

NCMI EQUIP South Africa 2013

Session 7

The Presence and Power of God

by Tyrone Daniel



I keep saying that the most revealing thing about the church today, and the churches we lead, is what we do or don't say about Jesus Christ. If you want to know the health of the church, ask the question: how much airplay is Jesus getting? Not just in meetings but in conversations? How much do we talk about Jesus compared to our mission or programmes? How well do we know the people or leaders at the expense of knowing Jesus Christ, who is the central theme and focus to everything?

In light of this I want to say that, to some degree, it appears that we as partnering churches are quite healthy in this, if I look at our Equip SA 2013 time together. We've raved and boasted about Jesus so much. It's great that we've been connecting, but Jesus is awesome. And did I mention that Jesus is awesome? That's been a real theme over this time together. May it be said of us that we are a people who are first and foremost passionate about Jesus. We're not raising an NCMI banner or the flag of local church, as important as that is, but we want to see Jesus high and exalted. As we do that, watch what God will do in this season. As people come running into this Kingdom they will see Jesus in his glory and splendour.

May it be a season that we never stop talking about Jesus. May we go from here without a concept of Jesus but a revelation of who this King is. Not a revelation borrowed from someone else but revealed from the Father to us. He is the Christ, the risen King, who is alive and well and awesome and, let's not forget, he is awesome! Let the testimonies flow through our churches, our businesses, our lives, our families, and everything on the awesomeness of this King Jesus who we serve and love so dearly and who loves us so dearly.

Living out the Bible

We've claimed to be a Bible based people. That doesn't mean we just preach what's in it but we live it out. If it's in there we want it. If not we don't. We are Bible plus and minus nothing. If it's the Word of God it's still relevant, it's still needed, and we want it.

If you read the whole Bible you will see that everything in it centres around Jesus. So, to be obsessed about Jesus isn't some good idea. The Old Testament anticipates his coming, the New Testament is about how he has come. Then if you look at Acts it's about the proclamation that he has come. The

epistles talk about how he is Lord. And Revelation ultimately is all about him and the consummation. He is coming back!

I want to be ready for his return and want to prepare those around me and the nations and cities and regions for it. When he comes back, the whole world will know, and I don't want it to be too late – people everywhere should at least have an opportunity to meet Jesus before that day, when everyone will fall to their knees and acknowledge this King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He's coming back as the righteous judge and the bridegroom for his bride.

Open to the Holy Spirit

So let's stay focused, knowing that day is coming soon, and remember we have a responsibility. If we seriously are enamoured with Jesus and want to see him highly exalted; and want the world to see him in his glory and splendour; we need to be far more open to the Holy Spirit to magnifying Jesus in our lives and ministries. After all, the Holy Spirit's primary role, according to the Scriptures, is to magnify Jesus.

When Jesus promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit, what he ultimately said was that it was better if he goes because if he stays, the Holy Spirit cannot come (John 16:7). So, right now, the Holy Spirit is better for you and I than having Jesus on this earth. And while the Holy Spirit comforts us and fellowships with us and empowers us, Jesus himself said in John 15:26 that the Holy Spirit's primary role is to bring glory to Jesus. So, if we're serious about that then we need to be embracing the Holy Spirit in our lives. We need to be serious about understanding his role so that we can be empowered to show the world who Jesus Christ really is.

AW Tozer wrote in *The Pursuit of God*:

“One of the most telling blows which the enemy ever struck at the life of the Church was to create in her a fear of the Holy Spirit. No one who mingles with Christians in these times will deny that such a fear exists.”

(Available for free at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25141/25141-h/25141-h.htm>)

The enemy knows that if we take the Holy Spirit out or if we fear him, or if we're nervous, or if we've had bad experiences, he can get the Church moving in the flesh. Most of us – including myself – have probably had bad experiences in what has been called the Holy Spirit and we've said we don't want that. The trouble is that we say we want the real or nothing and therefore we settle for nothing because we can't find the real. But we so desperately need the Holy Spirit in this season.

