



SIGNS & WONDERS

The kingdom of God does not involve land, money or earthly resources. It is spiritual in nature. So, beyond natural talent, aptitude, or interest, God gives abilities which are spiritual in nature and accomplish God's spiritual objectives of bringing folks to faith and obedience to him (as well as love and loyalty to each other).

TYPES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

• **words**

• **works**

• **witness**

The time period of Jesus/Apostles was short and unique in human history (60 years). These men had not only known Jesus, but they had also received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and performed many miraculous and spectacular things.

The QUESTION: Were the “witness” gifts given uniquely to these men to confirm their authority OR does the Holy Spirit confer these gifts upon people throughout history?

May someone today have the God
given gift of healing folks or speaking
in tongues?

If these “spectacular” gifts were meant only to authenticate the apostles, then they were finished when the last apostle died. That would mean that anyone who claims to have or exhibit one of these gifts today is a deceiver or they are themselves deceived.

If some of the spiritual gifts were short term and some are long term, the Bible NEVER indicates this! For instance, I Cor. 12 lists wisdom and faith right along side of healing and speaking in different tongues (vs.8-10).

Are these gifts still needed and valid today?

continuation(ism) = **YES**

cessation(ism) = **NO**

Why would some gifts vanish and some remain?

“All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.”

(I Cor. 12:11)

We are told to **desire** these spiritual gifts as well as “test” or weigh carefully” their exercise. (I Cor. 14:1-5, 29)

It seems impossible that “speaking in tongues” (itself a miraculous event) was only meant to confirm an apostle’s identity/authority because the apostle Paul said, “I would like every one of you to speak in tongues.” (1 Cor. 14:5)

The U.B. church (from inception, Otterbein/Boehm) has always believed in **continuation** of miracles and miraculous gifts as well as **caution** in attributing every spectacular event to God.

The cessation doctrine is the territory of Presbyterian, Baptist, Anglican, and many independent Protestant churches of Calvinist theology.

JOHN CALVIN – (1500's)

Emphasizing the SOVEREIGNTY of GOD in all aspects of salvation.

- unconditional election
- irresistible grace
- limited atonement
- dispensations

The U.B. church has never followed Calvin's theology, believing that God allows men's free will to operate in the process of salvation. This impacts many areas including the view that God did not limit certain spiritual gifts to certain dispensations of time.

The U.B. viewpoint on this issue joins with many other Protestant churches of Armenian heritage including Nazarene, Wesleyan, Methodist, Moravian, Lutheran, and (of course!) the “Pentecostal” groups ... as well as Roman Catholic.

II Corinthians 12:12

“Signs and wonders” mark an apostle.
True. This does not say that God
never imparts the signs and wonders
gifts to anyone else.

These miracle gifts show forth God's power, yet amazingly, do not always lead to faith in God.

- Paul struck a sorcerer blind. People believed!
(Acts 13:8-12)
- Paul healed a crippled man. People rioted and stoned him!
(Acts 14:8-20)

According to Hebrews 2:3-4, all “signs, wonders, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit” are testimonies in the physical world of the reality of God in the spiritual world.

***The WONDER [physical] becomes a SIGN [spiritual].**