



The Voice Of Truth

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Which One Will You Take Your Stand With? Part V

By Jimmy Pettigrew

We have been looking at the views on church authority. This week let us take a look at the Pentecostal faith.

The Pentecostal faith traces its beginning to New Year's Eve, 1899. In Topeka, Kansas, a handful of people called a fast that lasted 21 days. During this time they prayed earnestly for a great pouring-out of the Holy Spirit, which they say came at midnight on New Year's Eve, 1899. They believe in Holy Spirit Baptism, meaning they can speak in tongues and do miraculous things. Let us examine God's Word whether these things is so!

Holy Spirit Baptism was a promise and never a command. There are only two recorded cases in the New Testament: Acts 2, the Apostles; and Acts 10, the Gentiles. It was to fill a definite need. It was to endow the Apostles with power to accurately recall and teach the truth, John 14:26; to be guided into all truth, John 16:13; and to confirm their mission and their message with miracles, Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4. When Cornelius and his house received it, it was to convince the Jews that the Gentiles were part of this salvation plan, Acts 11:18; 15:7-8. Peter said, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). Peter said, "on us at the beginning", he had to go all the way back to the time the Apostles received the Holy Spirit Baptism, because

it never happened before to anyone. It never occurs again for anyone, and it is never hinted anywhere that it is for all Christians.

Holy Spirit Baptism was always accompanied with miraculous power. The Apostles on the day of Pentecost spoke in different languages which all could understand, Acts 2:4-11. They also did other miraculous things, Acts 2:43; 5:12. Why did the Apostles do miracles? They did so to confirm that the word they spoke was really from God. Notice Jesus said, "And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18). But why? The reason is given in verse 20: "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen" (Mark 16:20). They did signs to confirm the word. The Scripture says the word WAS CONFIRMED. Notice: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, WAS CONFIRMED unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs

and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will" (Hebrews 2:3-4). The word was confirmed. There is no need for more. The signs were written for the same reason they were wrought. Now it is all in the New Testament. Once miracles confirmed the word, their purpose ceased and they passed away (1 Corinthians 13:8-10). Notice also God made animals and mankind miraculously. Then they were to spread by natural means, giving birth to offspring. Then God made the church miraculously. Now it is to spread naturally, through the preaching of the word. If men today received the same baptism, they would have the same powers mentioned in Mark 16:17-20. If not, why not?

It was only after the Apostles laid hands on those who believed, repented, confessed Christ, and was baptized into His death, that they were able to do miracles. Those who were chosen to serve tables, Acts 6:6, the Apostles laid hands on the seven; Philip was one of these men. In Acts 8 Philip performed miracles in Samaria, Acts 8:5-8. After many of the Samaritans believed and were baptized, Acts 8:12-13, the Apostles sent Peter and John to lay hands on them to give them the Holy Spirit, Acts 8:14-18. Philip can do spiritual gifts and miracles, and he converts many Samaritans. But he could not, not being an Apostle, pass these spiritual gifts on to others. If Philip could have given them the Holy Spirit, why were Peter and John sent to do so? If they (Samaritans) could have prayed earnestly for a great out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, why were Peter and John sent to do so? Luke says, " Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit" Acts 8:18-19. Simon the Sorcerer had been converted but he wants to buy the ability the Apostles had to lay hands on saints and give them this measure of the Spirit. He is rebuked for such a notion. But we learn one thing. Spiritual gifts came through the laying on of the hands of an Apostle. Later in

Acts 19 Paul, an Apostle, lays hands on some saints in Ephesus whom he had to rebaptize. When he laid hands on them, ". . . the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And they were in all about twelve men Acts 19:6-7. "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works" 2 Corinthians 12:12. We have learned from God's Word that these spiritual gifts came through the laying on of the hands of an Apostle.

To be an apostle one had to see the resurrected Christ and be a witness of the resurrection Acts 1:21-22. No one can do that so there are no apostles in our day. Thus there is no laying on of the hands of an Apostle in order to impart spiritual gifts in our day. Since there are no Apostles living on earth and none of whom they have laid their hands, there is not a human on earth that can do such signs and wonders today! These signs were to the unbeliever, John 20:30-31. Yet, now we have the Bible as evidence to the unbeliever. The Bible we have to edify us today, we don't need miraculous spiritual gifts and they have passed away anyway. Let no one think that God has abandoned us because miracles have ceased. No. He still works by answering our prayers. He does so fully and truly, but not miraculously.

(Part 6 of this article will be printed in next week's bulletin)

MOST OF THE TIME

One day I was talking to a man who was supposed to be a Christian. He told me he attended services "most of the time," and seemed to think this put him in a good relationship with God . . . Now, please, think about it!!!

What if a husband was faithful to his wife most of the time?

What if your car started most of the time?

What if your heart beat most of the time?

What if you showed up for work most of the time?

What if you received your pay-check most of the time?

What if.....?

Then, WHY, should one think he can please God by being faithful most of the time?