



Online Bible Study Lesson 8 Miracles of Jesus' Apostles

Preliminary Bible Study Questions:

- 1) 2) Who were Jesus' Apostles?
- 3) Did St Paul the Apostle perform miracles?

Have you thought much about the Apostle's miracles? What great signs, wonders, and miracles did they perform? Today's lesson will compile the biblical list of the apostle's miracles from the Bible. Then a more in-depth look into the events will take place. Finally, the principles gathered from the biblical accounts of the Apostle's miracles will instruct us about God's nature and the work of his true Apostles.

Jesus' Apostles

All of the Bible's official disciples were also Jesus' apostles, with the obvious exception of Judas the Betrayer. But, did you know that not all apostles were one of Jesus' 12 disciples? **The terms "disciple" and "apostle" are not synonyms.** Simply put, the term "disciples" refers to learners or students; while, the term "apostles" refers to messengers. However, there is some crossover with the two designations in the New Testament. Did you realize that they were all elevated to apostles after Pentecost, less Judas Iscariot? This lesson will focus on Jesus' apostles; but more specifically, the apostles' miracles.

For a little fun, know that Jesus himself was never referred to as a disciple; but, he was referred to as "God's Apostle" (**Hebrews 3:1**), because of his function as God's special messenger to the world.

What is an apostle?

Here's a definition of apostle: A special messenger of God: a person to whom Jesus delegated authority for certain tasks (*Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, editor: Ronald Youngblood, Nelson Publishing, Nashville, 1995, p. 91).

Paul tells us the early church had a "test of apostolic authority" (**2 Corinthians 13:6**). He didn't reveal the specifics of what the test included; however, one test of a true apostle was the fact that they always stood for the harmonious truth of God's plan of redemption (1 Corinthians 15:11; 2 Corinthians 13:8). Another test of apostolic authority included God's working of signs, wonders, and miracles through the men (2 Corinthians 12:12)

Here is a partial list of Jesus Apostles:

Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James, son Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Matthias, Paul, Barnabas, Stephen, and James, brother of Jesus (**Galatians 1:19**). There were undoubtedly many more men called as apostles in the New Testament era.

Miracles of Jesus' Apostles

God prepared some amazing miracles for these men to perform at the most crucial time in the establishment of Christ's Church (**Ephesians 2:10**). Don't ever forget the biblical truism, "**ALL miracles are God's miracles.**"

Early in Jesus' ministry, not long after choosing his 12 disciples, he commissioned his apostles for a short mission to the Jews, "*Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!*" (**Matthew 10:7-8**). The disciples followed instructions and returned, sharing about all the great miracles they performed. Soon, Jesus sent 72 disciples from his broader following on a similar mission (**Luke 10:1**). They returned excited, saying, "Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!" (**Luke 10:17**). Jesus told them to calm down, because it's more important that their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Luke 10:20).

One can only imagine the great miracles the disciples performed during these short mission trips (**Mark 6:12-13**), because details aren't given to us. However, the Lord did gift us with the Bible's Acts of the Apostles, which we can search for the accounted miracles of the apostles. Peter tells us why the apostles had these extraordinary powers, "And the Father, as he promised, gave Jesus the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today" (**Acts 2:33**).

We'll start the list with a miracle Peter performed on the Sea of Galilee.

List of the miracles of Jesus' Apostles:

- Peter walked on water (**Matthew 14:28-31**)
- All believers spoke in foreign languages (**Acts 2:4**)
- *Many* signs and wonders performed (**Acts 2:43; 5:12**)
- Peter & John healed the lame man (**Acts 3:1-11; 3:16**)
- Peter's shadow fell on the sick, healing them (**Acts 5:15-16**)
- Stephen performed amazing miracles and signs (**Acts 6:8**)
- Philip cast out demons and healed the lame (**Acts 8:7; 8:13**)
- Peter heals lame Aeneas in Lydda (**Acts 9:32-35**)
- Peter raised Tabitha, aka Dorcas, from the dead (**Acts 9:36-43**)
- Paul & Barnabas performed signs and wonders in Iconium (**Acts 14:3**)
- Paul & Barnabas healed the crippled man who had faith (**Acts 14:8-10**)
- Paul & Silas cast a demon out of a fortune telling slave girl (**Acts 16:16-18**)
- Paul given extreme power for many unusual miracles. (**Acts 19:11-12**)
- Paul raised Eutychus from the dead after a terrible accident (**Acts 20:9-12**)
- Paul unharmed by poisonous snake bite in Malta (**Acts 28:3-6**)
- Paul healed Publius' father of fever and dysentery (**Acts 28:7-8**)
- Paul healed all sick people on the island of Malta (**Acts 28:9-10**)

One can't help but notice all of Paul's miracles. Most people would have turned proud and bragged about such great works. Let's discuss this matter of the temptation of pride further.

