

Do Miraculous Gifts Exist Today? If Not, Why Not?

Introduction:

- A. In our last study we noted that the Bible describes differing “measures” of the Spirit.
1. Jesus (and Jesus alone) was given “*the Spirit without measure*” (*John 3:31-35; 1:32-34; Col 1:19*).
 2. The apostles were provided a “baptismal measure” of the Spirit (*Acts 1:4-5; 2:4; John 14:26*).
 3. Others enjoyed a “laying on of the apostles’ hands measure” of the Spirit (*Acts 8:12-19; 19:1-7*).
- B. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul describes miraculous spiritual gifts in detail (*12:1-11*).
1. These “*manifestations of the Spirit*” were given “*for the common good*” (*12:7*).
 2. “*These are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each... as he wills*” (*12:11*).
- C. This led us conclusively to a recognition of certain “limitations” of the measures of the Spirit.
1. Jesus, who had “the Spirit without measure,” baptized the apostles with the Spirit.
 2. The apostles could impart gifts of the Spirit through “the laying on” of their hands.
 3. No Biblical record exists of those “laid hands on” being able to pass along the Spirit to others.
- D. Which is why Paul writes in *1 Corinthians 12:31*, “*And I will show you a still more excellent way.*”

I. Love: The Still More Excellent Way (1 Cor 13)

- A. *13:1-3*: the exercise of any spiritual gift is _____ in the absence of love.
- B. *13:4-7*: the fundamental _____ of love.
- C. *13:8-13*: the _____ (and thereby the superiority) of love.
1. “*As for prophecies, they will pass away*” (*13:8a; Prov 30:5*).
 2. “*As for tongues, they will cease*” (*13:8b; Isa 55:10-11*).
 3. “*As for knowledge (12:8), it will pass away*” (*13:8c; Luke 16:17*).
 4. “*For we know in part and we prophesy in part...*” (*13:9*).
 - a. “*In part*” — *ek* (in, of) *merous* (part, share, district).
 - b. Paraphrase: “via miraculous knowledge and prophecy, we have a portion of the whole.” 5. “*...but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away*” (*13:10*).
 - a. “*The perfect*” — *to teleion* (the mature, the full, the complete).
 - b. Paraphrase: “when the completion is realized, the portions will be done away with.” 6. The age of miraculous spiritual gifts was a kind of “childhood” era for the church (*13:11-13*).

II. Miraculous Spiritual Gifts in the Larger (Historical) Context

A. Remember, no record exists of those “laid hands on” being able to pass along the Spirit to others.

B. What happened when those people passed away? Miraculous spiritual gifts passed away as well.