

## Vocabulary Word #4 – Supernatural

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Vocabulary for Our Times (Pt 4)

February 3, 2019

Intro ... “It’s Only Natural”

**Dan 10:1-14** ...Daniel's Encounter with the Supernatural

**Eph 6:11-12** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

**1 Corinthians 11:10** “...a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

*“The Bible presents angelic beings as beings 'with whom we have to do,' as one of the environments of the Christian life. It is hard for the modern Christian to know what to make of this. Believers in Bible times were deeply conscious of the presence of angels in their midst... Paul feels no need to explain this phrase. He assumes the Corinthians will understand what he means. But I recall my revered professor of theology, John Murray, shaking his head sadly after reading this passage and confessing that he had no idea what it meant. Nor can I offer insight. Modern Christians, including myself, have lost the vivid conciseness of angelic beings that NT believers took for granted. ...Part of the reason is that modern people have lost touch with the supernatural... They have become skeptical of any beings beyond those of our senses.” John Frame, "Systematic Theology", p. 777*

*I am firmly convinced that too many Christians spend most of their lives trying to carry out their everyday routines in their own strength. The Bible has lots of warnings about this precisely because it's such a common tendency. It just comes naturally to us. **Wilson, Jared C.** Supernatural Power for Everyday People: Experiencing God's Extraordinary Spirit in Your Ordinary Life (p. xv).*

**1 Cor 14:1-5** Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. <sup>2</sup> For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. <sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. <sup>4</sup> The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. <sup>5</sup> Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy.

*...Do I need the "Strength" and "Building Up" that comes through the Spirit activity of Speaking in Tongues and Prophecy?*

## The Exaltation of the Natural

*"...pre-modern humanity saw the life of the mind as subject to external, spiritual, and mysterious influences. ...In modern humanity, things are quite different. No longer is there a plausible sense that our lives are under the influence of unseen spiritual forces. Instead, there are clear, palpable explanations for life's questions. ...This modern way of understanding feels safer because our problems are comprehensible, and not the product of mysterious forces" Mike Cosper, "Our Secular Age", p. 151*

**Our Enchanted Age** ...slowly and subtly creates a world that feels like—all we have and all that matters is the "Right Here & Right Now". **It is an age that tells us that all your attention and all that is good is found in natural spaces.**

*...Eternity is ignored and 'today' becomes our hyper-focus and obsession*

*...The Devil and spiritual forces are ignored and we live lives that feature conflict and contention with flesh and blood*

*...We live lives that are built on human strength rather than divine trust*

*...We obsess over the stuff of our 5 senses and neglect the stuff of faith*

**2 Cor 4:16-18** So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup> as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

*“What does Scripture mean when it tells us to fix our eyes on what we can’t even see? How do we begin to do that? Even though as Christians we affirm the reality of the spiritual realm, sometimes we succumb to naturalistic assumptions that what we see is real and what we don’t see isn’t. Many people conclude that God can’t be real, because we can’t see Him. And Heaven can’t be real, because we can’t see it. But we must recognize our blindness. The blind must take by faith that there are stars in the sky. If they depend on their ability to see, they will conclude there are no stars.”* **Randy Alcorn**, *“Seeing the Unseen”*, Kindle loc 29

### Our Senses

— *Where did we get these 5 capacities? ...God created them and gave them to us. It is God’s way of putting us in touch with our existence.*

— Who’s to say that there aren’t any other means of connecting with God’s creation?

**What impact did the fall have on our abilities to interact with all that God created?**

... Gen 2:17 *“the day you eat of the tree of knowledge, you shall surely die”*

- BUT... that ‘death’ played out in a variety of ways:
  - Changes in the physical realm
  - Changes in the Spiritual realm — **Adam’s Disconnect from God!! ...Man SENSED God Differently!!—or one could say, ‘He Lost His Sense of God!!’**

**Rom 3:10-12** all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, <sup>10</sup> as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

**Romans 1:25-26, 28-29** because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. <sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. ...<sup>28</sup> And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup> They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, **...This is the Natural Condition of Man—Disconnected from the Supernatural!**

***"Spiritual Disconnection is a Feature of the Human Experience, but Every once in a while, the door flings open"***

- ***Man has an encounter with God***
- ***Man has an encounter with Angels***
- ***Man encounters thoughts/ideas/understanding through dreams, visions, impressions***
- ***Man encounters miraculous powers that 'suspend' the laws of the natural realm***
  - Moses in Egypt ...Elijah ...Jesus
  - N.T. Church ...A New Door has Flung Open

**Acts 1:8** ...the promise of power

**Acts 2:14ff** ...the prophecy of Joel

**Rom 8:13-16** For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

- 1 Cor 2:9-14** But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”—
- <sup>10</sup> these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup> For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. <sup>13</sup> And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.
- <sup>14</sup> The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

***...The Disconnect from the Fall Can Only Be Remedied by the Engagement and Enablement of the Spirit (that which was lost in Eden) ...this is like Repairing a Spiritual Optic Nerve!***

***We are Called to a Life that FEATURES the Supernatural—Life that Engages MORE than One Dimension***

- A life that involves more than the right here and now—it engages eternity
- A life that requires faith

*“We deny that this world is all there is, but we live as though this world is all there is. We are willing to admit that the spiritual realm, the unseen, is real, but in turn we insist that the natural realm, the seen, is more real. We live as though all there is is this. In short, we lack faith.” R.C. Sproul, “Seeing Beyond the Shadowlands” ([ligonier.org](http://ligonier.org))*

- A life with non-physical living beings ...angels and demons
- A life with power that has no natural origin ...the power for belief & conversion ...the power for motivation & change ...the power for ministry that goes beyond the natural (ministry gifts, miracles, etc.)

*Christian living is supernatural or it is nothing. The church is made of “living stones built into a spiritual house” ([1 Peter 2:5](#)). “Spiritual” is the opposite of merely “natural.” It means inhabited and guided and empowered by the supernatural Spirit of Christ.*

*Paul distinguished between a “natural person” and a “spiritual person” ([1 Corinthians 2:14-15](#)). And he described those who act like “natural” persons as: “mere humans” ([1 Corinthians 3:4](#)). Christians are not “mere humans.” They are “spiritual humans.” God resides in them ([1 Corinthians 6:19](#)). They have new supernatural life flowing through them. They live with power that is not merely their own.*

*There is no way we can be the church without this experience. The call to deny ourselves for the sake of love, to return good for evil, to forgive seventy times seven, to endure one another, and to keep on doing this with joy for 50 or 60 or 80 years is not possible to the natural human. It is only possible supernaturally.” **John Piper**, “Living Supernaturally as the Church”*