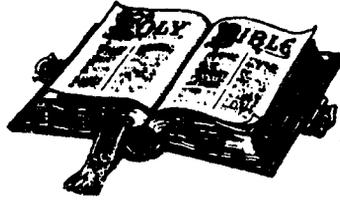


THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16

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DO MEN TODAY HAVE POWER FROM GOD TO PERFORM MIRACLES?

There are many people who believe and teach that people today receive from God and exercise miraculous power as the apostles (and some upon whom the apostles laid their hands - cf. Acts 8:18) did in the first century. **QUESTION:** Is there any Scriptural **proof** that anyone today receives miraculous power from God as some did in the first century?

Holy Spirit baptism and other gifts of the Holy Spirit along with signs, wonders and divers miracles were necessary in the first century for the **revelation and confirmation** of the Word of God unto man. (Read carefully John 14:25-26; John 16:13; Heb. 2:3-4; Mark 16:20). Once the Word of God was **completely revealed** to inspired men, **confirmed and given to the world in written form**, there would be **no further need** of miracle working power in the church! The apostle Paul declared: **"...Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto."** (Galatians 3:15). **NOTE:** By the close of the first century **God's Word** had been **completely revealed, confirmed and given in written form**. (See 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; 1 Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9;

Revelation 22:18-19 and Jude 3). In James 1:25 we read: **"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."** It is obvious from this passage that we have a **perfect law of liberty!** No more revelation is needed!

These additional observations may help clarify the truth.

1. When the **need** for the **revelation and confirmation** of God's Word **ceased** because it was **fulfilled**, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and other gifts of the Holy Spirit that were **needed** to accomplish the **revelation and confirmation** of the Word of God **ceased!** **NOTE:** Cornelius (& others) received Holy Spirit baptism to assure the Gentiles and convince the Jews that God had to the Gentiles granted **"repentance unto life"**. (See Acts 10 and 11). This was a one time event that did not need to be repeated.

2. After the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost in Acts 2 there is **no evidence** that the apostles (or those on whom they laid their hands) ever tried to perform a mira-

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Editorial ...

DO CHURCHES HAVE A SCRIPTURAL RIGHT TO PROVIDE ENTERTAINMENT, RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES? (concluded)

In addition to the Scriptural principles already discussed in prior articles here are some Scriptural principles that should be considered that should indicate to those who are truth seekers that we should not encourage (but condemn) the practice of churches sponsoring, arranging and providing entertainment, recreation and social activities.

1. It is not a "good work" for churches to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities since the Scriptures do not furnish us to such! However, the Scriptures furnish us "**unto all good works**" according to 2 Timothy 3:16-17. It says: "**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.**"

2. It does not pertain to "life and godliness" for churches to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities

since we have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness, but we have not been given the right for churches to so act. Peter declared: "**According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.**" (2 Pet. 1:3).

3. Churches cannot provide entertainment, recreation and social activities "**in the name of the Lord Jesus**" (i.e., by the authority of the Lord Jesus) since it is not authorized by Him. Paul said: "**And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.**" (Col. 3:17).

4. It is a transgression of (i.e., a going beyond) the doctrine of Christ for churches to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities since it is not authorized in the Scriptures. Those who transgress (i.e., go beyond) and do not abide in the doctrine of Christ do not have God according to 2 John 9! It says: "**Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.**" NOTE: Unless a practice is authorized in the doctrine of Christ we dare not participate in such! Neither should we encourage such!

5. We cannot encourage churches to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities without going "above that which is written" since such is not found in the Scriptures? However, we are warned "**...not to think of men above that which is written,...**" in 1 Cor. 4:6.

