

Are Sign Gifts for Today?

Signs, wonders and miracles were prevalent during the times of:

Moses & the Magicians

Elijah & Elisha

Jesus & the Apostles

Tribulation Period

Are signs and wonders for today? We will allow the Bible to speak for itself and discover that signs and wonders were for the Apostolic age, and that after the apostles died and the Bible was completed these signs and wonders ceased.

What are the sign gifts?

Matthew 10:1 And when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Matthew 10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

Mark 16:17-18 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they **cast out devils**; they shall **speak with new tongues**; They shall **take up serpents**; and **if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt** them; they shall **lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover**.

This list from Jesus is: (1) cast out demons, (2) heal all sickness and disease, (3) cleanse lepers, (4) raise the dead, (5) speak in tongues, (6) handle snakes, and (7) drink any deadly thing and not get hurt.

Who are the sign gifts for?

2 Corinthians 12:12 Truly the **signs of an apostle** were wrought among you in all patience, **in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds**.

These unusual gifts were given to the apostles. Notice when Jesus gave the promise of these gifts, he gave them to the apostles:

Matthew 10:1 And when **he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples**, he **gave them power** *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Mark 16:14 Afterward **he appeared unto the eleven** as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

Mark 16:15 And **he said unto them**, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Mark 16:17 And **these signs shall follow them that believe**; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

Why were the sign gifts given

Mark 16:17-20 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues...And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and **confirming the word with signs following**. Amen.

Hebrews 2:4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

God put His stamp of approval on their Christian activity with these gifts. People heard the apostles speak and God verified that this was “of God” by giving signs and wonders to show it was to be trusted, believed and followed. Today, we look into the Word of God to discern if something is “of God.” Back then, there was no New Testament written yet. What were they to believe?

Hence, signs and wonders were given for a transition:

Transition as the New Testament was being completed these gifts verified sound Bible doctrine.

As the apostles went out, they did not have a New Testament, as it was being written. Hence, they were leading church doctrine with only the Old Testament! How would believers know that they should follow this new doctrine? God bore them witness with signs and wonders.

Transition that the Church would be both Jews & Gentiles – one body in Christ

Ephesians 3:4-6 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the **Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body**, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

- Jesus had promised that the Holy Ghost would be given after He was glorified:

John 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the **Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.**)

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but **if I depart, I will send him unto you.**

- The Holy Ghost would indwell every believer:

John 14:16-17 And I will pray the Father, and he shall **give you another Comforter**, that he may abide with you for ever; *Even the Spirit of truth*; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for **he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.**

The Holy Ghost would indwell Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles – everyone!

1. The Holy Ghost descended and indwelt believing Jews:

Acts 2:4-5 And they were all **filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues**, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem **Jews**, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

2. The Holy Ghost descended and indwelt believing Samaritans (Samaritans are ½ Jew and ½ Gentile)

Acts 8:14-17 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that **Samaria** had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost...Then laid they *their* hands on them, and **they received the Holy Ghost**.

3. The Holy Ghost descended and indwelt believing Gentiles

Acts 10:44-45 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the **Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost**.

You must remember that this transition from the Jews being God's people to the church being one body of both Jews & Gentiles was a great, great transition. Hence, God used great means to convince believers that this was His plan.

One must consider the vast separation there was at this time between the Jews and others:

John 4:9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

God gave the apostle Peter a vision (Acts 10-11) to convince him that the Gentiles should also get the gospel. Here are the words of Peter:

Acts 10:28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

Paul reprimanded Peter for not accepting Gentiles in Gal. 2:

Galatians 2:11-14 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before *them* all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

One must understand how great this transition was.

When did these sign gifts cease?

1 Corinthians 13:8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

Tongues shall cease. This is a plain statement. When did they cease? When the New Testament was completed and the apostles were dead, there was no more need for sign gifts. If one wanted to confirm if the message was from God, he only had to look to the completed Word of God and the indwelling Holy Spirit.

What about today?

Should the church speak in tongues, heal all sickness, raise the dead, and cleanse lepers? The answer is "no." Why?

These sign gifts were given for a unique time when church planting and church growth were new and there was no Bible teaching on it. It was uncharted territory.

If you are born again, you have the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth and you hold in your hand the Word of truth. You have all you need to verify Biblical truth.

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that **ye heard the word of truth**, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, **ye were sealed with that holy Spirit** of promise...

John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the **Spirit of truth**, is come, **he will guide you into all truth**: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

You need to study this out for yourself:

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.**

I trust that the Lord will use this to give you understanding into a subject that often confuses new believers.