

Do Miracles Still Happen Today?

When you read the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, you find that the apostles performed various signs and wonders. Pretty fascinating stuff! For example, people brought out the sick and St. Peter healed them all. Do miracles like that still happen today?

A great question People are always interested in miracles. We love to hear if there are things that immediately, miraculously, change or confirm what is going on at the moment. So, when the Word of God was preached or shared in the book of Acts, there were miraculous events that happened at the same time. But, it is important for us to understand the **context** of these miracles that took place.

The context of what is going on in Acts is important, and I'll get to that, but let's start with the most basic question ... Do miracles still happen?

The answer is, simply, of course they do. God can do whatever He desires to bring us to faith in Him. The question is, then, is that the main way that God desires to work faith and salvation in our hearts? Biblically, the answer to that is no, generally not. Remember the verse from 1 Corinthians 1:22, ***"Jews demand signs, Greeks demand wisdom, we preach Christ Crucified....foolishness to the Greeks, and a stumbling block to the Jews, but to those of us who believe, it is the power of God!"*** In this way, God works to bring the world to faith in exactly the opposite way the world seeks God and expects God to work.

Whatever is going on in Acts, it isn't power for power's sake, that's what we would demand of God's things. Just think about how God generally works: God sends His Son, not to dominate like our heroes would, but to serve sinners and rebels. Then God the Father allows His Son to be crucified on a cross, rather than send His legions of angels to defend and protect the most perfect Person who ever lived. Then, God empowers a bunch of forgiven sinners to go and preach that Gospel to the whole world. So, God is doing things exactly the opposite way that we would expect. That's vital, because it is for our own good, so that we can see that it is all by God's grace. Even the miracles of the Bible tend to focus us away from the miraculous event to the message of the suffering servant Jesus Christ.

Why then do there seem to be more miracles associated with the proclamation of the Gospel in the Book of Acts? God seems to be doing the opposite of what was just argued. At first glance, that appears to be the case, but let's take a closer look at the context. Jesus Christ has risen again and located His message in the public ministry of these Apostles. They are living testimonies to that message of Jesus that by the power of the Holy Spirit He is bringing people to faith. When that message moves into a new place, among a new group of people, there are times when there are miraculous signs and wonders that accompany that proclamation in order to drive home the fact that this isn't the apostles' words; these are the Words of Jesus Christ even through them.

I do not believe that we should we expect that that would happen today with our proclamation. This is where I believe the context of that first proclamation of the Gospel through the Apostles might indeed differentiate itself from our context today. Remember, the book of Acts is describing how the message of Jesus Christ moved out, by the power of the Holy Spirit through the preaching and teaching of the Apostles. It didn't say that it had to go out the same way through us.

And, remember, too, what made that context of that time different than today. It was the fact that people didn't have the New Testament in a written form yet. This was a time of apostolic letters and public teaching and preaching. I believe the Holy Spirit undergirded their work in unique ways to help root that message and break down the ethnic encasement of that message. But, the greatest miracles were not the healings or the speaking in tongues; the greatest miracles were the Word of the Apostles that the Holy Spirit gathered into what we now call the New Testament! So, when we have, now, the very words of Jesus brought to us through the Apostles, that should be the thing we yearn for, not signs and wonders. With the Bible in our hands, we have the greatest miracle already. Whether other things come or not, they don't add or detract from the Spirit-filled Word of Jesus that brings us to faith and everlasting life. With that in mind, let God do whatever else He pleases. He certainly knows what's best for us and He gives us what we need for every day.

That's the View from Here

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