

## You Will Do Greater Works Than the Ones I Do

John 14:14

John 14:12-14 <sup>12</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

Remember, this entire section is a continuation of the discourse Jesus was having with his disciples in the context of the last supper on the night he was to be betrayed by Judas. He has told them in advance that he was to be delivered over to crucifixion, but that they must still believe in Him as in three days he will rise from dead.

All of this news certainly confused the disciples as they are still uncertain as to what Jesus is sharing with them. In the midst of this news Jesus continues to encourage the disciples by reminding them he is about doing the Father's will as he and the Father are one in essence. And if there is any doubt simply look at the works Jesus has done that only God could do. And this is the verse we ended with last time.

John 14:11 <sup>11</sup> "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.

The works Jesus addresses are those miraculous works He had been doing for the last few years that are referenced in chapter 10 of this gospel.

<sup>NAU</sup> John 10:25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me.

<sup>NAU</sup> John 10:38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

And what are some of those works that Jesus is referencing?

Matthew 11:4-5 <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> *the* BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT and *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed and *the* deaf hear, *the* dead are raised up, and *the* POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.

Jesus is quoting the prophet Isaiah through whom God promised to make clear who the Messiah would be as he fulfilled those things pertaining to the miracles this savior would perform to testify that he was sent from the Father. But then we come to our text today and we read this.

John 14:12 <sup>12</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

It has been debated as to whether or not these works are limited to miracles where, if they're not, they might also include those works that Jesus did in declaring the Kingdom of God being in their midst. But the context here is plainly dealing with miraculous works.

Even John Calvin, an excellent exegete of the Scriptures, admits that the works in question were miracles as he makes this observation in his commentary on the gospel of

John, “the works of which Christ here spake were his miraculous works, the same as those mentioned in the two preceding verses, works to which he appealed as proofs of His divine person and mission.”

And yet, regarding the extent of time in which these works would be performed among those who believe in Christ, Calvin goes on to say “some have understood this to refer to all the genuine followers of Christ. But this is manifestly wrong, for there is no Christian on earth today who can do the miracles which Christ did.

So, what Calvin and others have done with this particular text is to abandon the exegesis of this portion of Scripture in favor of what they see, or don't see, with their eyes, resulting in their experiences dictating to the word of God. Now, I agree with Calvin that we don't see the miracles that Jesus did of which he tells his disciple that they will do and even greater works.

But nowhere in Scripture can a biblical argument be made for the cessation of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, notwithstanding **1 Corinthians 13:8** where we read, Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of prophecy*, they will be done away; if *there are tongues*, they will cease; if *there is knowledge*, it will be done away...

Any serious exegete of the bible who uses this as a proof-text for the abolition of the sign gifts simply has not taken seriously the proper approach to interpret this portion of Scripture, where, by the way, only two sign gifts are mentioned, that of prophecy and tongues, with the third gift hardly characterized as miraculous, that of knowledge also ceasing.

So, if Jesus is addressing miraculous works that testify of the Father, and he has told his disciples that they will do the same works, even greater, then what are we to make of this? Keep in mind that the context has the disciples in the upper room at the last supper listening to Jesus explain all that is about to take place in a few hours. It could be argued that only those in the room, to eventually exclude Judas, would be the exclusive partakers of this message and is therefore limited only to the apostles, who would be given the privilege to manifest these miraculous works in their lives after Jesus goes to the cross, to bear witness to the risen Christ and his kingdom to come.

And it is true. The apostles were gifted in this way to bear witness to Christ through their ministries as Paul points out when writing to the church in Corinth as he addresses his own apostleship.

**2 Corinthians 12:12** The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.

But John 14:12 doesn't limit this promise to only the apostles as it clearly says, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

Well, the apostles would certainly believe in Christ but so would every other person who comes to faith in the Messiah, Jesus, which opens the door for not just apostles doing the works Jesus did, but anyone gifted by the Holy Spirit, which is why Paul makes clear that these miraculous gifts were not limited to the apostles as he would reference some of these same gifts, including the gift of miracles, in his letter to the Corinthians that

were meant to include the saints of those churches, not just apostles, with the caveat that all are not workers of miracles according to 1 Cor. 12:29.

