

“The Unexplainable”

(The Spirit...part 3)

Dr. Richard S. Koole
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I. Introduction

A. Elijah (I Kings 18)

1. Background
 - a. Ahab and Jezebel
 - b. Elijah and the 3 years of drought
2. The showdown on Mount Carmel
 - a. The 450 prophets of Baal
 - b. The contest....I Kings 18:25-39

(25) Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire.” (26) So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “O Baal, answer us!” They shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made. (27) At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” he said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.” (28) So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. (29) Mid-day passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

- c. Like an Indian rain dance
 1. Lots of activity...but no rain
 - d. Like a lot of churches these days
 3. Elijah’s turn
 - a. Poured water on the altar

b. His words

(36) At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. (37) Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.” (38) Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

4. The response of the people

(39) When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord—He is God! The Lord—He is God!”

5. They didn’t say that Elijah was a great preacher

a. They said God was a great God

6. They had witnessed the “unexplainable”

B. Our BHAG’s

1. Background

2. Justin’s BHAG

a. *“I want to see the “unexplainable happen”*

3. I’ve never forgotten that statement

4. I don’t want to “build another church”

a. Churches we build only by our own efforts and not in the strength of the Spirit will quickly collapse when we don’t push and prod them along.

5. Francis Chan in *“Forgotten God”*

a. “We’ve created a whole brand of churches that do not depend on the Spirit, a whole culture of Christians who are not disciples, a new group of “followers” who do not follow. If all God asked for were faceless numbers to fill the churches, then we would all be doing all right. Most of us would feel pretty confident. But simply having a good speaker, a service that is short and engaging, a good venue, and whatever else we add to the mix does not make a “good” or “successful” church. God intended for His bride, those who claim His name, to be much more than this.” (Chan)

6. What Jesus promised us in Matthew 16:18

“I will build my church and the gates of hell will not overcome it”

- a. I want us to be a Matthew 16:18 church
- b. More than a “Rain Dance”

8. Ephesians 3:16-21

(16) I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, (17) so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, (18) may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, (19) and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (20) Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, (21) to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

9. I want God to do more than we can imagine....the unexplainable

C. Two incredible truths re: the Holy Spirit

1. *He is God*
2. *He lives within you*

D. What that means to you today

II. Review

#1 He helps you love and worship Jesus

#2 He enlightens you regarding the mysteries of God

#3 He intercedes in your prayers

#4 He opens and closes doors for you

#5 He can be hurt by your actions

#6 He played a key role in your salvation

#7 He protects you from Satan

#8 He transforms you into the image of Christ

1. II Corinthians 3:18

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

III. New

#9 He adopted you into the family of God

1. Relaxing with my family

- a. Annie and Candace
- b. Closeness and familiarity

2. Part of God's family

a. Galatians 4:4-7

(4) But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, (5) to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.(6) Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." (7) So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

- b. What it means to have the "full rights of sons"
- c. What does it mean to be an "heir?"

3. What I'm willing to do for my children

- a. In this life
- b. When I'm gone
 - 1. An inheritance
 - 2. They're my "heirs"
- c. I do it gladly
 - 1. Even though they aren't perfect

#10 He convicts you of your sins

1. When you first felt the pull of the Holy Spirit
 - a. Conviction for sin
 - b. A yearning inside of you
2. Prior to salvation
 - a. John 16:7-8

(7) But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. (8) When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:
 - b. When you accepted Christ
 1. That deep sense of conviction
 2. The understanding of the love of Jesus
 - c. It is to your “advantage” or “good” that I go away
 1. Because of the indwelling power
2. After salvation
 - a. The Holy Spirit is more than a “guilty conscience”
 - b. He warns us of sin and danger
 - c. The guilt you feel when you sin
 1. He won’t let it go
 - d. But when you confess your sin
 1. Freedom and release
3. Your need to confess your sins
 - a. One-to-another

- b. To God
- 4. The need to repent for your sins
 - a. Get it all out
 - b. This morning
- 4. The freedom you will feel
 - a. Because he will forgive you
 - b. The burden of unconfessed sin
- 5. Quenching the Holy Spirit
 - a. When he stirs us....and we ignore him
 - b. We don't say "no"... we just don't respond

#11 He reveals God's will to you

1. Life becomes a result of the choices you have made

- a. Decisions as a high school and college student
 - 1. What will I be when I grow up?
 - 2. Who should I marry?
 - 3. Where should I go to college?
 - 4. Should I join the army, navy, air force or marines?
- b. The impact of those decisions

2. The will of God happens today...not only in the future

- a. Living by the Spirit implies a continual and active interaction with the Holy Spirit
- b. "It is easy to use the phrase 'God's will for my life' as an excuse for inaction or even disobedience. It's much less demanding to think about God's will for your future than it is to ask him what he wants you to do in the next ten minutes. It's safer to commit to following Him someday, instead of this day. (Chan)

c. Do you listen to the Holy Spirit as you stand in line at the post office? Perhaps He is asking you to begin a conversation with the elderly lady in front of you. Do you allow the Holy Spirit to lead you when you are making your budget? Perhaps He will direct you to allocate the monies differently. Do you seek the Spirit's leading when you are with your family each evening?

