

Demonstration of the Spirit and Power

by R. Edward Miller

The sermon underscores the necessity of the Holy Spirit and God's power in authenticating the Christian faith and transforming lives.

Duration: 35:17

Scripture: Mark 16:17-18, Luke 24:49, John 14:16-18, Acts 1:4-5, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:1-4, 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of demonstrating the power of God through miracles, signs, and wonders. He shares personal experiences of witnessing people falling under the power of God as a sign of His presence. The speaker also mentions Billy Graham's meetings, where the simplicity of his preaching was accompanied by a powerful move of the Holy Spirit, leading many to repentance. The sermon concludes with the speaker recounting his own experience of waiting for God's manifestation and the struggle to maintain faith, ultimately highlighting the need for perseverance and obedience to God's leading.

Transcript

I'm going to share out of the book of Corinthians, the second chapter. First Corinthians, chapter two. And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. My speech, my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Spirit and power. Jesus said he would pray the Father, and he would send the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Comforter to us. For he said, I will not leave you comfortless.

I will not abandon you. I will not leave you orphaned. Orphaned is what the word really means.

He said, I will come to you. But he comes not as a carpenter, as a teacher, as a prophet. He comes united with the Spirit of God.

He comes as Spirit. But he said also that without me you can do nothing. It is not power alone, it is not Spirit alone.

They are both needed. Many of you folk come from a world that is not even a so-called Christian nation, where idolatry is rampant, where other gods are triumphant, and there is no way that people are going to release the religion they have for a strange religion unless you can prove it's better. I wouldn't, would you? Jesus didn't expect his servants to go out and try with arguments and persuasions, to try with making friends and enticing people with nice words and even with other ways of joining your church.

I know many missionaries work that way. I've been on many fields. I know that personally.

But that's not the way he sent us out. He said to his disciples, tarry ye in Jerusalem until you're endued with power from on high. Because there must be a demonstration, there must be proof that that which we preach is true and that the gospel of Jesus Christ is greater than the religion of Buddha, the religion of Hinduism, the religion of Mohammed or any other religion.

I was holding a healing crusade in the city of Loberia, and about halfway through the crusade, as I walked into the building one night, a man accosted me, stopped me, said, I don't believe in this Jesus Christ that you preach. I'm a Mohammedan. I believe that Mohammed was a prophet.

I looked at him, I said, brother, I'm not interested in arguments, but I'll tell you what I'll do. Tonight, when I pray for the sick, I said, I'll call for two lines. One, I will pray with.

Two, you will pray with. I'll pray in the name of Jesus Christ. You pray in the name of Mohammed.

Let's see who heals. Oh, no, no, no, I don't want that. I know that night he was in the healing line.

And the next night, all of his family were. That your faith should stand in the demonstration of the spirit and power, signs and wonders. Power is necessary to convince people that your God is real, your message is true, and it's better than theirs.

I had a Jehovah Witness come to my house one day. I invited him in. I let him sit down, and I let him tell me all about what he believed.

It took him about two hours. I just listened. I said at first, I said, I'll listen to you if you'll promise to listen to me.

He said, all right. So I let him go. When he got through, I said, you're a poor salesman.

He said, why? I said, you want me to take all I've got and give me nothing in return. He said, what do you mean? Well, I said, you speak of 144,000, but that 144,000 is already made up, isn't it? Well, yes, I think so. I said, how about the rest of us then? What do we get? I don't know.

I said, you take away my hope, you take away my surety, you take away heaven, you take away everything from me, you take away the Holy Spirit, you take all his gifts and blessings, and what do you give me? A chance of being 144,000 is already made up. And I showed him I'd backed the door so he wouldn't run out. And I told him what I had and what God had done for me.

And I took about a half an hour more. When I got through, he looked at me and he said, sir, if I had what you have, I wouldn't change either. You've got to have something better and be able to prove that it's

better.

And one way, and one powerful way, and one way perhaps most used in the world is a demonstration, the manifestation of the power of the living God. His power to change, his power to heal, his power to work miracles, signs and wonders, but people falling under power, that's a sign. During that time, I've seen many things happen and I've seen nothing happen.

I've seen wonderful testimonies and no testimony, but it's a sign. It's a sign to increase faith, to show that God's there. Sometimes people have asked me in different countries, in different churches, why do people fall down? That's easy.

Well, why? Because they can't stand up. I've seen some people set themselves and weren't going to stand up. Down they go.

It's a sign. The soldiers and the rebel and the crowd came up to arrest Jesus. Who do you are seeking? Jesus of Nazareth.

I am he. We all fell down backwards. A sign.

