, as I watched, a gnawing question rose up within my spirit. I recognized it as coming from the Lord, and it shook me to the very core of my being.

"When will I be presented to the multitudes *today* as I was presented *yesterday*? Have I changed in 2,000 years? Is it not still My desire to heal the sick and set the captives free?"

Since Christ is incapable of change, His attitude toward sickness must remain the same as it was when He was on earth: He healed all manner of sickness and disease among the people(see Matt. 4:23-24; 8:16-17).

We read in Acts 1:1-2 and Acts 17 about what "Jesus began both to do and teach." The Gospels display the marvelous deeds the Lord *began*, and the book of Acts tells what *continued* through His body in signs, wonders and miracles after His ascension. Since that event, history has recorded numerous examples of God's continuing intervention.

Christ has not changed! He is still *Jehovah Rapha* (see Ex. 15:26; Is. 53:3-5). And He places great importance on confirming His Word with miraculous demonstrations of His love (see Heb. 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 12:7).

Every manifestation of the miraculous is a declaration from the Father that Jesus is, indeed, alive. Acts 4:33 says, "And with great power the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." It is not His intention that people simply *hear* the story of the Resurrection, but that they *experience* the living proof of it. We owe people an encounter with the living expression of Jesus on earth.

God wants the opportunity to reverse impossible circumstances and to bring forth a greater reality of His love, acceptance, and nearness. Everywhere Jesus went in His earthly ministry He manifested the reputation of God the Father into reality (see Heb. 1:3; John 14:8-11). It's the Father's intense desire that His people express that same reality to a lost and dying world. To do otherwise is contrary to God's will.

The scriptural purpose of every sign, wonder and miracle is to reveal the greatness of the Godhead. The glory of God is manifested by the demonstration of the Spirit (see John 2:11).

Another scriptural purpose of God's miraculous intervention is to confront the unbeliever. Signs, wonders and miracles can be used to cause people to make a decision about God.

We are living in a day when the Holy Spirit is restoring to the church everything that pertains to life and godliness (see Acts 3:19-21; 2 Pet. 1:3). The Lord has anointed His people to have signs following their testimonies (see Mark 16:20). In this process of restoration, the establishing of the miraculous is of paramount importance for the church's witness to the world.

I believe that as we honor the Lord and His Word, a release of benevolent, supernatural power will accompany our desire to minister to humanity's needs. The spiritual vacuum that has been created in many hearts will be filled, and the reality of the truth will be expressed in a way that may convince the most hardened, unbelieving person.

People today deserve as clear a picture of Jesus as was presented 2,000 years ago. Jesus worked miracles then, and His brand of evangelism arrested the hearts of His listeners quite successfully. Two millennia ago, His hands were never extended in vain; and today as the body of Christ, we are His hands reaching forth to this world.

James Maloney of The ACTS Group International, author of *The Dancing Hand of God*, travels internationally teaching the release of the supernatural power of God.