

In Faith Crises, Tarry A Bit

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Based Upon Acts 1:1-8; 2:1-4

"THE former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

"For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 1:1-8; Acts 2:1-4). At a critical time in the church's early development, they stood at the edge of something far bigger than they could have even imagined. Some were still reeling from the effects of Jesus' crucifixion, trying to understand why He allowed Himself to be trampled by the enemy. Others were ecstatic that He had risen on the third day, just like He said He would. Many others were looking forward to the time He would finally establish His kingdom on earth, defeating Roman rule. And others continued to harbor hurt feelings related to their campaigns to be first in the kingdom. Now, how do you prepare a motley, dejected bunch of followers, who have deep-seated feelings of resentment, and possibly even animosity for one another? It would require a miracle of God's grace, and laser focus on the mission, of their Master.

There are times in our lives when we experience similar crises of faith. There are times that even among our brothers and sisters in the faith, it appears that we have irreconcilable differences. There are times when one group of believers is absolutely right about important issues, and the other group is wrong, or vice-versa. There are times when whatever is causing a schism, are not necessarily the issues themselves, but our heart condition towards others relating to whatever we are passionate about. In times like these, we, like the early believers, require a miracle of God's grace, and laser focus on the mission, of our Master. But, how?

I am not smart enough to give a set of guidelines to answer such a conundrum. However, Scripture says that when the early church traveled that road, their Lord commanded them to tarry.

They were to tarry in Jerusalem to await the infilling of the Spirit on a level the world had never before experienced. Though they had proud people

among them campaigning for the highest seats in the kingdom, they were to tarry. Though they had religious and cultural chameleons in their midst (Peter would be checked on this later), they were to tarry. Though they were confused about the kingdom, the timing of its arrival, the nature of its constitution, and their mission, they were to tarry. But, for what and what purpose were they to tarry? And, what would be their reward for their patience in God's presence? The Bible says that the people of God were unified in their wait. They were all awaiting the same Power, which their same Master had commanded, for the same purpose of saving lost souls all around the world. The reward was a mighty, rushing, engulfing, move of power in the Spirit! Somehow, their obedience to tarry, and with expectant faith being willing to receive power, garnered unimaginable results—thousands of lost souls were saved through the unction of God's Spirit.

If you find yourself in a crisis of faith, or among fellow believers who seem to have irreconcilable differences, our Master's command to all of us is to tarry, receive His power, and move through the final paces of His mission. If you want a detailed description of how this all works, I am incapable of providing it, but rest assured that if you are willing and obedient, the Lord will do the same for you, that He did for the early believers. Now, tarry, receive the Holy Ghost in last-days proportions, and complete your Master's mission, to the end that we can all get off this crazy planet and be with God.