3. *The will of God usually involves other people*

- a. When God prompts you to say something
- b. Candace...Melissa...Deb
- c. Don't often know the outcome of a kind word

4. *Failure to follow his leading may "quench" the Holy Spirit*

- a. When people ask for...and then ignore your advice
- b. When the Spirit makes it clear...and you ignore his leading
- c. A.W. Tozer

And to expose our hearts to truth and consistently refuse or neglect to obey the impulses it arouses is to stymie the motions of life within us and, if persisted in, to grieve the Holy Spirit into silence.

- d. What is the Spirit asking of you?
 - 1. "I'll get back to you"but never do
 - 2. Don't put him off

5. *The will of God is a process....not a destination*

- a. Enjoy today...it's all you've got
- b. Ask him each morning to show you an opportunity
 - 1. To help somebody else today
 - 2. To share a word of encouragement
- c. What does he want you to do this afternoon?

6. *The Holy Spirit will help you recognize the will of God*

7. *The will of God is best discovered by those seeking it*

8. *The will of God usually unfolds one small step at a time*

a. He seldom tells you more than you need to know right now

9. *There are reasons people don't want to know the will of God*

a. The Spirit may want you to do some uncomfortable things

1. To sacrifice everything financially

2. To do or say something that will cause you to feel humiliation in the opinion of people

3. To move to another job...city...or country

4. To move you out of your safety and comfort zone

5. To stretch you beyond your comfort

6. To take away all your security

7. Not talking about becoming a foreign missionary

a. Living in the here and now

b. Afraid to take risks

1. Wonder what God might have done with your life

2. Had you been willing to follow his lead

#12 *He comforts you during the tough times*

1. Josh and the sailor who lost a child

2. When people seek my counsel during times of grief

a. Sorrows this past week

b. Last Sunday morning

1. Sue's dad died

2. Beth was called to her dying mother

- 3. Gil's sister died
- c. The first question I ask...
 - 1. Did they ask Christ to be their Savior?
- d. Few people ask...
 - 1. What did they do for a living?
 - 2. How much money did they accumulate?
 - 3. What were they driving?
- e. At funerals, people remember simple acts of kindness
- 3. The comfort of knowing this isn't all there is
 - a. The sorrow we bear is not worthy of comparison to what awaits us
- 4. John 14:16-17

(16) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor (Comforter) to be with you forever—(17) the Spirit of truth.
- 5. "Another"
 - a. Greek....the same as
- 6. When disappointment hits
 - a. Be still and know that I am God
- 7. Comfort isn't needed until you're "uncomfortable"
 - a. "The Valley of the Shadow"
 - b. The Branon family

#13 He empowers you to achieve your purpose in life

- 1. His purpose for your life
 - a. Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

b. Luke 24:49

I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high

2. Live a life of no regrets
3. God is capable of more than you can imagine

#14 He produces spiritual fruit in your life

1. Spiritual fruit is the surest evidence of salvation

a. Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

b. Don't be fooled by "fake fruit"

1. Lots of hard work

c. Grunting and saying through clenched teeth, "I will be patient" hasn't worked yet...and isn't likely to change

2. The Spirit is capable of producing lots of fruit!

3. Sin limits your ability to produce fruit

4. Fruit is for the benefit of others

IV. Summary

A. Next time....Your remarkable spiritual gift

B. The Vision for Chapel Pointe

1. More than a rain dance
 - a. To have you respond as they did to Elijah

(37) so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.” (38) Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. (39) When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord—He is God! The Lord—He is God!”

1. To experience the “unexplainable”

a. Ephesians 3:20

(20) Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

b. Our debt

c. Our people

1. Years of addiction broken

a. Alcohol and drugs

b. Porn

c. Habits

2. Shattered marriages healed

a. Tears of confession and repentance

3. Courage to the timid

4. Lives of no regrets

5. Produce a generation of champions

d. When people marvel

1. How did that happen?

2. No reasonable explanation

3. People see the transformation in your life and say, “The Lord—He is God!”

4. When people look at your life and know that you couldn’t be doing it by your own power