

APOSTOLIC SIGN-MIRACLES

The miracles that Jesus did in the gospel of John are consistently called “signs” (cf. Jn. 20:30-31). And there were special SIGN gifts given to the early apostolic Church that had specific SIGN value but did not continue.

God can work miraculously any time He so desires but the miraculous “sign-gifts” had a special purpose related to God transitioning from Israel to the Church Era and the accompanying new revelation as given through the apostles. In this context the apostles had a very unique and special sign-gift ministry that validated NEW revelation given through them. It validated them as apostles and their message!

New revelation and sign-miracles went together! The sign-miracles validated the new revelation and those giving it.

2 Corinthians 12:12 (NKJV)

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

If all believers had been doing “the signs of an apostle” then they would not have served to uniquely confirm the apostles in their apostolic role. The apostles were unique in the doing of “signs and wonders and mighty deeds” that were performed through them.

Acts 2:43 (NKJV)

43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

Note the emphasis was NOT on everyone doing signs and wonders! No, it was uniquely happening through the apostles – the special representatives of Christ who spoke with a unique authority on His behalf.

Acts 5:12 (NKJV)

12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon’s Porch.

Consistently in the early church the ministry of “signs and wonders” happened in conjunction with the apostles. They were uniquely singled out in this way.

Hebrews 2:3–4 (NKJV)

3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

Hebrews 2:3-4 very clearly indicates that the apostle's revelatory ministry was CONFIRMED with “signs and wonders, with various miracles”. Hence, we see that a KEY purpose for the apostles’ miracles was to validate that their unique ministry was from the Lord. New revelation was confirmed with apostolic sign-miracles.

The Church is built upon the REVELATORY FOUNDATION of the apostles and their close associates, the prophets (Eph. 2:20; 3:5). But in one form or another ALL New Testament revelation is traced back to and through the apostles to whom Jesus said the Spirit would guide into all the truth (Jn. 16:13; cf. Jn. 17:20). He did and it was CONFIRMED with miraculous signs and wonders!

Note is “WAS CONFIRMED” – not “it is being confirmed”. The New Testament message “was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). It was delivered. It was confirmed. This happened through the apostles. The apostles completed their mission. They are gone! There are no more apostles, there are no more sign-gifts. These all marvelously served their purpose and the Church now builds on them!

“These miraculous gifts were part of the credentials of the apostles as the authoritative agents of God in founding the church. Their function thus confirmed them distinctively in the apostolic church, and they necessarily passed away with it.” – **Benjamin Warfield**