

The Place and Work of the Apostles
Lesson 3 – God’s Authentication of the Apostles (Part 2)
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Introduction: God wants every man to understand and follow the words of the apostles.

- A. These men were clearly identified and upheld in the ministry of Christ.
 - 1. They were selected as special witnesses that would testify to the whole world. **(Lk 24:46-48; Acts 1:8)**
 - 2. They were personal witnesses to the ascension of Christ.
- B. God the Father would now strongly work with them through signs, miracles and wonders. **(Heb 2:2-4)**
 - 1. The beginning of the revelation of the gospel would be the day of Pentecost.
 - 2. Here we will see a powerful beginning the Father’s work with the apostles.

I. God powerfully pointed men to the apostles on the day of Pentecost

- A. This was a special day in Bible prophecy. **(Isa 2:3; 42:4)**
 - 1. Jesus gave the apostles specific instructions to wait in Jerusalem. **(Acts 1:4, 8; Lk 24:47-50)**
 - 2. This was to be a *grand beginning* and the apostles would be *in the center of it*.
- B. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a powerful sign. **(Acts 1:8)**
 - 1. There was an awesome sound that got everyone’s attention. It was like a “rushing mighty wind” but it also filled the whole house. **(Acts 2:1-2)**
 - 2. On the apostles appeared “tongues of fire” that was on each of them. **(Acts 2:2)**
 - 3. They then began to speak in other languages that they had not known (tongues) but which others who spoke these languages could understand. **(Acts 2:4)**
 - 4. The content of the message was given by the Holy Spirit thus would be perfect and appropriate for the occasion.
 - 5. Imagine hearing a great mighty wind that was so powerful that you ran to the place where you then saw men speaking with tongues of fire on them.
 - 6. God in this way was calling devote men to open their hearts to His message. **(Acts 2:5-8)**
- C. The signs brought men to fully place their attention on the apostles.
 - 1. The pronoun “they” in verse 1 referred back to the apostles in **Acts 1:26**.
 - 2. All those who spoke in tongues were “Galileans.”
 - 3. Peter and the 11 *made the response* and were *the focus of the audience*. **(Act 2:14)**
 - 4. Peter was the one to delivered the first gospel sermon as Jesus promised thus now using the “keys of the kingdom” as Jesus promised. **(Mt 16:19)**

II. God powerfully pointed Christians to follow the apostles

- A. After seeing the signs and becoming Christians. These were urged to continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine. **(Acts 2:41-42)**

1. They continued to see power signs worked by these men and responded in a godly fear. **(Acts 2:43)**
 2. We commonly see a powerful response of Christians to the teachings of the apostles after these signs were worked. **(Acts 2:44; 4:31-32)**
 3. There was an occasion where this power struck dead two members that lied to the Holy Spirit. **(Acts 5:9-11)**
 4. God wanted all Christians to carefully listen to and respect the words of the apostles.
- B. Spiritual gifts could only be given by the laying on of the apostles' hands.
1. At first only the apostles were working signs and wonders. **(Acts 2:4, 43; 4:33; 5:12)**
 2. Why do we see only apostles working signs?
 3. At an appointed time the apostles then laid their hands on selected men. **(Acts 6:3-6)**
 4. Stephen and then Phillip now could perform signs by the Holy Spirit. **(Acts 6:8; 8:5-7, 12-13)**
 5. Phillip had to send for the apostles for others to receive additional gifts of the Holy Spirit. Only apostles could give spiritual gifts. **(Acts 8:14-18)**
 6. Other passages show the necessity of a personal meeting with an apostle in order to receive a spiritual gift! **(Rom 1:11; 2 Tim 1:6; Acts 19:6)**
- C. Christians clearly knew the supreme place God placed the apostles.
1. They were taught that the apostles were appointed "first." **(1 Cor 12:28)**
 2. There were powerful signs that only the apostles could perform. The Corinthians saw these power displays over a period of time! **(2 Cor 12:12)**
 3. This caused the early Christians to freely write an apostle because they knew that God's message was delivered through these men. **(1 Cor 11:1-2)**
 4. The understanding that these powerful signs were worked allowed Paul to appeal to them not to put confidence in the eloquence of others. Paul coming in power should have created godly fear! **(2 Cor 10:10-11; 13:2-3)**

Questions

1. Why was it crucial that God work with the apostles through miracles, signs and wonders?
2. How was the Day of Pentecost revealed in Old Testament prophecy? Why is this day of utmost importance?
3. What things were done by God in the signs on Pentecost that fully focused the attention of men on the apostles? How do we know the apostles were the focus?
4. How did these signs and wonders help the apostles maintain respect of Christians?
5. What was the only way a Christian could receive a miraculous spiritual gift? How does this knowledge help us understand when spiritual gifts ceased?
6. What should be the proper response of Christians to the apostles?