

# Miracle Claims and the Gospel of Christ

## A Theological and Pastoral Examination

### Introduction

Throughout the history of the church, claims of miracles, signs, visions, and extraordinary manifestations have accompanied periods of spiritual excitement. Some of these claims may be sincere. Others may be exaggerated. Still others may be wholly unfounded.

The question that must be asked is not whether God is able to perform miracles. Scripture plainly affirms that He is.

### The question is rather this:

What place do miracle claims occupy in the preaching of the gospel of Christ?

When miracle stories become central, and when spiritual authority is grounded upon extraordinary narratives rather than upon apostolic doctrine, the church stands in danger of shifting its foundation. The gospel of Christ is not built upon spectacle, but upon the finished work of the Son of God.

## 1. The Nature of the Gospel

The apostle Paul declared:

“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” (1 Corinthians 2:2)

The power of God unto salvation lies in the message of Christ crucified (Romans 1:16), not in the display of signs.

In the apostolic era, miracles served a particular function: they authenticated revelation. They confirmed the authority of those through whom God was giving His Word. Hebrews 2:3–4 speaks of 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...”

Miracles bore witness to the message; they were not the message itself. When the message is eclipsed by fascination with the sign, the order is reversed.

## **2. The Danger of Exaggerated Claims**

Stories have circulated in Christian circles of dramatic healings, resurrections, and extraordinary acts performed by renowned preachers. One such widely repeated account concerns a preacher who is said to have thrown a dead child against a wall, after which the child was restored to life. (Smith Wigglesworth- an Article to follow))

Whether such a story is historically verifiable or embellished over time is secondary to a more serious concern:

What effect do such stories have upon the hearer? Do they direct men to repentance and faith in the Son of God? Do they direct the soul to Christ? Or do they foster awe of the preacher?

When personality becomes central and miracle narratives form the core of devotion, the line between Christian testimony and religious legend grows thin.

The apostles consistently refused such elevation. When Cornelius fell at Peter's feet, Peter said: "Stand up; I myself also am a man." (Acts 10:26)

True gospel ministry deflects glory away from the servant and directs it to Christ.

## **3. From Testimony to Superstition**

History shows how easily admiration turns into veneration. It has been reported that some individuals visit the graves of celebrated preachers and lie upon their tombs, believing they might receive

spiritual anointing by proximity. Such practices are sometimes called “grave hugging.”

However sincere the participants may be, such conduct bears closer resemblance to superstition than to New Testament Christianity.

Scripture does not teach that spiritual gifts are transmitted through physical contact with the remains of departed believers. The Spirit of God is sovereign. He is not channelled through relics.

When faith is subtly displaced from Christ to association with men, even revered men, superstition has entered.

#### **4. Signs Without Substance**

The New Testament provides a clear pattern of revival and conversion. At Pentecost:

The Word was preached. Christ was proclaimed. Hearts were “pricked.” Repentance followed. Three thousand souls were added—not because they witnessed spectacle, but because they were convicted by truth. In contrast, where gatherings focus upon imitation of tongues, falling to the ground, unusual behaviours, or dramatic claims without clear exposition of Christ’s atoning work, something essential is missing. Salvation cannot be declared where repentance and faith are absent. The gospel is not validated by atmosphere.

#### **5. Spirit Baptism and Manifestation**

Much confusion arises when the baptism of the Holy Spirit is equated with a particular manifestation.

Yet Scripture declares: “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.” (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Union with Christ, incorporation into His body, and participation in His life constitute the essence of Spirit baptism.

Paul also asks:

“Do all speak with tongues?” (1 Corinthians 12:30) The expected answer is no

The evidence of the Spirit’s work is not uniform manifestation, but repentance, faith, growth in grace and a knowledge of the Son of God, and perseverance.

## **6. The Subtle Shift**

The gravest danger of miracle-centred religion is not outright denial of doctrine, but subtle displacement.

The shift is gradual:

From Christ to experience. From Scripture to testimony. From repentance to sensation. From reverence to spectacle.

When men are taught to seek signs, they may become dependent upon stimulation rather than upon truth.

When signs do not appear, faith falters.

But when faith rests upon Christ crucified, it stands secure whether signs abound or cease.

## **7. The Sufficiency of Scripture**

The Reformation principle remains foundational: Scripture alone is the final authority.

The Spirit who inspired the Word does not contradict it, nor does He require theatrical display to confirm His presence.

The ordinary means of grace—preaching, and prayer—are not inferior to extraordinary manifestations. They are the appointed instruments through which Christ builds His church.

Where the Word is faithfully preached and received in faith, the Spirit

is at work—even if no outward spectacle attends.

## **Conclusion**

God is sovereign. He is able to heal. He is able to intervene. He is able to perform wonders according to His will.

It is my view the church must guard against elevating miracle claims above gospel truth.

Extraordinary stories may stir emotion. They may even inspire temporary enthusiasm. Yet they cannot save.

The gospel of Christ—His life, death, and resurrection for sinners—is the power of God unto salvation.

When miracle narratives overshadow that message, the church risks drifting from apostolic simplicity.

Christ crucified, death reurrection and alive must remain central. Not spectacle. Not legend. Not sensation. But the gospel.

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