Brother Yun says something similar to Tozer:

“After I arrived in the West, it didn't take long for me to realise that something fundamentally was missing in the body of Christ, which was the power and presence of God. I don't say this to condemn anyone but rather I point it out in the hope that it will speak to your heart and help the church. Thousands of churches today don't preach the word with the authority and power that Jesus promised to all who follow him. This is a tragedy as such powerless churches end up relying on human wisdom to see results. The fruit of such a half-baked Gospel invariably produces a harvest of half-baked believers, most of whom will fall away at the first sign of trouble.”

Looking at Acts

Acts 1: 1 – 3

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to *do* and to *teach* 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive.

We see in this text that Jesus *taught* and *did* many things. When he went to the cross and said it was finished, his role on earth was over, there was nothing more for him to do here. Now he has a heavenly mission, interceding on our behalf as we walk out what it is he finished on this earth.

What he did he wants us to live out and continue living out. What he taught he wants us to teach. He began it, he set it in motion, he accomplished what he accomplished and did what was needed. Then the Holy Spirit came so we could continue to walk in what he walked in and teach what he taught.

I still think that the purest truth of the Kingdom is what Jesus taught around it, because Jesus understands it like no one else. We need to get more of our theology around the Kingdom from the Gospels not just from the Pauline letters. Jesus expressed it and preached it and we need to do the same.

We also see in this text that Jesus went about giving convincing proofs that he is alive. We carry this responsibility as well, to go into the world – the regions or new areas God is promising to us – and show and prove that Jesus is alive. We're not just to preach a message and hope for the best, but we're to get out there and demonstrate.

The passage continues from verse 3b:

He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptised with[a] water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.’

6 Then they gathered round him and asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’

7 He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’

Jesus says, “You will *be* my witnesses.” I still find the book of Acts amazing. In fact, it often disturbs me – things that are recorded in this book challenge me and make me tell the Lord about how I want to see all that in my day. I know some of us do see these things and we praise God but it's time for more to walk in it.

It's not about flying to conferences to catch people's hearts or anointing. The same Holy Spirit that was there in the early church is the same Holy Spirit we have today. We don't have to go find him. I think at times the KJV has done us harm by calling him a Holy Ghost as some people think he's this ghost zooming around that we need to go find and bring to our church and city and people. With all due respect, he's not a ghost. He is God the Holy Spirit! He never left! He has always been here!

The church was birthed in power – the same power we have. He isn't some experience, good or bad. We just have to acknowledge him and walk in his power and trust him and understand there's more in God for us. We need to embrace who he is and honour him as God. Make room for him, he is holy and always holy and looking to empower his church afresh in this season.

In our togetherness, I'm trusting for there to be more manifestation of the Holy Spirit; more healings; more signs and wonders. We don't see the disciples going to 'do' witnessing, but they were 'being' witnesses. It wasn't a duty, it was an identity.

John 14:12

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

Jesus did some magnificent things when he walked this earth. Yet he says we'll do greater works! Do we need to learn how to do these? No, there's no teaching anywhere that shows us. Rather, you walk with him. You operate with him.

Now I'm not saying that we're to become enamoured with signs and wonders and all these great works. No, we're enamoured with Jesus. That's established and it will always be that way. If you lose your passion for Jesus you're in serious trouble. This stuff should not take us away from Jesus but get us to be more wowed by him. It should point people to Jesus and not to us. We're not going to break open cities and the places we're working in with a good message but with a demonstration of who this King is, because they've heard so many other things. Even in my nation (the U.S.) there's a willingness to have Jesus shown. Many people say Jesus doesn't want to be tested, but it's interesting to see how many times Jesus healed people in the Scriptures before they knew who he was.

Simple message

This is a very simple message but I believe it's right where we're at. I'm loving how people are hungry for the Holy Spirit again. I'm stirred that people get on aeroplanes and pay a lot of money to go to a conference where God is moving. It shows they're hungry. I think they're crazy to do it because they don't need to, but I am stirred.

God's looking to satisfy the hungry. He's not holding out on us. He's just wanting us to understand what he's doing today and not become enamoured with all the signs and wonders and miracles, but stay true to the King and his Kingdom and walk in that power today, because I believe it's here for us today and we can walk in it.

Mark 16:15

15 He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on people who are ill, *and they will get well.*'

19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

Jesus commissioned his disciples to preach the Gospel to all creation and lay hands on the sick, and he

promised the sick would recover. Then he left them and guess what? They went and did what he told them to do and he did what he said he would do. He accompanied them with signs, wonders and miracles.

