

WHY MIRACLES CEASED

Text: 1 Corinthians 13:8-10

Intro: No Bible believer could seriously doubt that at certain times in ages past, miracles were worked among men by the power of God. Neither would the Bible believer deny the fact that God's word testified that miracles would cease.

We are persuaded that, in keeping with Paul's inspired statement, miracles did cease, and that by the end of the first century.

Define. (Vine) "Is used of works of a supernatural origin and character, such as could not be produced by natural agents and means." That is the sense in which we will use the word miracle in this lesson.

1. We are not denying that God is still active in the affairs of the universe.
2. We are not implying that God has ceased to hear and answer prayers.
3. What we are willing to affirm is that the God who *could* answer prayers in a miraculous manner is not limited to the miraculous--and that He works today in and through natural, spiritual, and moral laws.

I. THE FIRST MIRACLES WERE THOSE INVOLVED IN THE CREATION OF THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATURAL AND MORAL LAW.

Such miracles were never meant to be permanent. They ceased when the creation was finished and its natural and moral laws were firmly fixed.

READ GENESIS 1:12, 21, 24-25, 28.

II. THE SECOND GREAT PERIOD OF MIRACLES WAS THAT OF THE TIME OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HEBREW NATION AND THE LAW OF MOSES. 10 plagues, Red Sea, manna, water from rock, etc.

A. From time to time while the Law of Moses was in effect, God sent prophets among the people to reveal inspired messages from God--and along with them, miracles to confirm the Divine source of their message. This was especially true during the early part of the period of the

divided kingdom

(Elijah and Elisha), and about the time of the return of the remnant from captivity.

B. Miracles were not the norm. They would lose their effect if they were. They were never meant to be a permanent part of the Law. By definition, they are above law.

C. By the time of Jesus, the Law and the writings of the prophets had been unquestionably established and confirmed by miracles, and no further miracles were needed with regard to it. LUKE 16:29-31.

III. THE THIRD GREAT PERIOD OF MIRACLES WAS THAT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF JESUS CHRIST, AND THE PROCLAMATION OF THE EVER-LASTING GOSPEL.

A. Miracles were given which established that Jesus came from God. Matt. 9:6; John 3:2

B. Miracles were also given to show that the gospel was the will of God. Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4

C. The gospel, having been fully revealed and fully confirmed, needs no further confirmation today.

D. Why do I believe that miracles have ceased?

1. God said they would, 1 Cor. 13:8-10.

2. The O.T. set the precedence, Luke 16:29-31.

3. I have never seen one--nor any real evidence that others in my life-time have seen such.

IV. THERE WILL BE A FINAL CONCENTRATION OF MIRACLES IN THE CONSUMMATION OF THE WORLD.

A. All will see Jesus when He returns, Rev. 1:7.

B. All the dead will be raised bodily, John 5:28-29.

C. The material universe will be completely dissolved.

READ 2 PETER 3:10-11.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Don't ask God to show you a miracle. Respond to His word which has already been confirmed by miracles.

- B. Don't hesitate to go to God and ask Him for the things you desire--and let Him decide whether to, and how to answer your prayers.

- C. Don't wait for a miracle before obeying His will.

- D. Don't be deceived by the claims of false teachers and their deluded followers.

Why did miracles cease? They had served their purpose. Why does a builder remove the scaffolding when he finishes a building? Why does the doctor remove the cast from a broken arm or leg when it has mended?

La Porte, TX, October 5, 1980

Exton, PA, September 17, 1989

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, July 3, 1994

Wrightsville, PA, August 1, 1994 (meeting)

Northside, Georgetown, TX, October 2, 1994 (lectureship)