

Don't Expect Miracles!



2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 Matt 24:3-14, 21-27

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Does God still work miracles?

Does He still use His mighty power over the Laws of Nature? Does God still use His supernatural, almighty power to do unexplainable things for people?

The answer is **YES** and **NO**.

Yes in the sense that *God can do anything He wants to do anytime He wants to do it!* He is the all-powerful Creator of everything seen and unseen. His ways are beyond our understanding; He works in mysterious ways ---

**if God wants to work a miracle,
He will work a miracle.**

But as we say that, you have to remember that God has given you **NO PROMISE** in Scripture that He will work a miracle for you. **NONE WHATSOEVER**. There is **NO PROMISE** that God will use His supernatural, almighty power to do unexplainable things for you. *You are not to expect God to work miracles for you. In Scripture, you are **never** directed to miracles for God's help, but you are **always** directed to God's Word and His promises for help.*

Remember the purpose of miracles: they are signs that point to Jesus as the Savior, and that His Word is true. If a Prophet or an Apostle worked a miracle, it was a sign that pointed to him as an authorized representative of Christ, and that his word was true and trustworthy.

Now that we have the **COMPLETE BIBLE**, **written down** and **collected together** for us, we don't need more miracles to *authenticate* God's Holy Word. **The miracles have already been done.** They are completed; they served their purpose; they have been written down and recorded for us. We can read and study them. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the witnesses to the miracles; the Gospels testify that Jesus worked many miracles to prove that **He was God** and that **His Word is true**. By faith, we believe Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and what they wrote about Jesus and His miracles.

The Holy Spirit is given through the Gospel, and He creates your faith and confirms to you that the miracles really happened;

we believe that *Jesus is God our Savior,*
and that *His Word is true!*

The “miracles” you hear about today **RARELY** testify that Jesus is the Savior, nor that His Word is true¹. The miracles that we hear about today seem to be all about keeping Christians “healthy and wealthy” – which is NOT their purpose. The miracles of today do not even fit the biblical criteria: in Scripture a miracle was instantaneous and complete. Most of the “miracles” you hear about today are **COUNTERFEIT MIRACLES FROM SATAN**, who has the power to deceive people with **great signs and wonders**².

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. 2 CORINTHIANS 11:13-15

The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 2 THESSALONIANS 2:9-10

For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. MATTHEW 24:24

Because we have **God’s complete Word in the Holy Bible**, you are to be **EXTREMELY SKEPTICAL** of any alleged “miracles” you hear about today. That is what Jesus and St. Paul is warning us about³! ***Even if someone would stake their life and reputation on an alleged “miracle”, you are to stake your life and your reputation on the solid rock of Christ’s Holy Word.*** Even if someone writes a **best selling book** and makes a **Hollywood movie** about their “miracle”; **DON’T BELIEVE IT.**

Rather than looking to **what we don’t know**, Holy Scripture teaches us to put our faith in **what we do know: God’s Word and Promises.**

¹ The “testimony” of alleged miracles today hover around these themes, none of which point to Christ and His work of salvation: (1) How great God is; (2) How blessed I am; (3) God responded to my prayer, work, money, effort

² Martin Luther: “We should learn to believe no miracle after the revelation of Christ, even though a person who had been dead for ten days were called back to life. If I now should see a priest or a monk raise a dead person in the name of St. Ann, I would say that it was the work of the devil.” [What Luther Says](#), #3005 Beware Of “Lying Wonders”

³ TAKE HEED. How many warnings do you need? Jesus and Paul both warn us to be skeptical (if not completely dismissive) of alleged “miracles”. Satan can work “miracles.” If God worked a miracle for someone, that’s a personal and private blessing he gave to that specific individual. There is no promise that he will do it for you too. Don’t let someone’s enthusiasm, zeal, and passion for their “miracle” lead you astray. Jesus and Paul both warn us repeatedly to be skeptical of alleged miracles.