There's got to be a response in our hearts. We can't hear stirring messages and then say, "Lord go do it." God is saying, "No you do it and I'll accompany you." Which tells me again that we're not running after signs, wonders and miracles because according to the Bible, they follow us, not the other way around! You've got to get this because a lot of people are running after all of that at the expense of the Kingdom rather than a motive of seeing the Kingdom advance.

Miracles are there to serve the harvest. The harvest is not there to serve the miracles. Miracles point people to Jesus so that we can see salvation come to them. The greatest miracle is still salvation, where people become a new creation! You can get healed right now but still go to hell. So don't be enamoured with miracles but look to this King who brought salvation and see that part of all that is healing.

This Gospel is a lifestyle and it's one of power. Some people like to talk about a "Word and Spirit journey" as if each of those were options in the Gospel. No, we need both and our focus is on King and Kingdom not on whether we are "Word" or "Spirit" people. If we get the King thing right we'll see the Gospel advancing in demonstrated power.

I believe we need to rediscover our radical edge as God's people in this season. I'm dumb enough to say that I'm going to believe all this and step out. We need to be walkers not talkers. In our togetherness God is not just calling a handful of radical people but wants to see all of us become radical! Let's rediscover what we had.

Some pointers for power

There are one or two pointers we need to keep in mind as we demonstrate this Kingdom.

One of them is that we don't address demons in our power. I'm amazed how the church thinks they've been given all this power. Don't go in the name of your church or NCMI, the demons will beat you up! We don't have the authority in us but in him, and what an authority that is! We have an opportunity to deliver people and see them liberated and living in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

We can see in Acts that when there was a demonstration of power the Word of God always spread. It's not about people looking at what we can do but about the Word going to places it can otherwise not go if it's not accompanied with power. Miracles from God come with a message. Many seem to have forgotten that. The message is wrapped up in the miracle. When someone gets healed, something

happens in their heart and they want to know what's happened. That's why we need miracles again. That's why we need to be walking in it.

Secondly, I don't believe you can be taught how to walk in signs and wonders. Many of us fly to places to be taught how to do this. You know Paul was never taught? He had an encounter with the Lord that changed him and then he believed what God said. He laid hands on the sick and they were healed. He broke open cities. Yes, he walked in partnership. But let me tell you, he didn't attend a class on how to heal people.

Now I'm not mocking that. We equip and believe in equipping but there are no formulas here. Because you don't heal anyone, Jesus does! So you can't learn how to heal anyone!

But there does seem to be a pattern that we see from scripture: When people are desperate God ministers and moves with them. Where there is an expectancy, God often moves. Not always, but generally he does.

It also seems that your level of faith is up to you and you're going to get something in line with that level. Not always. And it also seems that obedience plays a role. Miracles happen when we combine our will to the will of God – not when we tell God to heal someone because it is God who initiates. We co-operate with him in what he's doing.

In Acts 3 we see how a paralytic was begging at the gate and it was apparently a regular spot of his. How many times did Peter and John walk past that man? I believe Jesus walked past that man. But there was a moment when the will of God and faith combined and as the beggar asked Peter and John for money, Peter said, “Get up and walk in the name of Jesus!” and the man was healed. And look at the impact of that healing on the city and how many were added to the church in one day! This is what happens when we combine our will to the will of God.

Hearing God

With this in mind, it seems to me that there is a hearing of God required. We'll be hearing God until the day Jesus comes back. We have to hear God in everything we do. We say, “God's will, God's bill” and so we better know if something is the will of God if he's going to pay for it.

Presumption is one of the biggest destroyers for us and our future, where we presume God's in something rather than hear him first. The Lord is watching over his Word to perform it. Well we better make sure it is his word that we're walking in! He's not going to watch over our word!

Are you making time for God to speak? When it comes to signs and wonders we have to hear him as

we walk and go. When believers have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying they can respond obediently to the Word and see the grace and power of God.

Acting on it

Having said that, we need to act on what we hear. Have you ever heard the Lord and done nothing about it? The result? No one got healed. It's one thing to say you hear God all the time, it's another to do what he says. When we hear God's Word to us we must believe it, receive it, and act upon it no matter what.

