

## CHARACTERISTICS OF BIBLE MIRACLES #2

*John Edwards*

### **DONE DESPITE PROTEST.**

Opposition did not hamper or hinder the performance of miracles in Bible days. Luke 4:33-35 records, *“And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him, and hurt him not.”* Why do protests get in the way of modern “miracles” when they did not interfere with the work of the Lord?

### **DONE DESPITE THE PRESENCE OF UNBELIEVERS.**

This is seen in the record of Acts 13:10-12, when Elymas, the sorcerer who withstood Barnabas and Saul, was struck with divine pepper spray and *“the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.”*

**PUBLIC.** Apostolic miracles were so public that the conferring council could say of the apostles Peter and John, *“What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable*

*miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem”* (Acts 4:16). If miracles are being performed today as they were then, why is it that we do not know about it? Why not perform a notable miracle manifest to all in Terre Haute?

### **COMPLETE HEALING.**

Through Bible miracles of healing, lame men were given *“perfect soundness”* (Acts 3:16) and impotent men were *“made whole”* (Acts 4:9). The healing was total and absolute. There was no partial healing, nor was there any relapse. Why is this not true of “miracles” today?

**UNDENIABLE.** The council of Acts 4 could not deny the miracle of healing performed by Peter and John as they said, *“indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them...and we cannot deny it”* (Acts 4:16). Let those today who claim to be able to work miracles as in Bible days put forth a miracle that is unquestionably authentic and we will not deny it. The fact that “healing miracles” of today are denied is proof that they are not genuine, bona fide miracles.

That which was characteristic of Bible miracles is not characteristic of “miracles” alleged today. This one truth forever sets them aside as faked, forged, and

feigned. Dear reader, do not be deceived by *“deceitful workers”* or *“lying wonders”* (2 Cor. 11:13; 2 Th. 2:9). Hear, believe, and obey the truth.

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## WHAT THE CHURCH CAN AND CANNOT DO

*John Edwards*

As the body can only act by the impulse of the head, every activity of the church is governed and regulated by Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 3:17). So, to the Testament of Christ we turn to learn what the church can and cannot do.

**THE CHURCH CAN PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE LOST.** The church is *“the pillar and ground of the truth”* (1 Tim. 3:15). The church of the Thessalonians *“sounded out the word of the Lord”* (1 Th. 1:8). The local church can support a preacher while he labors among them (1 Cor. 9:1-14; 2 Cor. 12:13), send a preacher to another place (Acts 11:22), and support preachers as they labor in other areas (Phil. 4:14-18). In New Testament days, the local church sent directly to the preacher. There was never another church or organization that stood between the sending church and the receiving preacher.

**THE CHURCH CANNOT PLAN OR PROVIDE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OR FUNCTIONS.**

The preaching of the gospel will improve the attitude of the individual toward his social relationships and responsibilities, but nowhere has Christ assigned the church the work of social reform. Thus, the church is not authorized to act as an Alcoholic's Anonymous, drug rehabilitation center, Red Cross, home for unwed mothers, or an anti-gambling league. The church is not designed for the treatment and cure of any of the social ills of this world.

The Scriptures encourage Christians to eat together and associate with one another in social activities, but the home is the center of these activities, not the church (Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 11:22, 34). Thus, the church is not authorized to have banquets, dinners, suppers, parties, serve refreshments or to provide the place, facilities or supplies for such activities.

**THE CHURCH CAN TEACH CHRISTIANS.** The Lord has provided for the edification of His people. Among the gifts given unto men were evangelists, pastors and

teachers, *"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"* (Eph. 4:11-12). The focal point of edification is the word of God, as Paul commended the Ephesians *"to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified"* (Acts 20:32). Those taught and baptized are to be taught to observe all things commanded by Christ (Mt. 28:19-20). Acts 20:7 finds Paul preaching the gospel to the disciples at Troas. Elders, or pastors, are exhorted, *"Feed the flock of God which is among you"* (1 Pet. 5:2). In the church at Antioch, there were *"teachers"* (Acts 13:1). The church is a self-edifying body (Eph. 4:16). There is no authority for the church to send one cent from its treasury to another church for its edification or to a college to instruct and train Christians.

**THE CHURCH CANNOT PROVIDE SECULAR EDUCATION.** The teaching of reading, writing, and arithmetic is not the work of the church. It is common to find churches operating preschools,

elementary, junior and senior high schools, and colleges. Where is the Scripture that authorizes the church to do such? There is authority in the New Testament for the church to teach the word of God. The church is *"the pillar and ground of the truth"* (1 Tim. 3:15). Jesus said in His prayer to the Father, *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth"* (Jn. 17:17). Where is Scriptural authority for the church to teach the arts and sciences?

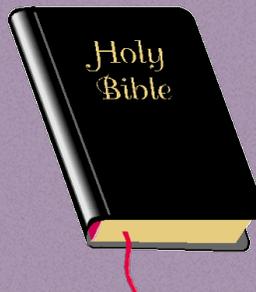
*"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." —2 Peter 1:5-9*

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