

Have the Sign Gifts Ceased Today?

Introduction

- Sign gifts were miraculous demonstrations that communicated or _____ truth. Mark 16:17-20
- There are people today who claim to have spiritual powers to work signs, miracles, and wonders. Is God giving this power today to individuals? Does the body of Christ need the operation of sign gifts today?
- The best way to answer these questions is to answer the simple question, “Why were the sign gifts given in the first place?”
- If we can understand from the Bible why God gave these sign gifts, then we can discern readily if they are still needed and operative today.

The sign gifts were given to validate the _____ of Christ.

1. An _____ of Christ was a person who had actually seen the resurrected Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:4-8
2. Not only this, an apostle's _____ had to be validated with undeniable miraculous sign gifts. Acts 2:43, 4:16, 29, 30, 33, 5:12; 2 Corinthians 12:11-12
 - *“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 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?”*
Hebrews 2:3-4
 - These _____ would serve as a confirmation for their message.
→ *“And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”* **Mark 16:20**
3. Today, many men claim to be apostles, but they are not. How do we know this? To be an apostle, you had to have seen the resurrected Christ in person, literally and physically.
 - No man knows Christ after the _____ today.

→ *“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.”* **2 Corinthians 5:16**

4. Therefore, we know there are no apostles today; hence, there is no longer the need for the apostolic sign gifts.

The sign gifts were given to reveal, communicate, and confirm

1. All throughout the book of Acts, while the early church was taking shape, God was progressively revealing more and more truth.
 - When the apostles preached of Christ’s resurrection and told Israel to repent and Christ would return (Acts 3:18-20), it was a miraculous sign that saved their skin (Acts 4:16), and confirmed their words (Acts 4:29-30).
 - When Peter preached Christ’s resurrection to Cornelius’ house, it was a miraculous sign that kept him out of hot water with his Jewish brethren.
Acts 11:17-18
 - God saved the apostle Paul and began to reveal to him truth that had been kept secret since the world began. Paul would desperately need the signs of an apostle to validate this new message that he proclaimed.
→ It was signs that confirmed and validated his _____ message before the church at Jerusalem. Acts 15:12-13
2. This was necessary until _____ of God’s truth could be given, written down, and preserved in a Book. Today we have that Book and it is called the Bible. We have it all, and God’s Word is sufficient to furnish us unto _____ good works.
 - *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*
2 Timothy 3:16-17

The sign gifts were given as a _____ to Israel.

1. The nation of Israel was born through the use of miraculous signs.
Exodus 4:30-31

2. 1 Corinthians 1:22 states, “For the _____ require a sign...”
3. 1 Corinthians 14:22 informs us that the gift of tongues was a _____ to unbelievers.
4. The Corinthian church started right next door to the Jewish synagogue.
Acts 18:5-7
 - As Israel observed these pagan Gentiles demonstrating **their** sign gifts, it was a testimony that God had _____ them and gone among the Gentiles.
 - As they saw their spiritual possessions now going to the Gentiles, it was to _____ them to jealousy that they might come to Christ and be saved. Romans 11:11, 13-14
5. This provoking ministry to Israel ended in Acts 28:25-28. After this declarative statement of judgment, we note several important things.
 - Soon after this, _____ was sacked and destroyed by the Roman emperor Titus. The Jews were scattered among the nations.
 - The Word of God is completed through Paul’s post-Acts books.
Colossians 1:25
 - Paul never mentions _____ again in any of his post-Acts books. Paul refers to himself as the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you, Gentiles.
Ephesians 3:1
 - The _____ gifts are never mentioned again in any of Paul’s post-Acts books.
 - There is evidence of the sign gifts ceasing in Paul’s post-Acts books.
2 Timothy 4:20; 1 Timothy 5:23; Philippians 2:25-27; 2 Timothy 2:15 (no miraculous word of knowledge)
6. In the gospels and Acts, when Israel was still there and still an issue, we see the demonstration of miraculous signs. Once Israel was set aside nationally there was no longer a _____ for these sign gifts. Once Israel was no longer an issue, the sign gifts _____.
7. Nowhere in the Bible are you told to _____ a sign. In fact, Jesus said that a wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign. Matthew 16:4
8. God gave to the apostles and early church miraculous signs, and we know why He did this, but there is no reason to be enamored with signs and wonders today. Be enamored with _____ and His completed Word.

The True Marks of an Apostolic Healer

Introduction

- Last week we learned that a true apostle of Christ had two primary characteristics:
 - First, they had actually _____ the resurrected Christ, physically, after His resurrection from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:4-9
 - Second, they demonstrated the validity of their apostleship through the manifestation of miraculous _____ and wonders. Hebrews 2:3-4; Mark 16:20; 2 Corinthians 12:12
- There are men today who claim to be apostles and have the apostolic sign gifts. It seems that the number one gift that they purport to have is the apostolic gift of _____.
- Let's put them to the Biblical test. Jesus said that His apostles would actually do _____ works than He did. John 14:12

First, Jesus and the apostles went where the _____ people were.

Matthew 9:35; Acts 5:15

Second, Jesus and the apostles healed _____.

Matthew 8:13; Mark 5:29; Luke 17:14; Acts 3:7-8, 9:32-34

Third, Jesus and the apostles healed _____.

Matthew 8:14-15; Acts 4:14, 16

- When Jesus and the apostles healed, there were no "lying symptoms" to ignore.

Fourth, Jesus and the apostles healed _____.

1. Many times in the Scripture, the Bible is careful to note this. Matthew 4:23-24, 9:35; Mark 6:56; Acts 5:15-16, 28:7-9
2. Unlike healers today, they did not leave long lines of _____ people who had to return home in their wheelchairs.

Fifth, Jesus and the apostles healed _____ disease.

1. They didn't just heal lower back pain, headaches, heart palpitations, arthritis, and other non-visible ailments.
2. They healed legs crippled from birth, withered hands, palsy, blind eyes, deaf ears, leprosy, etc.
3. Their healings were undeniably miraculous. Matthew 15:31; Acts 4:16
 - Jesus took an _____ that had been cut off and healed it. Luke 22:50-51
 - Peter healed a man who had been crippled and in bed for _____ years. Acts 9:34

Sixth, Jesus and the apostles performed the ultimate of all healings, they raised the _____.

- And they did it in front of _____ of people. John 11:38-45; Acts 9:36-43, 20:7-12

In Conclusion:

1. We have seen from the Bible six characteristics of a true apostle's healing ministry.
2. Despite the claims being made today, nobody is exhibiting these six characteristics from God's Word in their healing ministries.
3. If a person wants to conveniently disregard the six things that typified the Biblical sign gift of healing, that is fine, but they should not call themselves an apostle and claim to have the sign gift of healing.
4. Why is this important to look at and study? Because so many people today are living under _____ and condemnation because they did not receive their healing.
5. There are others who are filled with false _____ and end up devastated with their faith in God being undermined.
6. Christian – do not despair. Paul called this dispensation “the sufferings of this present time.” Paul said that though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day.
7. We have a hope that extends far beyond the physical healing of these corruptible, mortal _____. 2 Corinthians 4:17