

Miracles: Are They Still for Today?

Introduction: The Question Every Christian Encounters

Has God stopped working miracles, or are healing, deliverance and divine power still available today?

Key Learning: Questions about miracles are not academic; they shape how we hold onto God when we are waiting, hurting or praying for someone we love.

Miracle Defined

⁹ ‘Pharaoh will demand, “Show me a miracle.” When he does this, say to Aaron, “Take your staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh, and it will become a serpent.” ’

Exodus 7:9 (NLT)

A miracle (Hebrew *mopheth*, a wonder or sign) is a direct, supernatural act of God that transcends nature to reveal God’s power and advance God’s purposes.

In the New Testament we see:

Signs and wonders — demonstrations of God’s power pointing to Christ (Acts 2:22)

Gifts of the Spirit — the Spirit at work through the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12)

Answered prayer — God responding to the prayers of God’s people (James 5:14–15)

Key Learning: From the first use of the word, God uses miracles to set people free.

The Case for Cessationism

Cessationists believe miracles ended with the apostles: they authenticated the apostles’ message and were no longer needed once the New Testament was complete.

¹² When I was with you, I certainly gave you proof that I am an apostle. For I patiently did many signs and wonders and miracles among you.”

2 Corinthians 12:12 (NLT)

³ So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak? ⁴ And God confirmed the message by giving signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit whenever he chose.”

Hebrews 2:3–4 (NLT)

*⁹ Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture!
¹⁰ But when the time of perfection comes, these partial things will become useless.”*
 1 Corinthians 13:9–10 (NLT)

Key Learning: None of these verses say signs and wonders were only for that time.

The Case for Continuationism

Continuationists believe the miraculous gifts continue today.

“⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

Hebrews 13:8 (NLT)

Jesus has not changed. His character and power have not expired.

“¹² ‘I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.”

John 14:12 (NLT)

Greater works. The promise is to anyone who believes, not just the Twelve.

“⁴ There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. ⁶ God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. ⁷ A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. ⁸ To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. ⁹ The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. ¹⁰ He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. ¹¹ It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.”

1 Corinthians 12:4–11 (NLT)

The Spirit still gives gifts. Paul gives no hint these gifts are temporary.

“¹⁵ And then he told them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. ¹⁶ Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. ¹⁸ They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won’t hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.”

Mark 16:15–18 (NLT)

The Great Commission is unfinished. The signs accompany a Gospel that has not yet reached every nation.

“¹⁷ In the last days,” God says, “I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. ¹⁸ In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike— and they will prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will cause wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below— blood and fire and clouds of smoke.”

Acts 2:17–19 (NLT)

We are still in the last days. They began at Pentecost and continue until Christ returns.

Key Learning: The same Jesus, the same Spirit and the same unfinished commission mean miracles are still for today.

What About 1 Corinthians 13:10?

The time of perfection. Most scholars read “perfection” as Christ’s return, not the completed Bible. We still know only in part.

Church history. The apostles were few and travelled on foot; today there are thousands of verified reports of miracles worldwide every year.

Key Learning: Until Christ returns we still know in part, and God is still at work around the world.

Why Does This Matter?

How we answer shapes:

How we pray: with genuine expectation, or as a polite formality?

How we read the Gospels: a record of what Jesus once did, or a window into who he still is?

How we care for those who suffer: comfort only, or also faith and intercession?

How the global church sees itself: dismissing the testimony of millions, or pressing in as image bearers?

Key Learning: What we believe about miracles shapes how we pray and how we show up for people who are suffering.

Holding the Tension with Wisdom

God is sovereign, not a vending machine

We pray with faith, but we do not demand. God heals, but not always in our way or timing.

⁷ ...even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. ⁸ Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹ Each time he said, 'My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.' So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. ¹⁰ That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (NLT)

²⁷ And he certainly was ill; in fact, he almost died. But God had mercy on him—and also on me, so that I would not have one sorrow after another."

Philippians 2:27 (NLT)

Discernment is essential

Not every claim of the miraculous is genuine, so we test everything against Scripture.

²⁴ For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones."

Matthew 24:24 (NLT)

⁹ This man will come to do the work of Satan with counterfeit power and signs and miracles."

2 Thessalonians 2:9 (NLT)

²⁹ Let two or three people prophesy, and let the others evaluate what is said."

1 Corinthians 14:29 (NLT)

¹ Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world."

1 John 4:1 (NLT)

Suffering is not evidence of weak faith

Unanswered prayer does not mean weak faith (John 9). God can heal, and God is present with those who suffer.

The greatest miracle is new life in Christ

“¹⁻⁶ It wasn’t so long ago that you were mired in that old stagnant life of sin. You let the world, which doesn’t know the first thing about living, tell you how to live. You filled your lungs with polluted unbelief, and then exhaled disobedience. We all did it, all of us doing what we felt like doing, when we felt like doing it, all of us in the same boat. It’s a wonder God didn’t lose his temper and do away with the whole lot of us. Instead, immense in mercy and with an incredible love, he embraced us. He took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. He did all this on his own, with no help from us! Then he picked us up and set us down in highest heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah.”

Ephesians 2:1–6 (MSG)

Signs and wonders are signposts pointing to Jesus, not the destination.

Key Learning: Hold expectant faith together with trust in God’s sovereignty, careful discernment and compassion for those who suffer.

So What Do We Do?

Pray with expectation

“¹⁴ Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven.”

James 5:14–15 (NLT)

Welcome the gifts of the Spirit

“¹⁹ Do not stifle the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Do not scoff at prophecies, ²¹ but test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good. ²² Stay away from every kind of evil.”

1 Thessalonians 5:19–22 (NLT)

Tell the stories

“^{11a} And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony.”

Revelation 12:11a (NLT)

Stay humble about timing and outcome

God’s “no” or “not yet” is not silence; it is still a response.

Key Learning: A church that expects miracles prays for the sick, welcomes the Spirit’s gifts, shares its testimonies and trusts God with the outcome.

Conclusion: The Same Jesus

The Jesus who turned water into wine and raised Lazarus is alive and reigning today. The real question is whether we will come to him with open hearts and ask.

Key Learning: Jesus has not changed, so let's ask.

Reflection Questions

- What assumptions have you carried into this topic, and where did they come from?
- Have you ever experienced something you would call miraculous? How did it shape your faith?
- How can we pray for healing while still trusting God when the answer is “no”?
- What would it look like for our church to pray with greater expectation this week?
- Which gift of the Spirit might God have placed in you, even if it is undeveloped?