6. Since such is not authorized in the Scriptures for churches to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities

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**DO CHURCHES HAVE A
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it is a doctrine that originated with men! Jesus said: **“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”** (Mt. 15:9. We should not give heed to the doctrines of men, “...that turn from the truth.” (Cf. Titus 1:14)

7. We cannot encourage churches to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities by faith since **“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”** and such is not authorized in His Word! Without faith it is impossible to please God! (Cf. Heb. 11:6). We are to **“walk by faith”** according to 2 Cor. 5:7. We dare not be presumptuous!

8. It is a work of iniquity for churches to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities! In Mt. 7:22-23 Jesus said: **“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”** To work iniquity is to work lawlessness! It is to work without law or authority from Christ! In judgment many will claim to have done “many wonderful works” in the name of the Lord, but in reality they will have been workers of iniquity! Those who encourage churches to provide entertainment, etc. without authority from Christ are encouraging some to be workers of lawlessness! Workers of iniquity!

9. It is an addition to God’s Word for churches to provide entertainment,

recreation and social activities when such is not authorized in the Scriptures! However, God’s law is spoken of as **“the perfect law of liberty.”** (Cf. James 1:25; 2:12). We dare not add to it! (See Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18; 2 John 9; etc.).

10. Churches cannot provide entertainment, recreation and social activities “to the glory of God” since it is NOT authorized in the Word of God! According to 1 Cor. 10:31 whatsoever we do must be done “to the glory of God.” Paul said: **“Unto him (God - CRS) be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”** (Eph. 3:21). NOTE: God does **not** receive glory and Jesus Christ is NOT pleased when either individuals or churches fail to follow “the perfect law of liberty”! By it we all shall be judged! (See James 2:12).

No, churches do NOT have a Scriptural right to provide entertainment, recreation and social activities! We plead with those who are encouraging unscriptural practices to return to the truth as revealed in the Scriptures!

As more churches have provided kitchens and so-called “fellowship halls” to fill the physical man the spiritual man has been grossly neglected. Many of God’s children of spiritually impoverished and emaciated. Feasting is in but fasting is out! There should be more praying and less playing! Instead of churches providing entertainment they should be providing edification; instead of parties they should be providing more preaching! We should emphasize conversions instead of contests and “fellowship messages” instead of “fellowship meals”! Instead of providing social gatherings to entertain, churches should be providing spiritual gatherings to sanctify! (Cf. Rev. 3:14-22).

(CRS)

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cle and failed! (cf. Acts 5:16). NOTE: The apostles had been told that they would receive **power** after the Holy Ghost came upon them. (Cf. Acts 1:8). Obviously they did receive **power!** They could even **raise the dead!** (Cf. Peter in Acts 9:36-42 and Paul in Acts 20:7-12).

3. The fact that Jesus Christ performed miracles in the first century is no **proof** that he is doing the same thing today. Although Jesus is "**the same yesterday, today, and forever**" as Hebrews 13:8 says is **no proof** that He is **now** performing miracles as He did in the first century. Consider the following.

A. Although Jesus Christ is the same He is **NOT creating** the earth and all things therein as He once did! (See Col. 1:16-17; John 1:1-14; Heb.

1:1-2; Rev. 3:14).

B. Although Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, He is **not turning water into wine, or miraculously multiplying a few loaves and a few fishes, or raising the dead** as He did in the first century (Cf. John 2:1-11; Mt. 14:15-21; John 11:30-46)

3. Neither is Jesus Christ **NOW personally walking on the shores of Galilee nor dying on the cross NOW** as He once did!

No! **Men today do not have power from God to perform miracles** as some had in the first century!

(CRS)

GOSPEL MEETINGS

Hiram Hutto will be preaching in EAST ALBERTVILLE September 29 thru October 4, 1996 at 7:00 p.m. (except on the Lord's Day)!

– SENTENCE SERMONS –

Gentleness may manifest real strength and real strength may manifest real gentleness.

Drifting is characteristic of dead fish – and a lot of people!

Rumors are very buoyant. They are easy to float and hard to sink.

Kindness will help repair broken friendships.

We cannot have the Christ of the cross unless we accept the cross of Christ.

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