And despite how some people in the church today may have represented themselves in weird and bizarre ways, claiming to be utilizing some of these sign gifts when in fact it is clear that they haven't, it does not negate the clear teaching of Scripture that these gifts are still for the church today, with the caveat that only as God desires to utilize these gifts can they be deployed in the church in any age. You can go to my website to get my expanded teaching on the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

I've also posted a few Youtube teachings on a number of the gifts of the Spirit as I taught through 1 Thessalonians and Ephesians and so I won't go into a lengthy explanation here as to why the gifts of the Spirit have not been abrogated by God according to His word. I'll put a link to my website and those teachings in the description below.

Buit for today's teaching, in light of the context, I want to limit this study to the text we're dealing with where Jesus says, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

So, if we are to take these words of Jesus seriously, then it would seem logical that after Christ's resurrection and subsequent ascension back to the Father that we would see the fulfillment of our Lord's promise among those who believe. And what better place to see these works being performed than in the very book written to chronicle the early church, which we know as Acts or the Acts of the Apostles. By the way, Irenaeus, one of the early church fathers of the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century has actually been credited as the first to use the phrase Acts of the apostles. And yet that phrase is nowhere found in the actual work of Luke who simply opens the chronicles in **Acts 1:1-2** The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, <sup>2</sup> until the day when He was taken up *to heaven*, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

And so, Luke is simply chronicling those things being fulfilled that Jesus commanded his disciples to accomplish summed up in **Matthew 28:19-20** <sup>19</sup> "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

It would then follow that preaching the gospel and making disciples would also include God working in and among the disciples with those signs and wonders that Jesus promised He would work among them after His ascension to the Father, including miraculous healings that would be part of that promise.

And it is in the book of Acts where we find the first recorded miraculous healing after the day of Pentecost, in light of our Lord's words found in the upper room where he said, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do; because I go to the Father. It's found in Acts chapter 3, where Peter and John were used by God to heal a lame man crippled from birth. Peter and John confronted the man and then we read in

**Acts 3:5-8** <sup>5</sup> So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. <sup>6</sup> Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the

name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." <sup>7</sup> Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. <sup>8</sup> He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

What was the result of this healing? Two things. The first is that everyone who witnessed this miracle, including the man who was on the receiving end of this miracle, began praising God. But the second and probably the most important thing that transpired is how Peter and John used the miracle to then preach the gospel to the crowds.

**Acts 3:12-15** <sup>12</sup> When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? <sup>13</sup> The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. <sup>14</sup> You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. <sup>15</sup> You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

Notice Peter is not pulling any punches here as he begins his gospel message with the bad news that these sinners rejected the author of life and are responsible before a holy God for his death. But through a miracle God raised him from the dead and Peter and John are witnesses to this. And then Peter gives them this parting word.

**Acts 3:19-20** <sup>9</sup> Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, <sup>20</sup> and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you-- even Jesus.

It was through a miracle, not unlike the miracles Jesus performed among the Jews, that Peter is given the opportunity to preach the gospel, something you will not see among healing scammers today who name the name of Christ to prop up their supposed miracle ministries as these imposters separate people from their hard-earned money. That is spiritual criminality. And I'll reference this truth throughout this study. But back to Acts.

After this incident we see the apostles in chapter 4 of Acts continuing to preach the gospel where many more people were being added to the church and in this context the people realized that God was the one who was in their midst and they brought their sick to the apostles for healing.

**Acts 5:14-16** <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. <sup>15</sup> As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. <sup>16</sup> Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

Then we come to chapter 6 of Acts and we find a man who was confirmed by the apostles to be a deacon or servant to the body of Christ. This disciple's name was Stephen, who by the way was not an apostle. And here's what we read of Stephen in the context of the gospel being preached.

**Acts 6:7-8** <sup>7</sup> The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith. <sup>8</sup> And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.

Stephen was certainly a believer of the type that Jesus identified in our text, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also..