I believe we also do need to speak it. It amazes me how God's power flows through God's word. It amazes me how we don't really see Jesus pray for the sick but rather just speak healing over them. Even Peter and John in Acts 3 didn't pray for the paralytic but they just told him to get up and walk. They didn't shout tongues from heaven and freak everyone out! The attraction was the healing not weird stuff taking place.

I want the supernatural like never before but not the weird stuff that we call supernatural that doesn't seem to exist in the Bible. The supernatural should draw sinners to Jesus, not chase Christians and sinners away! God does do what he wants to do and we're not going to be prescriptive – he'll tell us to do things that may make us uncomfortable. But if it's chasing people away from Jesus, is that the Holy Spirit? It's his role to draw people to Jesus and see him exalted.

A mystery to healing

It's true that there is some mystery to healing. Sometimes people aren't healed. You and I can arm wrestle about this but it seems that happened in the Bible too. I'm asking us to protect the truth here and stay free and not put bondage on people. Many people have stopped praying for the sick because they haven't seen people get healed, and when they listen to preachers on this topic, those preachers tell them it's because they didn't have enough faith.

Sometimes in my own life I've prayed for people and had no faith and they've been healed. It was a sovereign move of God. Then there have been times where I've laid hands on people after I've been fasting and looking to live this out; I've got so much faith that I feel I can walk on water; and I look over to some guy on the street and shout, "Get up!" and nothing happens!

We often tell sick people that they aren't healed because they don't have enough faith. Now they feel sick and guilty as a result! Let's look at the Scriptures – there are times when people weren't healed. Why is it that Paul told Timothy to take some wine for his stomach, rather than heal him? I don't know. But they both clearly believed in miracles. So what I do know is this: we still keep praying for

the sick.

We often see that radical guys in history didn't walk in this all the time. That gives us faith to know it doesn't happen all the time and we can continue to do this. God does what God says he will do. I'm happy to know that God wants to heal and has made a way for everyone to be healed, but at the same time he doesn't heal everyone. I'll pray for anyone any time and trust they're going to be healed. Are you still in that place?

There's a mission in healing

A major part of the Great Commission includes signs, wonders and miracles. We know it's not just about going but also about making disciples. And it's also about walking in power. This is our mandate in God and with it we'll see the Word spread where it otherwise might not be able to.

Acts 8: 4 – 8

4 Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. 5 Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. 6 And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. 7 For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralysed or lame were healed. 8 So there was much joy in that city.

Let's look at this scripture and get some pointers from it.

1. We preach Christ, the Word of God, not miracles (verse 4 & 5)

The whole emphasis of our lives is Jesus. If you want signs and wonders and miracles, then lift up the name of Jesus. Proclaim the Christ! Then the job's just about done. Because there is power in His name.

AW Tozer says this:

“We who preach the Gospel must not think of ourselves as public relations agents sent to establish good will between Christ and the world. We must not imagine ourselves commissioned to make Christ acceptable to big business, the press, the world of sports or modern education. We are not diplomats but prophets, and our message is not a compromise but an ultimatum.

“Dare we, the heirs of such a legacy of power, tamper with the truth? Dare we with our stubby pencils erase the lines of the blueprint or alter the pattern shown us in the Mount? May God forbid. Let us preach the old cross and we will know the old power.”

Don't take Jesus out of this! He's the message that brings healing, signs, wonders and miracles.

2. Miracles bring response (verse 6)

The people responded after they heard Philip and saw the signs he did. God wants people to hear and see. Some of us are just speaking and they're hearing but they're not seeing.

3. People are set free (verse 7)

There was great joy in that city. Do you want that for your city? If we preach Christ, if we preach the Word, if we walk in power, people will be set free and we'll see them full of joy.

We want the truth

Like you, I've heard a lot on this subject and I'm by no means an expert. In fact, I'm yet to meet one. And if someone claims they are, I probably don't want to meet them, because this isn't something you can become an expert in.

There's a lot of rubbish being taught and we don't want to fight that but in our context, in our togetherness, we want the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The truth will keep us liberated and actually walking in this.