Oh, oh, oh, such mercy, such grace. If those idiotic men and women had realized, had thought a minute, why did I fall down? What made me lose the power to stand up? If he could do that by saying a word, what else could he do? I can get up, but he could also speak another word. I'd never get up.

This man is right. This man is true. This Jesus has something no one else has.

I don't think I'm going to touch him. Maybe he is the son of God. I think I'll just slip home.

There'll be a wise person, wouldn't it? There'd be a wise man, a wise soldier if he just slipped away because he had a look out. This man is not just any man. We need the operation of the Holy Spirit through the manifestation of power that people might know and believe.

And since the Holy Spirit has come, this last century, it is called the Holy Spirit century, there has been millions, and I say millions, brought into the church through the manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit, all over. There's a book written in Brazil, which is a tremendous ingathering of souls through the power of the Holy Spirit. And the name of the book is, Look out, the Pentecostals are coming.

And they came. My father was a Baptist minister, as you've heard me tell before, many of you, but I'll repeat. He didn't believe in healing, that's just limited to the days of the apostles.

That's all gone now. God doesn't do that nowadays. But at about four years old, my mother was very, very sick.

Doctors gave her about eight days at the most. She was dying, there was no hope. And this brand new Pentecostal preacher came by and talked to my father about healing, and he didn't believe much of it, but he was polite to him.

And then before he was through, he said, Well, would you mind if I prayed for your wife? Who's going to say no to something like that? So he permitted him to pray for his wife. And when he prayed for her, my mother gave him a mighty scream and raised up out of that bed and lived 40 years more. And that's hard on Baptist doctrine.

In fact, it was so hard on it that my dad just buried it. And before it was through, about for two years more, that whole Baptist church was filled with the Holy Ghost. If you've got something better to offer, I'll buy it.

But it's got to be better. It's got to be better. That's why Jesus said to his disciples, I've been under teaching for three years, the most perfect teacher that ever lived on earth.

And he gave his disciples a three-year personal course. And he said, But don't go out yet. Tarry in Jerusalem until you're endued with power.

And he didn't say how long. It took 10 days. And 10 days is a long time when you're sitting there doing nothing, not knowing what to expect or when.

No wonder a lot of people disappeared. There's only 120 left by the time the 10 days were over. I remember when the Holy Spirit came to Argentina.

And the Lord said we had to seek his face. He would come. But he said we had to seek his face from 8 o'clock at night until 12 o'clock at night.

And if the people wouldn't stay that long, don't, please don't come. And three people did come. And we started praying at 8 o'clock.

And they knelt down, blessed their heart, and put their head on their arms and knelt down in front of a chair. And I don't know where they slept or what they did. But I tell you, it was a long four hours.

Just four, not 10 days, just four hours. Just try sitting there in silence for four hours. It gets long.

And I was expecting God to move the first hour. And I quieted myself well the second hour. I kept hoping the third by the fourth.

I lost hope. And as you know the story, I'll repeat it if you'll pardon me. I'll be very briefly.

At the end, 12 o'clock, and I didn't wait till one minute after 12 either. I said, well, let's sit sit up. We all got up.

Well, praise the Lord. I put on a good face. They didn't know what was in my heart.

I couldn't say hallelujah. My heart wasn't full. But my head was empty.

I said, well, what's God been saying to you? He looked at me like, tell me, what do you think? Nothing. And I said to one, I couldn't believe God hadn't done nothing, because he told me he would. So I said to Felix, a young pastor, I said, well, Felix, what God said to you? Nothing.

Went to the little 16-year-old girl, the second one. I said, well, what's God to say to you? Nothing. I went to Felix's wife, Isabel.

Well, I said, Isabel, what the Lord said to you? Well, oh, nothing. And that little hesitation was a mighty boost of hope, because she didn't just way out, say no, nothing. She said, well, and then changed.

I said, well, what was it? No, nothing, nothing. Well, tell me. No, no, no.

Come on, tell me what the Lord said to you. No, it's not anything. She wouldn't tell me.

Went home. Next night at eight o'clock, they were there, and I don't know why they came. Nothing was going on.

But there they were, and we had a repeat. I talked to them about healing the Holy Spirit, and he wouldn't come and all those things until my inkwell went dry. Down they went, and there they sat.

One hour, two hours, three hours, four hours, twelve o'clock sharp. Well, let's get up. What's God said to you tonight? Nothing.

Felix, no. Finally came to Isabel. What the Lord said to you tonight? Oh, really not anything.

Come on, tell me. No. Come on, finally she told me.

She felt like hitting the table. By then, I would have had anything. She could have pushed a peanut on the floor with her nose.

