

## MIRACULOUS GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

### Introduction:

1. **Understanding Miraculous Gifts:** Miraculous gifts of the Spirit were significant in the early church, serving as powerful tools for confirming the message of the gospel. These gifts included speaking in tongues, prophecy, healing, and other supernatural abilities bestowed by the Holy Spirit. They played a crucial role in authenticating the apostles' teachings and spreading Christianity.
2. **Purpose And Function:** The primary purpose of these gifts was to serve as signs that confirmed God's message. Texts such as Mark 16:20 and Hebrews 2:1-4 emphasize that these gifts validated the divine origin of the gospel. Understanding the specific role these gifts played helps us appreciate their significance in the early church.
3. **Scope Of The Lesson:** This lesson aims to explore the purpose, reception, and duration of miraculous gifts. We will examine key biblical passages to understand how these gifts were received and their intended duration. Additionally, we will address contemporary claims about the continuation of these gifts and consider the implications of such beliefs.

### The Purpose Of Miraculous Gifts

1. What was the purpose of miraculous gifts (Mark 16:20)?
2. What does the author of Hebrews state about the confirmation of the word (Hebrews 2:1-4)?

### How Miraculous Gifts Were Received

3. What miraculous gift was manifested when the apostles and the household of Cornelius were baptised with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-14; 10:44-45)?
4. How does the account in Acts help us to define "tongues" (Acts 2:5-12)?
5. Was the Baptism of the Holy Spirit a regular, everyday occurrence (Acts 11:1-15; esp. vs. 15)?
6. It is evident that others also had some miraculous gift (1 Corinthians 12:7-11), so, if not through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, how did they obtain such a gift (Acts 8:9-18; cp. Acts 19:6; Romans 1:11)?

### The Duration Of Miraculous Gifts

7. Is there anything stated in Mark 16:20, Acts 8:9-18 and Hebrews 2:1-4 that indicates anything about the duration of miraculous gifts?
8. What does 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 teach about the duration of spiritual gifts?

### Answering Claims For Continuance Of Miraculous Gifts

9. What arguments do people put forward for the continuance of miraculous gifts, and how would you counter them?
10. If all arguments fail to convince a person that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit have ceased, what should you do?

### Conclusion:

1. **Recap Of Miraculous Gifts:** We have seen that miraculous gifts served a vital role in the early church by confirming the gospel message and demonstrating God's power. These gifts were bestowed through the Holy Spirit, often via the laying on of hands by the apostles. Key scriptures such as Acts 2 and 1 Corinthians 12 highlight the various manifestations and purposes of these gifts.
2. **Evaluating Modern Claims:** In addressing modern claims for the continuation of miraculous gifts, it is essential to rely on scriptural evidence. We have discussed the potential harms of believing in the ongoing presence of these gifts, including doctrinal confusion, false hope, and spiritual deception. Testing all experiences and teachings against Scripture is crucial for maintaining sound doctrine.
3. **Encouragement For Growth And Discernment:** As we conclude, let us focus on growing in faith, hope, and love, which are the enduring qualities emphasized in 1 Corinthians 13. True spiritual maturity is rooted in a deep understanding of God's Word and living a life that reflects Christ's character. By doing so, we can navigate our spiritual journey with discernment and a solid foundation in biblical truth.

## **Applications:**

### **1. Grounding Belief In Scripture:**

**Application:** Encourage a commitment to studying and understanding the Bible thoroughly. Emphasize that all beliefs, especially concerning spiritual gifts, should be based on clear and contextual scriptural evidence. Regular Bible study groups or personal devotions focused on understanding the purpose and context of miraculous gifts can strengthen faith and doctrinal clarity.

**Example:** Implement a weekly Bible study session focused on exploring the New Testament teachings on spiritual gifts, their purpose, and their intended duration.

### **2. Fostering Discernment In Spiritual Experiences:**

**Application:** Teach the importance of discerning spiritual experiences and teachings through the lens of Scripture. Encourage the congregation to test all spiritual claims against biblical truths to avoid deception and false teachings.

**Example:** Create a series of workshops or seminars on spiritual discernment, using case studies and examples to practice evaluating modern claims of miraculous gifts and other spiritual experiences against biblical principles.

### **3. Encouraging A Focus On Faith, Hope, And Love:**

**Application:** Redirect focus from seeking miraculous experiences to cultivating the enduring qualities of faith, hope, and love. These qualities are emphasized in 1 Corinthians 13 as the true markers of spiritual maturity and effectiveness in Christian living.

**Example:** Initiate programs or challenges that promote acts of love and service. Encourage members to share testimonies of how they have experienced or expressed faith, hope, and love in their daily lives.

### **Assignment: Write A Short Article**

**Assignment:** Write a 500-700 word article on the topic: "The Purpose and Duration of Miraculous Gifts in the New Testament."

### **Guidelines:**

#### **1. Introduction:**

- ☞ Start with a brief introduction to the topic. Explain what miraculous gifts are and their significance in the early church.

#### **2. Main Body:**

- ☞ Purpose Of Miraculous Gifts: Discuss the primary purpose of miraculous gifts as outlined in Mark 16:20 and Hebrews 2:1-4. Explain how these gifts confirmed the gospel message and demonstrated God's power.
- ☞ Reception Of Miraculous Gifts: Explain how miraculous gifts were received, referencing Acts 2:1-14, Acts 10:44-45, and 1 Corinthians 12:7-11. Highlight the role of the Holy Spirit and the apostles in imparting these gifts.
- ☞ Duration Of Miraculous Gifts: Discuss the biblical evidence for the duration of miraculous gifts, focusing on 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 and other relevant passages. Explain the different interpretations of when these gifts were intended to cease.

#### **3. Conclusion:**

- ☞ Summarize the main points discussed in the article. Reflect on the implications of the cessation of miraculous gifts for contemporary Christian practice and belief. Emphasize the importance of grounding beliefs in Scripture and practicing discernment.

**Objectives:**

1. Engage With Scripture: Encourage students to read and analyze biblical passages critically.
2. Develop Writing Skills: Enhance students' ability to articulate their thoughts and understanding in a coherent and concise manner.
3. Reflect On Application: Prompt students to consider how the lesson applies to their faith and the broader Christian community.

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