

# The Supernatural Work

by A.B. Simpson

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*The supernatural work is the work that God does through us, using His power and strength, and not our own.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19-20, John 14:10, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:14, 1 Corinthians 3:6-7, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Galatians 5:25, Ephesians 2:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, Hebrews 12:1-2

**Topics:** "Divine Guidance", "Supernatural Empowerment"

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## Description

A.B. Simpson emphasizes the necessity of supernatural power and direction in Christian service, asserting that our works are not our own but are prepared by God through the Holy Spirit. He illustrates that true effectiveness in ministry comes from dying to self-reliance and receiving divine empowerment, as exemplified by biblical figures like Moses and Paul. Simpson warns against the dangers of acting on personal impulse rather than waiting for God's guidance, highlighting the importance of aligning with His divine plan. He concludes that even the smallest acts of service, when done in the Spirit's strength, can yield significant results for God's kingdom. Ultimately, he calls believers to seek God's specific purpose for their lives to avoid wasted efforts.

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## Transcript

"We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10.)

The apostle here declares that our works are "prepared," for that is the true translation of the word "ordained," "that we should walk in them." They are not our works, but His supplied to us through the Holy Ghost and the inworking of Christ, and we just work out "according to his working, which works in (us) mightily." Our whole life must be supernatural to the close, and our very service must be received before it can be performed. "Receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

We must have supernatural power for our work. We must pass the sentence of death upon our natural enthusiasm, energy and zeal; and, dying to our own strength, we must receive power through the Holy Ghost and do our work in Him.

Moses had to be rejected when he stepped forth at the age of forty in his own enthusiasm to deliver Israel. Afterwards, when he came back at eighty, a broken man, humbled and conscious of his inefficiency, God could use him, like His own rod, an instrument in the hands of Jehovah.

Christ Himself continually recognized His power for service as divinely supplied. "I can of my own self do nothing," He said; "as I hear, I judge." "The Father that dwells in me, he does the works." Therefore He did not begin His public ministry until He received the Holy Spirit and there was added to His divine Personality a second divine Personality -- the third Person of the Godhead. And as He went through His earthly ministry there were two Persons united in His life work, the Son of God and the Spirit of God. He chose to be dependent upon the Spirit in order that He might be the more perfect type of us in our dependence.

Therefore His disciples were bidden to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high. They were not suffered to go out in their own strength, but had to lean upon the Spirit for their wisdom, courage, faith and complete efficiency.

No man is fit for the humblest service in the church of God until he receives the divine baptism of the Holy Ghost. The mother needs it in the nursery, the Sunday school teacher in his class, the preacher in his pulpit, the soul winner in his dealings with the inquirer and the saint in his ministry of prayer in the secret closet.

There is no truth that needs to be more emphasized in this age of smartness and human self-sufficiency than the imperative necessity of the baptism of the Holy Ghost as the condition of all effective Christian work. We must tarry before we go.

It pays to wait. The traveler pursued by his enemies lingered five minutes at the blacksmith's shop to have his horse reshod, and while some might have thought he was foolish thus to delay, yet he was truly wise, for as they drew near at the last moment and shouted their expected triumph he leaped into the saddle and was soon far in the distance. A week spent at the source of faith and power will bring more effective service than years of human effort in the energy of our highest gifts and loftiest genius.

We must have a supernatural plan. In the working out of a military campaign the commander relies upon the intelligent cooperation of his subordinate officers. If one division of the army were to rush into the attack heedless of the plan of the leader, it might hinder instead of help. A very small force judiciously used at the salient point of attack or defense often turns an enemy's flank and changes the outcome of a decisive battle.

Christ has a plan in His mediatorial work. He does not send us forth to draw our bow at a venture and run wherever our fancy may dispose us, but He wants us to understand His method and work according to His great purpose. It is foreshadowed in the promise of the Spirit (Acts 1:8), the gospel for the center first, and then for the circumference, and then for the uttermost parts of the earth.

That plan was more fully unfolded at the first great council of the Christian church in Acts 15 and consists of three great sections: first, a visit to the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name; second, the return of the Lord and the restoration of Israel; third, the millennial reign with the ingathering of all the Gentiles.

A wise worker will work according to this plan. He will not attempt today the ingathering of all the Gentiles, but will be occupied with the outgathering from them of the few who are to be the firstfruits for His coming. He will not be devoting his attention to Israel supremely, for the restoration of Israel is to come with the return of the Lord. His chief business will be to give the gospel to the Gentile and gather out of them a people for His name.

This will save us many a bitter disappointment. We will not be found trying to convert all the people in the world and stop all the abuses of our time. This belongs to the next dispensation. Rather, we are to be busily occupied in the great missionary work of the age and the bringing back of our King.

