

GOD'S WAY OF SALVATION - The question of being right with God is not "Am I living a good enough life?" Nor is it the statement "I'm doing the best I can." Salvation is not gained by what WE do for God, rather it is a free gift based on the FINISHED WORK of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8,9)! Religion is MAN'S effort to please God. Becoming a Christian is believing that GOD has already done all that needs to be done for me to be saved. Many religious people on judgment day will discover to their utter despair that "religion" will not allow them into the presence of God in heaven (Matt. 7:21-23). The vital question is "Are your sins forgiven?" All men are sinners by NATURE and by action (Rom. 3:23 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3). We don't become sinners when we sin; we sin because we ARE sinners. Our very NATURE towards God is corrupt (Is. 53:6; Rom. 3:10-13). Because we are sinners, we experience death (Rom. 6:23). Death is not only physical (separation of the soul from the body), but also spiritual (separation of the soul eternally from God) (2Cor. 5; Gen. 3). Man's only hope of being reconciled to God is through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ (2Cor. 5:17-19). Through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection He paid the penalty for man's sin and made it possible for believers to be freed from the bondage and condemnation of sin (1Cor. 15:1-7; 1Pet. 2:24). Forgiveness is possible through His shed blood (I Peter 1:18,19) by TOTALLY trusting Jesus as your ONLY hope of being made right with God; you can be saved from the condemnation you justly deserved (Jn. 1:12; 3:16; Acts 4:12; 16:31).

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The CORNERSTONE

BIBLICAL ANSWERS TO CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Miracles, Signs and Wonders



Cornerstone Booklets

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Signs and Wonders Don't Guarantee Faith

Many people mistakenly believe that if God would only perform some kind of miracle before their eyes, they would believe in Him, never to doubt again. The miracle would be undeniable proof of God's existence and believability.

Two Things Are Wrong with This Line of Thinking.

First, the Bible indicates that evidence of God's existence, power, and glory is so overwhelming that only a fool would say "there is no God" (Psalm 14:1; 19:1-6). Both the witness of creation and the witness of conscience are sufficient indicators of man's obligation to bow himself in worship and obedience to the Creator (Rom. 1:19-25). A man who rejects God's rule over his life must deliberately "suppress the truth" (Rom. 1:18) and "exchange the truth of God for a lie" (Rom. 1:25). It is in this rebellious state that man's vain reasonings are exalted over God's revealed truth (Rom. 1:21).

Second, the Bible gives numerous illustrations of those that experienced the miraculous firsthand and yet still didn't trust in God. The Israelites witnessed God's miraculous power repeatedly when God delivered them out of Egypt, but they were still filled with unbelief (Exodus 7-20; Numbers 14:11). Jesus did signs and wonders that no man had ever done (John 3:2; 9:32), yet the religious leaders accused Him of doing these miracles by the power of Satan (Matt. 12:24). Jesus told the story of a rich man who thought that a miracle would convince his brothers to believe in God (Luke 16:19-31). He believed that if God resurrected someone from the dead, then surely his brothers would have faith in God and deliver themselves from the torments of hell. God replied to the man that if they refuse to believe in God's word already available to them, neither would they believe because of seeing a sign or wonder (16:31). Faith in God is always rooted in the hearing and believing of God's word, not in experiences (Romans 10:17).

Seeking Signs and Wonders Is a Sign of Carnality.

Those who are seeking signs and wonders are easy prey for Satan's destruction. This is why Jesus warned that an "evil and adulterous generation" seeks after signs. Seeking after signs is of the flesh and not

of the spirit. We are told in the Bible to set our mind on "things above" (Colossians 3:1). Christians are to focus on the things "not seen" rather than the "things that are seen" (2Cor. 4:18). A man living by what he sees with his eyes is walking by sight and not by faith (2Cor. 5:7). Unless a man walks by faith he cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6). Jesus, when speaking to Thomas, promised a special blessing to those who believe in Him without ever having seen Him.

Signs and Wonders Can Originate with Satan.

Satan is a great imitator of God! Moses' miracles by God's power were imitated through the sorcerers of Pharaoh by Satan's power (Exodus 7:11,12; 8:7). Satan uses a man's curiosity and fascination with the supernatural to lead him astray. Jesus warned of false Christ's and false prophets who will do great signs and wonders for the purpose of leading the elect of God astray (Matt. 24:24). The antichrist in the last days will work "all power and signs and lying wonders" after the "working of Satan." Notice that these are lying wonders designed to deceive and to lead the gullible astray from the truth about God and His word. Deut. 13 uncovers the truth behind Satan's counterfeit miracles. His signs and wonders are designed to cause people to "go after other gods" (Deut. 13:2).

The Signs and Wonders of the Apostles and Christ

It is significant that Satan could not completely duplicate the miracles of God in Egypt (Exodus 18:18,19). Satan's power is limited; God's power is unlimited! Nicodemus knew that Jesus was a "teacher come from God," because no man could do the miracles that Christ performed. Jesus' healing of the man born blind, in John chapter 9, was a unique miracle that had never taken place "since the world began." Jesus appealed to His miracles as proof of His ability to "forgive sins" (Matt. 9:5,6). The apostles also were granted special miracle working ability to verify that their message was from God (Mark 16:15-18, 2Cor. 12:12; Hebrews 2:4). After God's divinely inspired word was completely written through the apostles, these special signs were no longer needed (Revelation 22:18,19).