So often we are so hungry for more – which isn't wrong – that we take whatever seems to be working but isn't really working. I'm reminded of Matthew 7:21 – 23 where Jesus talks about people who did amazing things in his name but yet he never knew them. That whole thing blows my theology and tells me that because something is happening it doesn't mean things really *are* happening. We want it to really happen the way God wants it to happen, so let's be real about this.

Acts 10:38

...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

Jesus came as an example and he said that we must do what he did and teach what he taught (as we see in Acts 1.) He began this and we're to carry it on. So from Acts 10:38 above we can see that:

1. It's God who anoints

Man appoints but God anoints. You can't have what God hasn't given you. You can't have what I've got, because you're not me. God apportions according to how he desires.

I believe in the laying on of hands – it's in the Bible – but generally, if you look at Scripture, it's more for commissioning. I can't lay my hands on someone else and now they have my anointing. I can appoint someone wherever I want but it's God who anoints, not me. We can't fly to another region to try and catch some other man's anointing or have him lay hands on us so that we can take what he has to our city.

Look, if I'm wrong then ignore what I'm saying but let's look at the Bible. Jesus never did that and he never said the Great Commission was about laying hands on people and then everything is sorted. I wish he did, that would be so much easier! Discipling is a lot harder than laying on hands.

2. God anoints people

It says in this scripture that God anointed “Jesus of Nazareth”. That points to his humanity. So we see that God anoints people and that's good news!

3. God anoints with the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit covers, seals and fills believers.

4. God anoints with power

The Scripture says that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit AND with power. It's God's power working through man's weakness. It's awesome to realise that God makes this available to us. How many times have we had to lean on God's anointing when things have gotten very, very hard? To some degree those are the best moments in our lives and ministries – when you recognise that without him you're finished.

You can amaze people with a good message but there will be no transformation without the anointing of the Holy Spirit which empowers and brings life. My dad used to often teach that the anointing is simply this: the Holy Spirit's enabling and ability to get the job done. Not to feel good, look good or show how awesome we are, but to get the job done.

We need that. The future is so bright but we need the Holy Spirit to anoint us and lead us. In our

weakness he is strong.

Business people, you want strategies? I've met many people where God has provided his anointing for business as they've listened to him. Parents – let me tell you that none of the books have helped me a time of crisis. There's anointing to father your sons and daughters.

If you think you can do this, please stop doing this. Because you can't do this.

5. The anointing enables us to do good

We need the help of the one who is good to do good. Are we doing good? We're anointed to.

6. The anointing brings healing and wholeness to others

7. The anointing brings freedom

It says that Jesus healed all under the oppression of the devil. You and I don't do that, the Holy Spirit does that. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. Oppression opposes what is good, right and holy and we've been anointed to break that. The anointing breaks the yoke and lifts the burden off all people.

8. God was with him

In a sense, the anointing is evidence that God is with us. What matters most to me is this: is God with us? I don't want to have to guess. He's either here or he's not.

Now I know he's with us because the Bible says so but is there a clear evidence that he is? That there's life? We want to experience and see and walk in more of his signs, wonders and manifestations. We're not running after that, it runs after us, but it would be wrong and foolish to think we're going to do what God's called us to do without walking in the power he promised.

King and Kingdom

God is doing this with us but there's more. And it's for all. Some of us have become so Word based that we've forgotten about the Spirit, while others are in the opposite place. I don't know how we've separated these two things but we're about the King and the Kingdom. You cannot preach Kingdom without demonstrating Kingdom. If we can talk people into the Kingdom then people can talk them out of the Kingdom. That's happening a lot. Because we're relying on wise and persuasive words rather than the cross. Remember Paul said he didn't come with wise and persuasive words, lest the

cross be emptied of its power. (1 Corinthians 1:17.) How much are we living in wise and persuasive words and a powerless cross?

There's a fresh season for more of the manifestation and presence and power of God. I'm not telling the Father how he has to come or what he has to do – if it's him I'm happy, I'll take whatever he wants to do. But I'm not doing this without him and hoping he's with me, I want the world to see he's with me.

I think of Exodus 33. How will people know we are God's people? Not good words, big church buildings or even a people with a passion for the nations. The only way people will know we're different from anyone else is because God's presence is with us.

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