Apostle Paul's Miracles

Paul didn't write much about his miracles (Luke wrote Acts); in fact, he rarely ever mentioned the topic, even when writing about Jesus. One exception was to the Corinthians when he had to defend himself against the self-proclaimed "super-apostles" (**2 Corinthians 12:11-12**).

But, often, he would speak of the source of power for his great service to God, "We now have this light shining in our hearts but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves" (**2 Corinthians 4:7**). He later said, "If you want to boast, boast only about the Lord" (**2 Corinthians 10:17**)

If anyone could have boasted about performing great signs and wonders it was Paul. God knew that any human with as much power as was given Paul would corrupt the miracles and corresponding message, and accept praise for such great

works. So, God gave Paul a little reminder to stay humble. Paul said, "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" (**2 Corinthians 12:7**). Paul hated the thorn, whatever it was, actually begging God three different times to remove it. Regardless of what it was, Christ told Paul, "*My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness*" (**2 Corinthians 12:8-9**).

Paul the Apostle then explained why he took pleasure in all his weaknesses, including the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles he suffered, "Because when I am weak, then I am strong" (**2 Corinthians 12:10**). In other words, when Paul's weaknesses struck him down, then Christ's power lifted him up and became evident in Paul's preaching and miracles. The same spiritual principle works in our lives... when we stay low and humble Christ shows his great power in and through us (**Galatians 2:20**).

Reasons for Jesus' Apostles Miracles

Jesus' main reasons for performing his own miracles were to glorify God the Father and announce that the Kingdom of God had arrived in the flesh (*i.e.* the Son of God). Both Jesus' teachings and miracles were witnesses to who he truly is, the Son of God and Savior of the world. In essence, Christ's miracles happened to be an expression of salvation.

Is there any reason to think that Jesus' apostles had differing reasons for their miracles?

Not at all. Jesus' Apostles main reasons for performing miracles were to glorify God and his Son, and also the Kingdom of God. Miracles are attention-getters and great works of authorization for the gospel message, of which the apostles were the prime conveyors. Both the apostles and the gospel needed authentication, which the amazing signs, wonders, and miracles provided in full (**Acts 14:3**).

Jesus said, "*Truly, truly, I tell you, he who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also; and he will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*" **John 14:12-13** NHEB.

Miracles also brought fear into the hearts of people. When God struck and killed Ananias and Sapphira through Peter great fear swept through the hearts of both

believers and unbelievers. God's immense power, demonstrated in the apostle's miracles, was causing great fear and chaos throughout Jerusalem and the surrounding area (**Acts 5:1-11**). A healthy fear in the heart of a soul leads to the admiration of the Lord (**Psalm 111:10**) and submission to God Almighty (**Acts 10:34-35; Acts 10:1-4**).

Still, today, in all these ways and for all these reasons God showed his greatness through miracles. First, through the Prophets of old, like Moses and Elijah; then through Jesus himself; and finally, through Jesus' apostles. These miracles are for your benefit, so that you are drawn to God through his Son, Jesus.

Grasp This!

The following verse is critical for understanding why God worked miracles through his apostles:

Hebrews 2:1-4 NHEB “Therefore we ought to pay greater attention to the things that we heard, so that we will not drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense; how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation — which at the first having been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard (*i.e.* apostles). God also testifying with them, both by miracles, signs and wonders, by various works of power, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will?

There's a message that God wants spread around the world, and this is it:

The Good News proclaims that Jesus Christ died for our sins. All those who repent and believe in his name will be saved (Acts 20:20-21).

Not to diminish God's miracles, but the most important thing to grasp is God's gospel of love and forgiveness.

The supernatural phenomenon of miracles is spectacular and glorifies the Lord; however, the salvation of a spiritually dead sinner by God's grace is his greatest miracle, which Jesus' Apostles would wholeheartedly affirm.

Has it sunk deep into your soul yet? **Do you realize that you must experience God's forgiveness ABOVE ALL ELSE?**