



**KING'S
CHURCH**
EDINBURGH

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Where are the Signs and Wonders?

Jesus opened His ministry by reading *Isaiah 61:1-2* (*Luke 4:16-21*), and the gospels are full of Him healing people (e.g. *Mark 1:29-34*). He then gave authority to His followers to do the same and the book of Acts shows this happening (*Acts 2:42-43, 3:6-10, 5:12-16, 8:4-8, etc*). Healings and deliverances were not an end in themselves: they were signs that were to put Jesus as the Messiah, they were confirmation of His authenticity as the Son of God.

For the church to grow, we need an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in amazing measure so that we can see something dramatic happen, so that we can see signs and wonders. The people in Acts were very ordinary and imperfect but they'd had such an encounter with the Holy Spirit that they saw extraordinary things happen and they turned the world upside-down (*Acts 17:16*).

Three observations from *Acts 5:12-16*:

1. Many, regularly, all. This was their experience of healing, whereas ours is usually: little, seldom, and few. There have been times in church history when "many, regularly, all" has been the church's experience, let's believe and plan and act like it could be for us.

2. Peter's shadow - this is really weird! People sensed the presence of God on these people and did everything they could to get close. They were awe-struck and desperate. The disciples weren't healing people through formulas, they were simply empowered by the presence of God in that moment, like Jesus (*John 5:19*).

3. In the open. Signs and wonders are fundamentally for unbelievers, so if you want to see them more then you need to begin to offer to pray for people outside of church meetings. *“The meeting place is the learning place for the marketplace.”*

The big question: If you really do believe that Jesus is alive, why don't we see more healings happening?

- **Lack of faith.** Jesus told some of the people He healed that their faith had healed them. We tend to be very analytical and sceptical, which is contrary to faith.
- **Too complicated.** It's our responsibility to pray, it's God's responsibility to heal. And if He doesn't do it the first time, ask again. This is childlike faith.
- **We don't like mystery.** We don't like getting involved in things we don't understand. Maturity reveals more of the mystery! There are questions we won't get answers to - this mustn't stop us from praying for healing. Mystery is good: if there wasn't any, we might think we were all-knowing like God is.
- **Disappointment.** This is a powerful emotion which we have to acknowledge but should not let it shape our faith.
- **Lack of desperation.** We give up far too easily because we think there are other options and because we haven't got a big enough vision of God.

God heals, it's literally His name! (*Exodus 15:26*) Jesus showed us perfectly what God is like, He has triumphed over death, and God does not change.

A local church must have a culture of healing and become a healing community. We must be expectant and take and make opportunities. How to do this:

1. We celebrate all forms of healing that come from God. This is true for miracles and medical knowledge because it's all from God.
 2. Health for the whole person. The gospel is for every aspect of people's lives, and God can heal all things. The Christian community can counsel, support, teach to heal. We should look after our bodies and do all that we can to demonstrate to the world that we have a reason to live.
 3. Expect the miraculous. God does this, there is medical documentation of this. Adrian Holloway (<http://www.adrianholloway.com/healing/>) has many stories of healings you can read. God cares about even the smallest thing.
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Questions:

- Are you convinced from the New Testament that Jesus healed people and wants to heal people through His followers?
- Do you have any encouraging stories of healing that happened to you or people you know?
- Which of the three observations from *Acts 5:12-16* did you find most encouraging.
- Which of the reasons Dave suggested for not expecting miracles is most true for you? How can you grow in faith for this?
- What steps can you take to begin to see God's healing power breakout through you?



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