

LENEXA EDIFIER

*"and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.""
(John 8:32)*

November 21, 2021

LET'S SETTLE THIS ISSUE OF MODERN DAY MIRACLES

Jim Stauffer

Jesus sent His apostles on what has been described as the limited commission. Limited because they were to limit their scope to the lost sheep of Israel. He gave them the power to heal and cast out demons as they went on their way preaching that men should repent (**Mat. 10:5ff; Mark 6:7ff**).

Following His crucifixion and resurrection He authorized what is referred to as the Great Commission. This time He increased the scope of their efforts, *"And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 'He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.'"* (**Mark 16:15-16**) Later in **verses 17,18** He promised them miraculous powers that would confirm the word they preached. This was to happen in Jerusalem according to **Luke 24:49**, *"And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."* We see that power come from on high in **Acts 2:1-4**, *"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance."*

We now have the 12 preaching the gospel to the whole world and increasing the spread of the gospel by granting those spiritual gifts to those who have been saved through obedience to their preaching through the laying on of hands. As a result, the gospel was spread in the first century because saints had the ability to prophesy (teach His word) and do other miracles which would attest to and confirm the word spoken (they did not have the written word yet).

Further information about these miraculous powers is taught by way of necessary inference. In the **8th chapter of the book of Acts** Philip is preaching in the city of Samaria. We are told in **verse 12** men and women were responding to his preaching by being baptized. When word traveled to Jerusalem, Peter and John were sent to pray for them to receive the Holy Spirit which at this point had not fallen on any of them. What do we necessarily conclude from this information? That each one who obeyed the gospel was to receive the Holy Spirit and that it could only come from the apostles. People were not born with these powers. People did not receive them automatically upon their baptism. They received them from the hands of a small group, 12 men.

Again, what was the purpose of these powers? It was to confirm the message of the gospel so people would know they were hearing the truth from God. Why were the gifts needed to confirm the word? Because there was no central location or authority behind the word spoken at that time except a demonstration of the power of God.

Now, Paul later tells us these gifts were of a temporary nature. He tells the Corinthians, *"Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away."* (**1 Corinthians 13:8-10**) There would be a time, he says, when that which is complete (the revelation of God's word) will have been achieved and men will no longer need partial revelation but will have the entire word of God to peruse, meditate and pray over. And when that does happen these powers will be done away. It is obvious no one who lives now has been the recipient of the apostles hands and prayers to receive

miraculous power. It is further evident today that those who claim to possess or to have observed such miracles are being fooled by charlatans or they are simply wanting to see something so badly they believe something happened that did not.

Let us see someone today perform the miracles of those in the New Testament! A miracle that no one can deny. Go to the morgue or funeral home and revive a body that has been declared to be dead for days as Lazarus or Dorcas were.

The problem with the so-called miracles of today is they are easily disbelieved because they do not provide the necessary evidence. Someone claims to heal a fever or a sore arm or any of a number of things that can be psychosomatic or simply something that shows no evidence at all. The purpose of miracles in the Bible was not simply to make the sick well, but to do it in a way for people to see the power of God. Let me encourage those who claim such powers today to follow a funeral procession as the Lord did and raise the corpse from the dead.

In conclusion today's so-called miracles do not fit the criteria of the New Testament. They do not confirm the word. That has been done. And they do not come from the only source God gave, His apostles.

ACTS 15 AND BIBLE AUTHORITY

by Randy Harshbarger

Salvation in Christ was certainly "good news" for the Gentiles. "The Jews" first was the order of preaching beginning at Pentecost. Soon. Those who were *...aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise...*

(**Ephesians 2:12**) were brought into the kingdom through the preaching of Peter (**Acts 10, Cornelius**) and Paul (**Acts 13 Antioch of Pisidia**). When Paul and others returned to Antioch of Syria, they spoke of their work among the Gentiles reporting *....all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles* (**Acts 14:27**).

The good reports did not mean that all was OK. In fact, a "doctrinal" issue, simmering at first, was getting hotter. While the Gentiles could be part of the kingdom, something the Jewish elders in Jerusalem admitted, the leaders were still quite concerned about the Gentiles being baptized but not being circumcised. Could a Gentile really be part of the kingdom when he retained his ethnic identity? Would the Gentiles have to make commitments to the Law of Moses in order to be accepted?

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved (**Acts 15:1**). Whoever these men were, the fact that they came from Judea, the place where the gospel was first preached to the Jews, probably lent some credence to their objections regarding the Gentiles. After discussing the issue, Paul, Barnabas and others traveled to Jerusalem to visit the apostles and elders about the matter. Along the way they visited with other brethren telling about the reception of the Gentiles into Christ's church; this brought joy to all. Discussions in Jerusalem continued. Although God was working in the lives of the Gentiles (**vs.4** *all things that God had done with them*), others objected. The Pharisees, in their zealotry, believed it was necessary *....to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses*.

Peter's "sermon" (**vss. 6-11**) summarized his preaching to and the subsequent acceptance of the gospel by Cornelius and his household; he had spoken about these matters before (**Acts 11**). Peter concluded: Since God has accepted the Gentiles on the basis of faith, why can't you accept them in the same way? Why should you *...test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?* If the Jews could not gain salvation through obedience to the Law of Moses, why think the Gentiles could do so? Paul to the Galatians *...that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.....I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain* (**Galatians 2:16-21**).

God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile. All could be and can be saved by His grace, through faith in Christ. The gospel Paul and others preach was a "level playing field." The blessed gospel is for all. But that gospel is Christ's, not Paul's or Peter's or the Jews, or ours.

Old Things Are Passed Away

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come (**2 Corinthians 5:17**).

