

SUMMARY: The miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit thru the 9 gifts in the first century (i.e. speaking in tongues) were for a temporary purpose, which was fulfilled, and therefore the gifts no longer exist.

TWO TYPES OF GIFTS:

1. Primary Measure: A special measure of the Holy Spirit given on three occasions:
 1. Acts 2:4: To the apostles on the day of Pentecost
 2. Acts 10:44-47: To Cornelius's household ten years later upon taking the gospel to the gentiles.
 3. Acts 9:17-Acts 13:9-11: To the apostle Paul in Damascus or at a later date, before Acts 13:9. The exact time is not clear.
 2. Secondary Measure: Given out only by the laying on of the apostle's hands. Examples: First Deacons (Acts 6:3-8), Peter & John in Samaria (Acts 8:14-16)
- *Note: Primary & secondary measures are not Biblical terms.

GIFTS TO BE DONE AWAY:

The Bible specifies that the gifts would be done away with:

1. I Cor. 13:8-10: "gifts of prophecy...done away...tongues ...will cease...knowledge...done away...when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away."
2. Eph. 4:11-13: "was given...measure of Christ's gift... some as prophets...some as apostles...for equipping of the saints...until we attain the unity of the faith..."

PURPOSE OF GIFTS:

As can be seen from the previous point, the purpose of the gifts was to equip the saints until the unity came. It had a temporary purpose. Equip - confirm who had the truth. The completed Bible was the "perfect" of I Cor 10:8-10 (James 1:25) and declares itself to be complete (Rev. 22:18-19)

LIST OF GIFTS:

I Cor. 12:8-10: Wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing of spirits, various kinds of tongues, & interpretation of tongues. (9)

WHEN DID THE MIRACLES CEASE?

No specific statement of when in the Bible. Surely they ceased when the apostles and anyone who they laid their hands on died, i.e. around the end of the first century. It is also interesting to note that Rev. 20:2 states that Satan will be bound for 1000 years. This may

have occurred at the same time, terminating both sides of the supernatural era around the end of the first century.

The last miracle mentioned in the New Testament is in Acts 28:8 while Paul is on his way to Rome in about AD 60.

WHAT OF SUPPOSED MIRACLES TODAY?

First century miracles were:

1. Verifiable, subject to personal perception (taste of wine, John 2:1-9)
2. Instantaneous & complete (Man near pool at Bethesda was unable to walk 38 years, instantly walked & carried his own bed John 5:5-9)
3. Not denied by contemporaries, in John 2:10-17 the Jews were not denying the cure, they were criticizing carrying the bed on the Sabbath.
4. 100% success rate, no record of any failures.
5. Stately, never bizarre, no showbiz.
6. Never accompanied with request for money.

What of "miracles" today?

1. Are repeatedly shown to be phony.
2. Are typically psychosomatic in nature, not subject to verification. (Note: It is estimated that 55% of persons seeking for medical help are suffering from psychosomatic symptoms)
3. Supposed cures blessed by God to show that God was with them are duplicated by obviously erroneous religious groups, non-Christian groups, and atheists.
4. Characteristically accompanied by requests for money.

CONCLUSION:

The first century Christians needed miracles to tell who was telling the truth when two different people were claiming to have the truth. They had no written word to confirm what was being said. Today we have the two Bibles of God to read to know that we are right. The written Bible and the world which God created (Romans 1:20). We are specifically instructed to study to show ourselves approved. We do not need gifts today.

Therefore the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit thru the 9 gifts in the first century (i.e. speaking in tongues) were for a temporary purpose, which was fulfilled, and therefore the gifts no longer exist.