We must have supernatural direction. It is possible to have a divine plan and yet run at our own impulse in the direction of our work. This was Saul's mistake. God sent him as Israel's king to destroy his enemies, but Saul took the reins into his own hand and, instead of waiting for Samuel to lead, stepped out in front, and by his presumption destroyed himself and his kingdom.

This was Joshua's danger. God had sent him and promised to bless him in bringing Israel into the Land of Promise. Joshua had an idea that he was to lead the armies of Israel, and so God had to meet him with a drawn sword and lay him on his face at the very outset of his career, and remind him that He, not Joshua, was Captain of the Lord's host. Then Joshua became conqueror when he simply followed his conquering Leader.

Very early in the Acts of the Apostles Philip had to learn this lesson. Preaching in Samaria with wonderful success, it seemed on all human principles that was his immediate duty. But suddenly the Spirit commanded him to go down into the desert, and he was wise and faithful enough to obey, to leave his work in Samaria and to go down a hundred miles into the lone wilderness until at last the leading was made plain, and the prince of Ethiopia was converted to God and became the pioneer of the gospel in the great continent of Africa.

Even Paul and Silas had to be severely taught that they must go every moment at the direction of their supernatural Leader. Rushing forward in the accomplishment of their plans into Bithynia, Mysia and Asia, they were suddenly stopped by the Holy Ghost, "The Spirit suffered them not." They had gone beyond their personal Leader, and they were compelled to retrace their steps and get still before God and wait for new orders. They seemed to be doing good, but God was not pleased and would not have it.

He does not even want good work if it is not His very work for us at that very time. It is not true to say, I am doing some good, I am doing the best I know how. True service is doing the very thing that God has for us, doing it in His strength and wholly pleasing Him. If we are not doing this we may be hindering Him by our very Christian work. It is a serious question whether much of the religious work today is not entirely out of God's will. I believe that many a man that is preaching today in an American pulpit ought to be in some heathen field, and because he is not in God's will, he blights his blessings and lets his church run into foolishness, worldliness and sometimes infidelity.

So Paul called a halt and waited for his Leader to point the way, and then he found that way led them out of the field that he was cultivating across the Aegean Sea into the continent of Europe and the kingdom of Greece.

God had a great ultimate purpose in that which Paul could not foresee. He knew that the nations of modern history were to have their theater of action in that great continent. There our forefathers were to be born and thence were we to spring, and well may we thank God that Paul obeyed that divine leading and gave up his own work to the work of the Master.

Beloved, are you doing the very work God has for you? Did He redeem you for the purpose of spending your life in selfish amusement, or even in half-hearted conventional formalism which you call Christian work? Go to your knees and find out whether your life at last is going to prove a failure, and whether you

are going to discover too late that you have lost your way and have spent your strength in vain.

Last, we need supernatural efficiency. God must give the increase and bring the fruition as well as lead the way, and He does give efficiency for the humblest ministries which are performed in Him. The seed may have seemed to lie in silence, but it is sure to spring forth and bring the harvest.

A single sentence spoken by Mr. Spurgeon in an empty hall that the carpenters were fixing for his next Sabbath's service reached the ear of a mechanic at his workbench in an adjoining shop. Twenty-five years later Spurgeon found, when that man was on his deathbed, that he had been saved through that arrow shot at a venture because it was in the Holy Ghost.

A little English girl lived and died unknown to all but her family and her pastor, but the beautiful story of her life was written by her minister, Leigh Richmond, in a tract called *The Dairyman's Daughter*. That little tract fell into the hands of a young English noble who was wasting his splendid intellect in dissipation, and William Wilberforce arose from his perusal a consecrated Christian and became the emancipator of all the slaves in the British Empire. William Wilberforce wrote a little book called *The Practical View of Religion*, and it fell into the hands of an easy-going Scotch preacher who was actually thinking of giving up his pulpit to teach mathematics; but out of that little book was born the mighty soul of Thomas Chalmers, and out of his life came the Scottish Disruption, the Free Church, and the great movement for Christ and missions which that noble church has led and to which many of us owe our Christian hopes.

How marvelous the chain of divine working! How mighty the efficiency of a little word! How immortal the Word of God which lives and abides forever!

We will not always be conscious of the power. Indeed it is our weakness that God most frequently uses. A little message spoken in great humility will become a seed in some other heart whose fruit will shake like Lebanon, and the blessing cover the earth and fill the heavens. "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yes, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord."

"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that plants anything, neither he that waters; but God gives the increase. . . . Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ab-simpson/the-supernatural-work/>

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