

No Modern Miracles, But Don't Be Disappointed!

Some are disappointed when we teach that we don't have healings and miracles today which occurred in the time of Jesus and his apostles. It's thought we are shortchanging ourselves, or we are missing out on part of God's power for us. The question is asked, "Who are we to limit the power of God?"

Healings in the New Testament were spectacular! They were the ability to miraculously cure physical handicaps, blindness, or diseases. These healings were not marginal improvements in health; they were dramatic, instantaneous and complete! There was no doubt that the cause of the healing was supernatural. No follow-up treatments or therapy were necessary. See how Peter healed a lame man in Jerusalem (Acts 3:1-10).

Miracles were also amazing! They were the ability to perform supernatural feats. Undoubtedly miracles exceeded nature and human abilities. One test for determining if something is a miracle is to rule out the process of nature as being the cause. Although amazing, it is not a miracle when flowers bloom and when children are born. Indeed the creation of nature was a miracle of God. But the laws of nature created by God, continue naturally. Miracles bypass the laws of nature. Miracles were self-evidenced. No one had to be told they were seeing a miracle! Peter raised Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9:36-42). Paul caused blindness to come upon Elymas (Acts 13:6-12). Paul withstood deadly viper bites (Acts 28:3-6).

Healings, miracles, and all spiritual gifts had great significance nearly two thousand years ago, in New Testament times. These supernatural abilities confirmed that the New Testament is the word of God (Hebrews 2:3-4). However, they were only administered by the Apostles, and those upon whom they laid their hands (Acts 8:18). This means the need for miracles had an expiration date, within one generation of when they began. Although we can't limit God's power, **God** can limit our endowment of his power!" He has, and we must agree with him!

The gifts of the Spirit were necessary, and they were to be in effect until the knowledge of the mystery of the Gospel became completely available (1st Cor. 13:8-13). Once the good news was confirmed and recorded as scripture (Heb. 2:1-4), the miraculous gifts would no longer be needed. Paul said love (charity) would never fail, but spiritual gifts such as prophecies, tongues, and knowledge would cease or vanish away. So, at the point at which the knowledge of the mystery of the Gospel was complete, Christianity had matured beyond the need for gifts of the Spirit. The gifts were only needed during the infancy (childlike stage) of Christianity. However, faith, hope, and charity (love) would always be needed. The Gospel was completely revealed and recorded as the first century of Christianity drew to a close (Jude 3-4). This was when the gifts ceased.

To say that we must have modern "gifts of the Holy Spirit" relegates the church back into an immature, childlike stage. We would not be "stepping up" our faith to a point of using miracles and healings, but rather we would be "stepping down" in faith. Centering on "faith, hope, and love" are marks of those full-grown in Christ. The brethren at Corinth preferred to emphasize the "gifts of the Holy Spirit" to demonstrate their success as Christians. They missed the true marks of success. God wanted them to emphasize faith, hope, and love. He wants us to do the same.

This should not be a disappointment. We have everything we need abundantly supplied by God, without the use of miracles. We are not shortchanged. We are not missing out on anything. We are full in Christ through faith, hope, and love.

Are we accelerating in faith, hope, and love? Or, are we hampering our growth in Christ and closeness to God by turning back to first century miracles?

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