

The Prattmont Church of Christ is just what the name suggests, a church that belongs to Christ. We are not a denomination; we are simply a group of Christians trying very hard to practice the teachings of our Head, Jesus Christ. The New Testament offers a complete pattern for what each local church should be like—its organization, its worship, its work, etc. We are committed to following that pattern. We cordially invite you to attend our services. We would also welcome any comments or questions about this bulletin.

TIMES OF SERVICES:

Sunday
 Bible Study.....9:00 A.M.
 Worship.....10:00 A.M.
 Training Class.....5:00 P.M.
 Worship.....6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:
 Bible Study.....7:00 P.M.



Weekly Bulletin
 September 16, 2018

Let's Study Miracles (Part 3)

by Bryan Gibson

#7 Others (besides the apostles) received the Holy Spirit—with miraculous effects—when the apostles laid their hands on them. The first two non-apostles to perform miracles were Stephen (Acts 6:8) and Philip (Acts 8:6). Earlier, the apostles laid hands on each of these men (Acts 6:6), and the significance of that is clearly explained in two passages: (1) Acts 8:18: “when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given”; (2) Acts 19:6: “And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.”

#8 Cornelius and his household—they were the lone exception; they were the only other ones who received the Holy Spirit without the laying on of the apostles’ hands. They too were baptized with the Holy Spirit, and it certainly had miraculous effects (Acts 10:44-48). That this was a highly unusual event can

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be seen in Peter's words when he recounted what happened: "And as I began to speak the Holy Spirit fell upon them, **as upon us as the beginning**" (Acts 11:15). To describe this unique event, Peter had to go back to the time when the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit ("at the beginning"). So this was not a regular occurrence; in fact what happened here had a very special purpose: to convince the Jews that God made no distinction between them and the Gentiles, to show that the Gentiles could be saved through Jesus Christ—without having to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses (Acts 11:17-18; 15:5-11).

#9 Miracles, signs, and wonders had two very clear purposes—in some cases to **reveal** God's word (e.g. prophesying), and then in other cases, to **confirm** God's word, to confirm that what was spoken was indeed the truth, that it came from God. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, and we know that's true, because He was "attested by God...by miracles, wonders, and signs" (Acts 2:22). "And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did" (Acts 8:6). "Therefore they (Paul and Barnabas) stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands" (Acts 14:3). And these passages are in perfect harmony with what is taught elsewhere about the purpose of miracles (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4; 1 Kings 17:24). What's interesting, and further confirms the point we're making is that miracles were not performed when what was taught could be validated by the Scriptures (Acts 17:1-4, 11), nor were they performed when some point had already been revealed and confirmed (Acts 15:12).

Based then, on the nine observations we've made, here's the all-important question: Do men and women today have the power to

perform miracles? **First**, have you seen any, or heard any reports of any being performed? We're talking about clear, indisputable miracles—ones like we referenced earlier from the Book of Acts. As pointed out previously, miracles such as these could not be hidden—news like this would travel the world in practically an instant. **Secondly**, the promise made to the apostles—"You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5)—anyone promised that today? As noted before, the only other folks who were baptized with the Holy Spirit were Cornelius and his household, and that had a unique, one time only purpose. **Thirdly**, anyone today had the apostles lay hands on them? Of course not, because they've all been dead for nearly 2000 years. Remember, this was the only other way people could receive the Holy Spirit, with miraculous effects. **Fourthly**, hasn't the word of God been fully revealed and confirmed? (John 16:13; Ephesians 3:1-5; 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 1:3). Remember, the purpose of these miracles was to either reveal or confirm God's word. If that has been accomplished, then why would any man or woman need to perform them today? You don't need a miraculous revelation today to preach the truth, because it's all there in the Scriptures. And to confirm whether or not someone is preaching the truth today, you just compare it to what the Scriptures say. This full and complete revelation— isn't that what Paul was looking toward when he spoke this prophecy: "Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away" (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).

Note: All three articles in this series on miracles can be found at:

www.prattmontchurchofchrist.org/resources/weekly-bulletin