And yet it does not necessarily follow that he who believes, by default, would include everyone who believes. Otherwise, everyone in the body of Christ at that time would be performing such miracles. And again, don't let the miracle ministry frauds tell you it was because of a lack of faith that everyone didn't perform such miracles back in the day and that if anyone has enough faith today they can do the same as Jesus. Christ didn't qualify his promise through having enough faith, but that they believe on Him, which is to say, that they are Christians, born of the Spirit.

The apostle Paul could be seen as the epitome of one who believed and performed many of these wonders as he preached the gospel and yet on two different occasions he did not employ these miraculous gifts where in his first letter to Timothy he said to him, No longer drink water *exclusively*, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.

Frequent ailments? Where is your mercy Paul? Just heal the man. Well, there's no reason to believe that Paul didn't pray for Timothy in that way, and yet, God, who is the only source for such miracles, apparently said no. So, the next best thing is to take some medicine, in this case a little wine.

One of Paul's closest friends was ministering with him in a city called Miletus. But Paul had to move on with his missionary journey's leaving his friend Trophimus at Miletus. In his second letter to Timothy he makes reference to this.

**2 Timothy 4:19-20** <sup>19</sup> Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. <sup>20</sup> Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.

What do you mean you left him sick? Did you not remember that Jesus said, whoever believes will do the works I do and even greater works? There is a tendency to think that such miracles can be done whenever we wish, as if we possess the power and authority in ourselves.

It is God and God alone who determines when and where such miracles will be accomplished to his honor and glory. And he may do it through an apostle or anyone who believes on Christ as the book of Acts makes clear where in chapter 8 we find another miracle being performed in the midst of persecution after the killing of Stephen who was stoned to death, as the Pharisee by the name of Saul participated in his death.

**Acts 8:1** Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

And then we see that in the midst of this persecution Philip, one of the seven deacons along with Stephen, who is now dead, began preaching the gospel in the city of Samaria. Keeping in mind that Philip is not an apostle, notice what accompanied his preaching?

**Acts 8:6-8** <sup>6</sup>The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing. <sup>7</sup>For *in the case of* many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out *of them* shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. <sup>8</sup>So there was much rejoicing in that city.

Are you seeing a pattern here? The gospel is going out to the world and in these particular cases it is being accompanied by miracles through both apostles and regular members of the body of Christ with the power of the Holy Spirit. But as it stands in the first 8 chapters of the book of Acts only a handful of people are identified with being used by God in a miraculous way. Certainly there were more believers in Christ, and yet only these handful are recorded as having miracles accompany their proclamation of the gospel. Could there have been more? Absolutely, but up to this point in Acts only a few are recorded. The point is that simply because Jesus said that those who believe in him will do greater works does not translate into everyone who believes will be used in this way. We then come to chapter 9 of Acts where the Pharisee Saul has been literally thrown to the ground by Jesus Christ himself as he blinds Saul.

**Acts 9:3-5** <sup>3</sup>As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; <sup>4</sup>and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" <sup>5</sup>And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He *said*, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,

And then Jesus commands him to get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do." <sup>7</sup>The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. <sup>8</sup>Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup>And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

It is assumed that during this time Saul came to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior as another miracle is about to take place at the hands of a disciple of Christ who is not an apostle.

**Acts 9:10-12** <sup>10</sup>Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." <sup>11</sup>And the Lord *said* to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, <sup>12</sup>and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight."

**Acts 9:17-18** <sup>17</sup>So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." <sup>18</sup>And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized; **Acts 9:20** <sup>20</sup>and immediately he *began* to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

In this same chapter we have two more miracles, both at the hands of Peter. But what is interesting about these two miracles, one healing a paralyzed man and one raising a disciple of Christ from the dead by the name of Tabitha, is that Peter was not the first to come into contact with these people found in two different cities, that of Lydda and Joppa.

In both cases, there were saints in these two cities who were aware of the conditions of the two people needing miracles, and yet none of them were used or prompted by God to enact a miracle for these two people. Did they not fall into the category that Jesus identified as he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also? Absolutely, and yet it was not God's will to use those believers in those situations. Only as God directs people can it be said that all who believe he will also do these works.

