



Discovering Your Design:

Preparing Christ's followers to change the world

MIRACLES

DEFINITION: THE SPIRIT-GIVEN ABILITY TO DO THAT WHICH CAN ONLY BE DONE THROUGH SUPERNATURAL MEANS TESTIFYING TO GOD'S POWER AND AROUSING AWE AND WONDER IN THOSE WHO SEE OR HEAR IT.

- "A miracle is God stepping into His universe, setting aside the ordinary laws of nature to do something extraordinary" (Gangel, 162).
- Literally means the "workings of powers".
- "This term may refer to any kind of activity where God's mighty power is evident. It may include answers to prayer for deliverance from physical danger (as in the deliverance of the apostles from prison in Acts 5:19,20, 12:6-11), or powerful works of judgment on the enemies of the gospel or those who require discipline within the church (see Acts 5:1-11, 13:9-12), or miraculous deliverance from injury (as with Paul and the viper in Acts 28:3-6). But such acts of spiritual power may also include power to triumph over demonic opposition (as in Acts 16:18 cf. Luke 10:17)." (Grudem 1062).
- On the other hand there are others who see a narrower definition of miracles. "An event of supernatural power, palpable to the senses, accompanying the servant of the Lord to authenticate the divine commission" (Flynn, 161).
- Miracles authenticated the messenger and his message (II Corinthians 12:12 and Hebrews 2:4). Many believe a study of miracles show that they appeared at unique times in the history of God's people (Exodus, the prophets, (Elijah and Elisha) Jesus and the early church) .
- The same could be true in countries today which have not had a Gospel witness and at the same time could explain why we don't see them (narrow sense) so much in our day, for they are not needed. This point is debated by various Christians.
- This gift is not exercised at the will of the person, rather by the will of God.

Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:10, 28, 29

Contribution: this gift builds up the body as we receive a greater sense of awe for God's power. As miracles attest to the validity of a Gospel witness, people respond in faith and believe.

Biblical Examples: Jesus (John 2:1-11), Peter (Acts 12:1-12), Paul (Acts 28:3-6)

Characteristics - People with this gift :

- are used by God to perform miracles
- may have a corresponding message (of the Gospel) that needs to be authenticated (i.e. the Gospel) and exhortation to repent and believe

Cautions:

- make sure God gets the glory
- as a church we must remember that not all miracles come from God cf. II Thessalonians 2:9
- any miracle worker must be careful to deflect any attention given them to God