

Miraculous Gifts of the Spirit

Introduction

From our last study, we have seen that there are three measures or manifestations of the Holy Spirit:

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit

1. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit
2. The miraculous gifts of the Spirit

We learned that the indwelling of the Spirit is for all who are obedient to the Lord and become Christians. The indwelling is given at the point of baptism (Acts 2:38; Ephesians 1:13-14; John 3:3-5)

We have also seen that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred only twice (Acts 2 and Acts 10). Both occurrences introduced the gospel to a particular group of people.

1. The beginning of the gospel introduction to the Jews (Acts 2)
2. The beginning of the gospel introduction to the Gentiles (Acts 10)

We have also demonstrated that by the time that Ephesians was written, there was only one valid baptism in effect at that time (Ephesians 4:4-5). That one baptism was water baptism in the name of Jesus in order to receive the forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21). In this study we will examine the miraculous manifestations of the Spirit.

I. The purpose of miracles

A. Exodus 4:1-8; 29-30

When God told Moses to preach to Pharaoh, were miracles given as a sign to confirm Moses' message as being from God? _____

Moses spoke the truth and then confirmed it with miracles. There was no written scripture at this time.

B. John 20:30-31; 10:37-38

Did Jesus perform miraculous signs to confirm His mission to the world? _____

1. Were these miracles recorded in scripture? _____
2. Were the recorded miracles capable of producing saving faith in the hearers? _____
3. NOTE: Jesus spoke the message, confirmed the message with miracles, and then the miracles were written down in order to produce faith in those who read the scripture.

C. Mark 16:20

Was the purpose of miracles to confirm the authenticity of the spoken word? _____

D. Hebrews 2:2-4

Before we had a written New Testament, were miracles used to confirm the spoken message as being authentic? _____

E. The word "confirmed" means: "to make firm, establish, make sure," (W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words).

NOTE: the gospel that was preached was a new message to the world as was the Ten Commandments to Israel.

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Miracles were used to accompany the spoken word in order to confirm its authority as the word of God. Once written, the written scripture became authoritative and was capable of producing saving faith (John 20:30-31).

F. Once something is confirmed as being true and authentic, it no longer needs to be reconfirmed. Is the written word (the Bible) true today? _____ Why?

II. How were miracles imparted

A. Miracles were imparted to the apostles and to the household of Cornelius by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts ch 2, 10). We have seen that there is only one baptism valid today, therefore miracles imparted in that manner are no longer available.

B. Acts 8:14-19

In verse 18, did Simon observe that miraculous gifts of the Spirit were imparted through the _____ laying on of the apostle's hands? _____

NOTE: Philip the evangelist could perform miracles because the apostles had laid their hands on him (Acts 6:5-6). Philip, however, could not impart the gifts to others. It required the apostles (Peter and John) to impart the gifts. This is what Simon observed and he wanted to purchase the ability to pass on miracles like the apostles could.

C. Question: since people in the New Testament times could not receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit without the laying on of the apostle's hands, how can people today?

III. Duration of miraculous gifts

A. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13

1. Does this passage say that miraculous gifts of prophecy would be done away? _____
2. Does this passage say that miraculous gifts of tongues would cease? _____
3. Does this passage say that miraculous knowledge would be done away? _____
4. Is it your understanding that miraculous gifts were to be temporary according to this _____ verse? _____
5. Does this passage say that faith, hope, and love would continue to remain (abide) _____

Note the contrast: tongues, knowledge, and prophecy would cease and be done away while faith, hope and love would remain. Faith, hope and love are permanent in comparison to tongues, prophecy, and miraculous knowledge.

B. What are the "partial things" (in part) in this passage?

_____, _____, and _____

C. Literal Greek rendering says, "For in part we know, and in part we prophecy, but when comes the perfect thing, the things in part will be abolished."

D. NOTE: when the perfect "thing" comes (not the perfect one) . "Thing" is a neuter gender noun in the Greek, therefore the "perfect thing" is not Christ. Christ is not a "thing".

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- E. "Perfect": (telios) "signifies having reached its end, finished, complete" (W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words).
- F. In verse 9, Paul names the partial things (partial knowledge, partial prophecy). The perfect, completed, finished, mature product would be the completed revelation of knowledge and prophecy. The "perfect thing" has to be the completion or end result of the "partial things", therefore the perfect thing must be of the same nature and same kind.
- G. Hebrews 2:2-4
1. Were miracles used to confirm the spoken word of God before there was a completed written Bible? _____
 2. Were the "knowledge" and "prophecy" that were being revealed at that time partial? _____
- H. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
1. Is the written word all we need to be pleasing to God? _____
 2. Is the revelation of God's knowledge and prophecy in the Bible therefore complete, finished and perfect? _____ (see James 1:25 ..."the perfect law that gives liberty").
 3. When the perfect thing (completed New Testament record) came, was there any more need for miraculous confirmation? _____
- I. Would faith and hope still exist after the partial things were done away? _____
(remember the contrast: prophecy, knowledge, and tongues would be done away and cease while faith, hope and love would continue)
- J. Hebrews 11:1; Romans 8:24
Will hope and faith be swallowed up in sight when we see Jesus revealed from heaven? _____

Therefore, the partial gifts of knowledge, prophecy, and tongues were to cease before the second coming of Jesus. They were to cease when the "perfect thing" came. The perfect thing has to be the end result or mature product of tongues, prophecy, and knowledge. Tongues, prophecy, and knowledge were for revealing and confirming the message of God to man, therefore when the message was completed, the miracles had accomplished their purpose.

Conclusion

- A. Miracles were for the purpose of confirming the spoken word of God as being true and from God. Once the word was confirmed and written, the purpose of miracles ceased (John 20:30-31; 2 Timothy 3:15-17).
- B. With the dying of the last apostle, the ability to impart miraculous power to others ceased. With the last letter of the apostles written the perfect, completed word of God had been given and confirmed as being true and from God. Therefore, the partial things ceased with the completion of the revelation of the New Testament books.
- C. Those who claim to have the gifts of prophecy cannot agree even among themselves as to their teaching. Note all the different churches that claim to have the same spirit (Mormons, Pentecostals, Catholics, Christian Science, Oral Roberts and his 800 foot Jesus... just to name a few).

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- D. God is not the author of confusion, but all the different messages of these people who "Prophecy?" caused division, confusion, and obvious contradiction to what the written word of God teaches. Therefore, their message and practice is not from God (Galatians 1:6-9).
- E. Miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit have ceased. God does still give the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to those who have been baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins as a seal of their inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; Acts 2:38).