On the day when we were baptized into Christ we were baptized into His death and from that moment we were new creatures in Christ walking in newness of life (**Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-4**). Being in

Christ denotes a very close personal relationship with Him. We love and trust Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (**Mark 12:29-30**). Being in Christ we are willing to do whatever we must do in order to prove that love and trust (**John 14:15; John 15:14**). Walking in newness of life, we give full possession of our life to Him. I love the words of **Gal. 2:20**: *"I have been crucified with Christ; and now it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."*

As new creatures in Christ, we allow Him to fill our hearts, mold our thoughts and guide our lives every step of the way on our journey through this life (**Rom. 12:1**). As we strive to do this, I pray the thoughts of **Col. 3:1-2, Matt. 6:19-21 and Heb. 12:1-2** will echo within our hearts daily: *"seek things above, set your mind on things above, not on the things on the earth"; "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven"; "run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes of Jesus."*

Before us lies many battles that we will have to fight between good and evil that we will encounter on this journey. There will be battles with temptations brought into our lives by the lure of the world around us (**1 John 2:15-17; Rom. 12:2**). There will be fierce battles as the result of physical conditions and adverse conditions that will strike our human frame. We are bombarded daily with enticements that discourage a life of purity while encouraging and promoting all manner of wickedness and immorality. Living in a time when it seems that sin reigns in the hearts of men and women everywhere we will have to fight the good fight of faith every day for the rest of our lives (**1 Tim. 6:12; Eph. 6:10-18**).

I, for one, am convinced that when the storm clouds gather and the battle begins to rage, our God will direct the heart of all who trust and obey Him. He is able to turn the worst day into a beautiful experience. He can make the light shine through the darkest night (**1 Peter 5:6-7; Hebrews 13:5; Romans 8:35-37; Isaiah 40:31; Psalms 23**). Today, I am convinced that so long as we obey Him, striving each day to keep His commandments, there is no end to what He can and will do for us. To God be the glory forever and ever!

As one of our grand old songs tells it, *"No matter what may be the test, God will take care of you; Lean, weary one, upon His breast, God will take care of you."*
Charles Hicks, White House Tennessee
swabbie5256@gmail.com

What does a true messenger of God look like?

To answer this question I take you to a text in which Paul describes his attitude and conduct --

1 Thessalonians 2:1-12. You should read it carefully and get to know the apostle Paul. What do we learn about Paul? What should we expect from messengers of the Lord?

- He was willing to suffer, severely, in order to speak the word of God to the lost. **(v. 2)**
- His presentation was always true and truth. There was never any deceit, error, falsehood or hidden motives. It was genuine and it was God's truth. **(v.3)**
- Paul never altered the message to accommodate or please people. He was entrusted with God's message and that is exactly what he taught. **(v.4)**
- He never flattered people to gain their trust and affection for his own personal gain. **(5)**
- Paul was not looking for honor or recognition for his work. **(6)**
- His affection was clearly seen in his gentle, loving care for the people. He behaved like a nursing mother toward her baby. **(7)**
- He sacrificed for the welfare of his listeners, because he cared for them. **(8)**
- He worked hard to provide for himself rather than be a burden on others. Paul was not self-serving, selfish or money-hungry. **(9)**
- Paul practiced what he preached! He was, truly, a righteous man. **(10)**
- His message was from God so he was not afraid to speak with authority, like a father to his children. **(11)**
- His objective was to get people to walk worthy of God who calls them into His kingdom. **(12)**

A closing thought: The work of God's true messengers, who exhibit this character, will not be in vain. It will be effective. **(1)**

Don Bunting

John Locke wrote these words over 300 years ago. Truth is still truth no matter how old it is.

"The great division among Christians is about opinions. Every sect is about opinions. Every sect has its set of them and that is called orthodoxy; and he who professes his assent to said opinions, though with an implicit faith and without examining, is orthodox and in the way to salvation; but, if he examines and

thereupon questions any of them, he is presently suspect of heresy, and if he opposes them or holds the contrary, he is presently condemned as in a damnable error, and in the sure way to perdition.

“Of this one may say that there is nor can be nothing more wrong. For he who examines and upon a fair examination embraces an error for truth, has done his duty more than he who embraces the profession of the truth without having examined whether it be true or no.

“For if it be our duty to search after truth, he certainly who has searched after it, though he has not found it, in some ways has paid a more acceptable obedience to the will of his Maker than he who has not searched at all, but professes to have found truth when he has neither searched for it nor found it; for he who takes up the opinions of any church in the lump, without examining them, has truly neither searched after nor found truth, but has only found those who he thinks have found truth, and so received what they say with an implicit faith, and so pays them the homage that is due only to Almighty God.”

We offer either in home studies in person or by way of Correspondence Courses.

Call me, Jim Stauffer at 913-620-0563, Evangelist at the Lenexa church of Christ.

We believe in worshiping and serving the Lord as He has instructed in His word.

Things that are not taught in the Bible that people believe, and foster false teaching as a result.

The rapture! We need to see Scripture that teaches us this doctrine.

Please call us to study the Bible. It is refreshing.

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And

whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

OUR ADDRESS IS:

7845 Cottonwood Dr.

Lenexa, Kansas 66216

913-620-0563

Visitors welcome

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer
Elders:

Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons:

Bill Miller

Brandon Jimison

Joe Hurd

Check out the following websites:

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10

News and Notes:

Those in need of prayers:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick, Denese Goring, Brooklyn Boyer, Tracy Richardson, Don Craig, Tina Brofft, Ken Green, Matt Bassford, Tim Young, Gerry Sandusky, Cleveland Reddinger, Andy Robertson and Addy Armstrong.

Bible Classes: Sunday Morning - **Revelation** - Bill Miller

Wednesday Evening - **I&2 Peter and Jude** - Ron Peck

Sunday Sermon: *Discipleship and the Master*