I would have held it. I would have said, go ahead, push it. I feel like hitting the table.

Go ahead, hit the table. No, and no way I could cajole her, I could beg her, I could plead, but she did not in any way want to hit that. Go home.

Next night, they were all there, with a repeat. Four solid hours, nothing. But she still felt like hitting the table, but wouldn't do it until the fourth night.

And I'd had it here up to here. Four hours is a long time to sit waiting for nothing. Long enough you're waiting for an airplane.

Bad enough to sit in an airport and wait. But to wait for nothing, that's a long time. I didn't wait four hours.

1130, I said, this is it. I had them sit up. I said, well, Isabel, did God still put on your heart to hit that table? Yeah.

Well, come hit on it. No, and no way she would. So finally I says, all right, we're going to stand up, we're going to sing a chorus, and we're all going to hit on that table.

You're going to scare me. See a little table sitting there. So all five of us marched around, my wife and I and the three, and we marched around to sing a chorus.

And I hit on the table, my wife hit on the table, and one by one they hit on the table, except Isabel wouldn't. And that went on about 15 minutes, very close to 12 o'clock by then. And finally she hit on that table, and she didn't hit much.

And that wind of the Spirit blew through that room. They were anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit. They were under the power of the Holy Spirit.

And I want to tell you something, that's the beginning of the revival of the Argentine. That still is going on. That was 1949.

It's still there. When I went there, there wasn't a thousand Christians in the country. Today there's well over two million.

God is moving. But the thing is, the thing is, until He comes, and there's a demonstration of power, people say, my religion's better than yours. My religion's better than yours.

If I give someone a tract on the street, he'd throw it as far as he could throw it and cry out, my God, forgive me, I touched a Bible, or a portion of the Bible. Nothing to do with it. When God began to work His works, within one year, 2,500 had been filled with the Holy Ghost.

That was more than 50 years before, all 50 years. And then God began to move. Wonderful things took place.

But you see, Paul is going into a new country, Corinth, into Greece. He said, I determined, no nothing among you will say Jesus Christ, that your faith might be founded in the demonstration of the Spirit and power. Now that's power.

But there's one more thing. He didn't say power only. He said the Spirit and power, didn't he? Jesus manifested power, but the Spirit hadn't come yet, had He? And He was very grieved because there was no repentance, wasn't He? And He said, woe unto you, Bethsaida, Capernaum.

Woe unto you, because I gave you what you wanted, but you didn't give me what I wanted. I healed your people, I've cast out your devils, but you didn't repent. Jesus said when the Holy Spirit comes, He will convince the world of sin and righteousness and judgment.

That's what He said, isn't it? And when He came the first day, the first day 3,000 people in that congregation that Peter accused of killing Jesus Christ, and 3,000 people said it without any fear or hesitation, and they cried out, what do we do to get saved? The conviction of the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit and power, that He might come and bring Christ to us, because as He showed us, as He shows us that wonderful Christ, as He shows us our own condition, as He puts before us realities, repentance is an automatic reaction. Repentance is an automatic reaction to the work of the Holy Spirit Himself, as He moves over the heart of a man or a woman.

Even these days, you see people weeping and crying before God, and Kleenexes all over the place. They call us a Kleenex church. Kleenex people think we're great people.

Why? Why? What brings those tears? Nobody's telling any sad stories. There's no casket up in front with a body in it. Where do those tears come from? The melting Spirit of God that begins to flow into the spirit of a man and begins to touch him.

Charles Spurgeon, the great English preacher, said, when Mr. Wet Eyes leaves the church, the Holy Spirit has left the church. Incidentally, Charles Spurgeon was a Baptist preacher, and he said it more than once. When Mr. Wet Eyes leaves the church, the Holy Ghost has left the church.

He's no longer moving over the hearts of men. He's no longer moving over that inner spirit. We sit there dry-eyed and say, Amen, maybe, and listen to a nice sermon.

And if we don't like what's said, we criticize it. We store it back there, a little bit of it, about 1 17th part might be stored in our memories. Now, we know a little bit more, but the Holy Spirit has not come.

And I want to tell you something. When the Holy Spirit doesn't come to my services, I go home and cry because we're nothing without him. We're nothing without him.

Without him, we can do nothing. In the demonstration of the Spirit, how is the Spirit demonstrated? By convincing men of sin and righteousness and judgment. Billy Graham's readings years ago, way back there in the 40s, he wasn't moving much in the gifts of power, but there was a company of the Holy Spirit.

