

#12 THE DOCTRINE OF MIRACLES

30 PRACTICAL DOCTRINES YOU NEED TO KNOW | DR. RANDY WHITE

THE ISSUE OF MIRACLES HAS BEEN ONE OF THE GREATEST POINTS OF DIVISION WITHIN THE CHURCH AGE.

- Catholics and Protestants are divided on the issue of miracles.
 - The Roman Catholic church is an *apostolic* movement, believing that the Apostle Peter's position has been transferred from one pope to another through the ages.
 - The Protestant reformation was decidedly *anti-miracle* and was often criticized by the Pope for not displaying any *signs* from God that the reformers were correct in their protests.
 - John Calvin believed (as do most Protestants) that miracles were only associated with new revelation, and that since the reformers were going back to old revelation, miracles were not necessary.
- Thomas Jefferson, a deist, represents the view that liberal Protestants have taken, and that is that Biblically recorded miracles themselves were not real events.
- The non-Catholic / non-Protestant realm of the Christian faith (independent churches, "free-church" movement, Fundamentalists, evangelicals, etc.) have divided over the issue.
 - Charismatic or Pentacostal churches believe in the *continuation* of the "sign gifts."
 - Non-charismatic churches teach the *cessation* of sign gifts.
 - Evangelical churches are often divided or mixed on the issue.

WITHOUT DOUBT, THE BIBLE PRESENTS MIRACULOUS EVENTS AS HISTORICAL, SCIENTIFIC, VERIFIABLE EVENTS.

- While the *rationalist* denies supernatural events, the Bible presents these events as undeniably supernatural.
- "Miracles of the Bible Interactive" (Michael Aubrey, Editor) lists 264 miracles of the Bible.
- In the parting of the Red Sea, a little research will show the standard approach to miracles:
 - It was an allegorical event and did not take place in history.
 - It was a scientifically definable event, and any miracle was in the timing.
 - It was a supernatural event caused by the direct intervention of God. This is the approach taken of Biblical miracles.

THERE ARE MANY OCCASIONS IN THE BIBLE IN WHICH MIRACLES DID NOT OCCUR.

- John the Baptist could have used a miracle! God chose not to perform a miracle because John's ministry as the forerunner was one of verbal announcement, not Kingdom authority. John was neither prophet nor apostle, but rather spokesman.
- In 2 Timothy 4:20 Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletus, but in Acts 19:11-12 Paul had such supernatural abilities that one of Paul's handkerchiefs was enough to heal someone.

ARE MIRACLES AN EXPECTED PART OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE?

- For the most part, Pastors have been extremely reluctant to teach that God is not working miracles today.
- To understand the issue, one should study the *methods* of God's work through history to determine whether or not miracles should be an expected part of the Christian experience.
 - From Adam to Noah we do not know of a single miracle (save perhaps Enoch's disappearance).
 - From Noah to Abraham there were a few "miracles of nature" but no recorded miracles performed by or upon individuals (save perhaps the conception of Isaac and the destruction of Lot's wife).
 - The book of Exodus is filled with miracles, almost all of which were related to the proof of Moses' prophetic call.
 - The books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy contain very few miracles, all related to Moses' leadership or provision for the nation.
 - The books of Mathew, Mark, Luke, and Acts contain 60% of all the Bible's miracles.
 - The Pauline Epistles do not contain a record of any miracles performed.
- Paul said that *sign gifts* were a phenomenon of *every* believer during his day – 1 Corinthians 12:7
- In the same context, Paul said that the day would come with *faith, hope, charity* would be all that would remain – 1 Corinthians 13:8-10, 13.
- In the apostolic age, there were manifestations of the Spirit to guide, encourage, prove, and teach. Today we have faith, hope, and charity. We place our faith in the truth of the Scriptures, our hope is in the blood of Jesus Christ and His coming for His church, and charity is the full expression of Christian love until Jesus comes.