God has promised in His Holy Word to use His mighty power in your life in some concrete ways . . . there are places where God **P R O M I S E S** works with His **grace and mercy** in *miraculous ways*.

For instance, **YOUR BAPTISM WAS A MIRACLE** that God worked with water in your life⁴. Jesus put His promise of forgiveness of sins in the water of Holy Baptism. In that “*water and Word*”, Jesus moved you from the Kingdom of sin, Satan and death and brought you into His Kingdom of life, light, and eternal salvation! The reason we know that Baptism is a supernatural miraculous event is because Jesus has promised to use His mighty power in the water of Holy Baptism to forgive sins.

The same thing is true for **HOLY COMMUNION**. The reason we know that Holy Communion is a supernatural, miraculous action is because Jesus has promised to use His mighty power in bread and wine to forgive our sins. The miracle of Holy Communion is that when you “take and eat” and “take and drink”, you are receiving the very body and blood of the crucified and risen Savior Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

Both Baptism and Communion are “*sacraments*” – a word that means “*mystery*”; they are *mysterious miracles* where Jesus places His promise to use His supernatural, almighty power to forgive your sins.

Jesus does not promise to work any other miracles for you. You are not to expect Him to work miracles for you. Be sure not to be misled by all the false miracles you hear and read about. Don’t be deceived; don’t be impressed nor envious of them. Don’t let Satan deceive you!

In Holy Scripture, you are never directed to miracles for God’s help, but you are always directed to God’s Holy Word and His promises for help⁵.

⁴ Ironically, those groups within Christianity which promote miracles almost always minimize or deny the places where God **promises** to work miracles: His Sacraments of Baptism and Communion!

⁵ Ultimately, the modern day idea of “miracles” is a form of the false doctrine “Enthusiasm.” *Enthusiasm* is expecting private revelations from God in forms of dreams, visions, signs, miracles, etc. As Lutherans, we reject enthusiasm as a false doctrine. Martin Luther warns in the Smalcald Articles: “Accordingly, we should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through His external Word and Sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and Sacrament is of the devil.” Smalcald Articles, III, viii, 9-10, in *The Book of Concord*, ed. T G Tappert, p. 313.

Put your faith in the **Promises of God**, not in some supernatural miraculous power that the devil and his demons can perform. The Promises of God always point to Christ and build up your faith; the Promises of God give you strength for each day and hope in daily living. Don't be deceived by "alleged" miracles. Rather, **remember, review, and rehearse** the promises God makes to you: for instance,

Watch over your life

Psalm 121

Defend you from all evil

Psalm 97:10

Provide your daily bread

Matthew 6:11

Make all things work for good in your life

Romans 8:28

Listen to and answer your prayers

Psalm 5:3

Strengthen you when you are weak

Isaiah 41:10

Comfort you when you mourn

Psalm 34:18

Guide and direct every step of your life

Proverbs 3:5-6

Give you His Holy Spirit

Luke 11:13

Empower you for godly living

Romans 8:11

Assure you of His love and forgiveness

Hebrews 10:22

Give you hope, peace and security each day

Psalm 62:1-2

Don't be deceived by "alleged" miracles --- rather, **Remember, review, and rehearse the promises God makes to you!**

Holy Scripture teach us to look to the promises of God to see God's almighty power at work in our lives; *we are not to expect God to work personal miracles for us.* God's mighty power is seen in His **grace and mercy** at work through His Word and Sacraments in your life! Amen!

Holy Spirit, we ask that you deepen our faith in Your Holy Word and Sacraments. Give us strength for each day through the Promises of Holy Scripture. Defend us from false teachers who work false miracles to deceive even the elect if that were possible. Make us skeptics of modern day miracles, and rather convicted and convinced of Your Word and Promises.

.Matthew 24:3-14, 21-27

As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" 4 And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. 5 For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray. 6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. 11 And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. 12 And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. 22 And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. 23 Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. 24 For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand. 26 So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. 27 For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

1 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, 2 not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3 Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 6 And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, 10 and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, 12 in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness