

How They Work To Create An Illusion

by Bill Crews

*One of the most unfortunate facts of life in our day is this: There are preachers throughout the earth – their number is legion and only God knows the total – who have learned to manipulate people, to play upon their emotions, to orchestrate their actions. **How they work to create an illusion! And how successful they have become.***

These preachers, for the most part, will agree (at least they pay lip service to these things) that (1) the Bible is the revelation of God and God's will to man (2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 1:1-2); (2) the last book of the Bible was finished almost 2,000 years ago (the Revelation); (3) the Bible is complete, perfect, adequate, all-sufficient for men in all generations (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Jude 3; 2 Peter 1:3); (4) man is to neither add to nor take from the Bible (Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Galatians 1:8-9; Revelation 22:17-18); (5) Christ came among men as a man at just the right time, the time foretold by the prophets, and did everything the Father sent Him to do (Galatians 4:4; John 6:38; 17:4; 19:30); (6) the apostles of Christ fully accomplished their work and have and need no successors; (7) the prophets fully accomplished their work, and there have been neither apostles nor prophets since the first century (Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 2 Peter 3:2); (8) the primary purpose of the miracles performed by Christ, by the apostles, and by other servants of God in the first century was to confirm the message they taught and to produce faith in that message and in the Christ (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:1-4); (9) eye-witness accounts of these miracles have been preserved in the New Testament for the benefit of all who were not there to witness them and for the same purpose (John 20:30-31).

These preachers all agree that there will not be another Bible, another Savior, other apostles, or other prophets. But they do **not** agree that God planned to cease the working of miracles among men (although the New Testament clearly foretells it, 1 Corinthians 13:8-10). They want baptism in the Holy Spirit, miraculous speaking in other languages, miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, miraculous healing of the sick to continue on in every generation of men until the end of time. **And they work to create the illusion that they do!**

Misusing the statement that God “*changes not*” (Psalm 15:4), the statement that “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and forever*” (Hebrews 13:8), and the statement that “*God is no respecter of persons*” (Acts 10:34), they attempt to obligate God to do among men today exactly what He did through Christ, the apostles and prophets, and others in the first century. But anyone who really reads the New Testament record knows that these things are not taking place today. By the power of God, and through Jesus Christ and various chosen disciples of His, thousands were the recipients of miracles, and tens of thousands more were eyewitnesses of these miracles. The blind were made to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, the maimed and deformed to be whole, the lepers to be cleansed, the dying to live, and the dead to live again. Sometimes the faith of the sick is emphasized; sometimes the faith of friends or relatives is emphasized; often nothing is said of anybody's faith. The only times that a miracle was attempted without success, the potential worker of the miracle, not the one in need of the miracle, is condemned – either for his lack of faith or for his lack of authority from God (Matthew 17:14-18; Acts 19:13-16). Over and over the divine record speaks of the healing of everyone who had been brought or who had come to be healed (Matthew 4:22-24; 8:16;

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