And when that man would preach to thousands of people there in Los Angeles, and I want to tell you something, his sermon was as simple as any first-year Bible student could have preached it. When he got through preaching and began to invite the people to Christ, there was a Spirit that settled over that people, and the people came running with tears streaming down their eyes and crying out for mercy. Stuart Hamlin, one of the, shall I say, eminent stars of Hollywood, he wrote that song, It Is No Secret What God Can Do.

He went to that meeting, and his own testimony was, I went to accompany my wife because she bugged me so much, I finally went with her. He said, I sat there criticizing the preacher, but he said that all of a sudden when he gave the invitation and called for people to come to Christ, the next thing I knew, I was in the middle of the aisle running forward with tears running down my face, and I didn't know how I got there. The Spirit was there.

The Spirit was there. That's how he got there. He was demonstrating the fact that he was there.

Only the Spirit can go inside this hard crust we call a body, and move into the Spirit of man and into the heart of man, and deal with it, and melt it, and break it, and bring it into subjection, submission, till it cries out, My God, have mercy upon me. That's the work of the Holy Spirit. Paul said, I want your faith to be founded in the demonstration of the Spirit, and power alone isn't enough.

Spirit alone oftentimes isn't enough. People are too set in their ways. When they see the demonstration of power, they're suddenly faced with a God that they never knew before, and he can do things right here in our world.

And they can see it, and they can touch it, and they know it's true. And then, when with that is the Holy Spirit, in the first years of this century, and I remember a good many of them, we saw so often the demonstration of the Spirit and power. Many, many a time, the people were running to the altar, crying out for mercy before the pastor ever finished his sermon.

And then, after the altar call, and after people, that would be an hour or two, then they had the healing service, and those that wanted to be touched in their bodies were invited. And there are many of those, and I've seen all kinds of miracles happen instantly, because God was there. But if he doesn't come, if the power of the Holy Ghost isn't manifested, we've got just another church, maybe a little better than theirs, I don't know.

We've got just another religion, because Christianity was never meant to be a religion. It is a relationship. It is a relationship, for a man or a woman meets directly with his God, and his God reveals himself to that man or woman, and they become a child of God, and with access to heaven, he that is born again can see the kingdom of heaven, and can enter the kingdom of heaven, and he that isn't can't.

Jesus made that point. God grant us that we don't try to build churches with enticing words, but with a manifestation of the Spirit and power. There's one prayer I've prayed 10,000 times, and no exaggeration, Come, Holy Spirit.

There's one song of one of my favorites, Come, Holy Spirit, I need you. I need you. If no one else needs you, I don't care.

I need you much. Come, Holy Spirit. He's the one that does the work.

If any soul is ever saved, it was saved by the Holy Spirit bringing him, bringing that soul to the fountain of blood, and washed him, and made him clean. If there's any body was ever healed, it was done by the Holy Spirit through the gift and power of the ministry. If there's anyone filled with the Holy Ghost, didn't be sure it wasn't the preacher that did it.

It was the Holy Spirit. Come, Holy Spirit, we need you. Come, Holy Spirit, I need you.

Come, Holy Spirit, over this congregation, and even as we dismiss, each one goes his own way, let there be a cry in their heart, go with me. I don't want to go alone. I want you to go with me, and be with me.

Let there be a cry in their hearts, even in their home, and their home churches, and their pastors, and the pastors that are healed. Come, Holy Spirit, I need you. I can't do anything without you.

If you're a pastor, and you stand before a people, you can't do anything without him, nothing that's eternal. You can tell nice stories. You can preach doctrine.

You can teach people in Sunday's classes, and you could have prayers in a home, but without him, you can do nothing. Come, Holy Spirit, I need you. Come, Holy Spirit, I need you.

My prayer is, as the Holy Spirit has come to us these days, that you'll take that hunger, that thirst, that even now is in your heart, and take it home with you. Nurture it. Let it grow.

Let it become more intense. Let it become deep within you a cry. Come, Holy Spirit, fill my heart.

Fill my life. Maybe you've had the filling. Maybe it's come to you, but my Bible says be filled now, not a past experience, a today experience.

I need him every day, and I do my best to meet with him every day. I need him. Come, Sweet Spirit, I pray.

Come in your grace. Come in your power. Come in your own way, but come, and Holy Spirit, that's my prayer tonight.

For these dear ones that have come so far with a desire to meet with you, and Lord, you've been gracious. You've met with many, and I thank you so much, but let not one leave it here and go home, back to business as usual. Let there be an inspiration.

Let there be an understanding. Let there be a hope. Let there be a faith that will cry out, go with me, Holy Spirit.

I need you at home. I need you in my job. I need you in my house.

I need you in my church. I need you in my life. I need you in my spirit.

Come, Holy Spirit. Shall we stand?

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