

# Cessationism



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Cessationism The belief in the Holy Spirit and His gifts today has been a of unmatched controversy among Christians, bible scholars and otherspectators. While some quarters believe that the Holy Ghost still enables people to work miracles, others believe that the Spirit no longer uses men to accomplish miraculous missions. This paper will analyze cessationism in Christian history.

### Cessationist Views

The view that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit including healing, speaking in tongues, and prophesy ceased to be practiced at some point in the history of the church as opposed to continuationism. Depending on their level of belief against spiritual gifts, cessationists may be divided into four groups, classical, concentric, consistent and full cessationists. In general, cessationists believe that cessation ended with the end of the apostolic era; beginning on the day of Pentecost and ending when the last apostle died to the fulfilment of the purpose of God in history<sup>1</sup>. In other words, cessationists believe that miraculous activities were purposely meant to authenticate the church and to aid its stable establishment<sup>2</sup>.

According to the Bible (Exodus 4: 1-8), Moses was given the power to perform extraordinary works in order to establish his ministry before Pharaoh as being authentic. In a similar manner, Elijah before Ahab authenticated his ministry as noted in 1 Kings 17: 1 and 18: 24-25. In the New Testament, the book of Acts, the apostles performed miracle acts after they were filled with the Holy Ghost in replication of Jesus' works.

In general, many authors have agreed that biblically, miracles may be clustered according to periods; Moses, the prophets including Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, among others, the first coming of Jesus, and the

Second coming of Christ<sup>3</sup>. However, the bible is silent in certain periods which may not mean that miracles did not happen at such times.

Citing scriptures such as Ephesians 2: 20 and 1Corinthians 13: 8-10 and works written by people in ancient periods such as Justin Martyr, Augustine, Clement of Rome, and Origen among others, Cessationists make their claims against the existence of miracles today<sup>4</sup>. However, a close analysis of these claims reveal that they go against the teachings of the bible concerning the continuation of spiritual gifts as stated in Romans 11: 29.

### Conclusion

While Cessationists in their different categories believe that God still has the power to perform miracles through humans, this never happens in the current day noting that God's mission of establishing a stable church has been accomplished. In my view this is a wrong interpretation of the bible; I believe spiritual gifts in their fullness still exist. In many cases, the Cessationists clearly misinterpret biblical teachings and ignore certain scriptures. For example, Acts 1: 8 states that gifts will be available to the church in their witnessing to the very end of the world. The gifts of God, in my view and in line with bible testimony (Rom 11: 29), are not withdrawn and therefore will continue to be in existence till the second coming of Christ.

### Notes

1. Warfield, B. B. The classic work is Counterfeit Miracles. New York: Charles Scribners. 1918.
2. Edgar, Thomas R. Miraculous Gifts: Are They for Today? Neptune, N. J.: Loizeaux Brothers. 1983.
3. Dixon, Larry E. " Have the ' Jewels of the Church' Been Found Again? The <https://assignbuster.com/cessationism/>

Irving Darby Debate on Miraculous Gifts.” Evangelical Journal 5 (Spring 1987): 78-92.