We're now a third of the way through the book of Acts. Keep in mind that these miracles are not necessarily happening every day but are separated over a period of months and as we will see even years, as after Peter is used by God to raise Tabitha from the dead we read **Acts 9:43** <sup>43</sup> And Peter stayed many days in Joppa with a tanner *named* Simon.

Many days later Peter would again be used by God, not to miraculously heal or cast out demons, but to continue to preach the gospel as the household of a Roman centurion and his family would be led to the Lord by Peter. It's not until four chapters later, in Acts 13, many many days later, that we once again see the works that Jesus did now being brought to bear in the lives of two men who believed on the Lord: the Pharisee, Saul along with his new friend in the Lord Barnabus as they are set apart by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel.

After Saul, who at this time was also known as Paul, and Barnabus came to Cyprus they arrived at a town called Pathos where they were confronted by a man whose name was Elymas who was opposing them, trying to turn certain people away from the faith. But the miracle that God will use through Paul will not be used to heal anyone but to inflict a malady on Elymas.

**Acts 13:9-11** <sup>9</sup> But Saul, who was also *known as* Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze on him, <sup>10</sup> and said, "You who are full of all deceit and fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to make crooked the straight ways of the Lord? <sup>11</sup> "Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and not see the sun for a time." And immediately a mist and a darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking those who would lead him by the hand.

By the way the irony here should not be lost on us as this was the same miracle Jesus himself inflicted on Paul as he was made blind just before his conversion. After this incident Paul and Barnabas continued traveling and preaching the gospel wherever they went until they came to Iconium where we read in **Acts 14:3** <sup>3</sup> Therefore they spent a long time *there* speaking boldly *with reliance* upon the Lord, who was testifying to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands.

Again, notice the reason for God granting signs and wonders being done at their hands. It all accompanied speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord as they spoke the word of his grace, that is the gospel. If the gospel is not first and foremost then all the miracles in the world are to no avail, which is why the false prophets, apostles and healers of our day are nothing but scam artists whose primary work is to promote their supposed miracle ministries. You will know them by their fruit which they reap from your wallet or pocket book.

Just as a reminder, Jesus, on the night in which he was betrayed, was not instituting a distinct ministry of miracles, signs and wonders as many today would claim Jesus was doing. One group of false teachers today who promote this deceptive idea include those involved in the New Apostolic Reformation movement also known by the acronym NAR, who claim to be able to teach you how to manipulate the Holy Spirit into releasing his power through you in miraculous ways, albeit for a price you pay out of your pocket for this secret knowledge, what can arguably be called neo-Gnosticism, the same type of Gnosticism that was condemned by God in the first century. But let's get back to real miracles found in the book of Acts.

As Paul and Barnabus were forced to leave Iconium they traveled to Lystra where they continued to preach the gospel. And we read this. **Acts 14:8-10** At Lystra a man was sitting who had no strength in his feet, lame from his mother's womb, who had never walked. <sup>9</sup>This man was listening to Paul as he spoke, who, when he had fixed his gaze on him and had seen that he had faith to be made well, <sup>10</sup>said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and *began* to walk.

The crowds in Lystra saw this and thought that Paul and Barnabus were gods. But Paul assured them that they were not.

**Acts 14:15** We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM.

It's not until we come to Acts 16, many many days later, that we see God using the evangelistic ministry of the apostle Paul, as the gospel is accompanied with another miracle.

**Acts 16:16-18** <sup>16</sup>It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling. <sup>17</sup>Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." <sup>18</sup>She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment.

It's not until we come to Acts 19, three chapters later, a number of years into the evangelistic ministry of Paul that we again see the next recorded mention of miracles at the hands of Paul as he ministered to the church in Ephesus.

**Acts 19:9-12** [Paul was] reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup>This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. <sup>11</sup>God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, <sup>12</sup>so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out. **Acts 19:20** <sup>20</sup>So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.

In chapter 20 we have the incident where Paul was teaching in the city of Troas and on a particular day he taught until midnight where a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, [sank] into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. <sup>10</sup>But Paul went



down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him."

We're now three quarters through the book of ACTS. In fact, from this point on, which includes a number of years, we see no miracles being recorded in the ministry of Paul, until we come to the last chapter of Acts where Paul and those who accompanied him had just been delivered from a ship wreck, where they made it safely on to the shore of the island of Malta where the natives helped them dry out as it was also raining at the time. And then we read this.

**Acts 28:3-5** <sup>3</sup> But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand. <sup>4</sup> When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they *began* saying to one another, "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and though he has been saved from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live." <sup>5</sup> However he shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm.

**Acts 28:7-9** <sup>7</sup> Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius, who welcomed us and entertained us courteously three days. <sup>8</sup> And it happened that the father of Publius was lying *in bed* afflicted with *recurrent* fever and dysentery; and Paul went in *to see* him and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and healed him. <sup>9</sup> After this had happened, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases were coming to him and getting cured.

Now, as we come to the end of the book of Acts it is not miracles that are found to take prominence in the ministry of Paul who is under house arrest at this time by the Roman government, but we read this.

**Acts 28:30-31** <sup>30</sup> And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, <sup>31</sup> preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.

Paul would not escape his imprisonment under Roman rule. Scripture does not specifically tell us when Paul died or was executed by the state of Rome, though many historians will agree that he was martyred for his faith. We are told this, however, near the end of Paul's life in a letter he wrote to Timothy.

**2 Timothy 4:6-8** <sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; <sup>8</sup> in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

By the way, by today's standards a poverty stricken and imprisoned Paul would be an embarrassment to the miracle peddlers dressed in their thousand dollar suits or dresses fawned over by misled people who are given the false hope of a miracle in their own lives, without the real miracle message being faithfully exclaimed from the roof tops found in the gospel which is what we have seen all throughout Acts as central, whether miracles accompanied its proclamation or not.

As I mentioned early on in this study I agree with John Calvin that we do not see the types of miracles that Jesus did during his earthly ministry nor similar miracles at the hands of his disciples and apostles in the first century, or at least I haven't. And this is

why so many people argue that these signs and wonders and miracles were simply meant to kick start the church and were never meant to be extended beyond the first century. But the Scriptures simply do not teach this, it must be inferred as Calvin inferred when he said, there is no Christian on earth today who can do the miracles which Christ did.

I don't know if Calvin had the opportunity to visit every corner of the earth and every hamlet hidden from sight when he made that statement, but I'm thinking not. Unless the very word of God gives us compelling evidence to conclude that such miracles could not accompany the proclamation of the gospel today, it must be reasoned that God can and may do so at His good pleasure for his glory. Our particular experience of the absence of miracles, or evidence from silence, is not a biblical argument for God not continuing to work in such a way in places in the world where the gospel has not gone before, for example.

As we've seen, the book of Acts demonstrates that the words of Jesus did come to fruition and yet Luke makes it clear that not every believer was gifted by God with miracles to accompany their proclamation of the gospel, and we don't see those miracles on every page of Acts. I'm sure there were many more that were not recorded, but that's not the point. The point is that God is not manipulated to our desires but will accomplish the advancement of His kingdom through the gospel and if it pleases him he may use miracles to accompany that message of hope to the world, even if we aren't aware of them.

Multiple scores of people have come to faith since Christ's first coming without experiencing a miracle. I dare say you came to faith in Christ without a miracle accompanying your conversion. And yet, a miracle did accompany your conversion. You just didn't recognize it as such as you most certainly were on the receiving end of it. That miracle is called being born from above, or born again by the very hand of God. A miraculous birth where God raised your dead spirit to life. A birth that we cannot bring about in ourselves. Paul reminds us of this miracle.

**Ephesians 2:1,4-6** And you were dead in your trespasses and sins<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,

Don't underestimate the miracle of new birth at the hands of the Holy Spirit, where we are told that God saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.

That's the miracle that every child of God can witness as we faithfully take the message of hope found in Christ out to the world as we watch God do a miracle in the lives of those who receive and believe this message of hope, this gospel that the apostle Paul tells us is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.