

A Christian is a keyhole through which other folk see God.

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Prayer Study #325

SIGNS AND WONDERS

Copied from *The Gifts of the Spirit* by Harold Horton

The redeemed of the Lord are not only saved unto everlasting life; they are the children of God. When we say we are the children of God and that God is our Father, we are not merely employing terms of inspiration or endearment, we are not making sentimental nor even devout reference to One who has in marvelous condescension taken up towards us an attitude of benevolence and loving-kindness. When we say that God is our Father and that we are His children, we are using terms of absolute relationship. We are not merely accepted of God: we are begotten of God. Our relationship to God is not one of divine courtesy but of divine life. We are born of God. Our divine Parentage is as real as, but infinitely more enduring than, our human parentage. As children of God we are partakers-now-of His mighty, miraculous super-nature. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, partakers of His divine nature (2nd Peter 1:4; 1st John 3:2).

The message of the whole of Scripture is that this miraculous super-nature of God should be manifest in His children. Like Father, like son. And God has made full provision for the manifestation of that super-nature in His children in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Again, we are not only co-heirs with the Lord Jesus, by virtue of which relationship He is not ashamed to call us brethren (Hebrews 2:11): we are said to be the *children* of the Lord (Hebrews 2:13), born of Him, the incorruptible Seed, the eternal, Living Word. As children of the Lord we are possessors of His very nature and ought as such to display evidence in our measure not only of His perfect character but of his mighty divine faculties. We are the sons and daughters of Omnipotence and Omniscience, as well as of Infinite Holiness and Endless Life. The offspring of a bird display every bird-like faculty and characteristic. The moment they are born, they are miniature copies of their parents. They eat, breathe, move, think, like a bird. There comes a time when, like a bird, they spread tentative wings and take to the air. The son of a bird can fly. It can also sing. The offspring of an earth-born creature cannot fly nor sing. It has the wrong nature. The heaven-born sons of God should evidence heavenly, that is super-natural, beyond-natural, characteristics. God has provided in the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the resultant Gifts of the Spirit, means for the reproduction of His divine faculties in His children.

Now the heavenly super-nature of the Lord Jesus was manifested not in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, for there, during the whole of His young manhood, in common with all the carpenter-fellows of His day, he wrought tools. The marvelous fabric of His spotless daily life He also wrought through the faith and the Word that were available to the men and women round about Him. His divine super-nature was manifested in His miraculous works wrought by those heaven-given tools, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, with which He was endowed immediately on His receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit on that memorable day in the Jordan (Matthew 3:16). The Scripture is scarcely more insistent on

any subject than on this: that the children of God should express, at least in some fragmentary measure, this divine miraculous super-nature. For this reason, both the Lord Jesus and His children are said in the Prophets to be “for signs and wonders” (Isaiah 8:18). This supernatural divine power and wisdom was seen in unmistakable manifestation in His simple children immediately after their baptism in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. It was not a theological claim that arrested the devout Jews on that memorable day, but a manifestation of divine wisdom and power in the speaking of miraculous tongues by unlearned followers of the Lord Jesus. It was not a masterly unfolding of the Word that set the envious priests by the ears some time later, but a mighty and immediate operation of the Gifts of the Spirit in a lame-born man by two of the simple children of God. It was not a phenomenal display of evangelistic fervor that swept Samaria some time later still, but a repeated demonstration of the Gifts of the Spirit in supernatural healings, through the Spirit-filled hands of one who was not considered capable of ministering the Word of God (Acts 8:6; 6:2-4). Neither was it alone the sweet savor of fragrant holiness in Paul that caused the astounded Lycaonians and the gentle-hearted Maltese barbarians to ascribe to him divine origin and rank, but an unanswerable display of divine power through the Gift of the Spirit in miracle after miracle of human deliverance (Acts 14:3, 11; 28:6).

In regeneration of the Lord Jesus has stamped upon His begotten ones the impress of His life and loveliness. In the baptism of the Spirit He was designed to charge them with His heavenly dynamic. In the Gifts of the Spirit He has provided for the visible, audible, and tangible expression of that dynamic, in the utterance of things that transcend profoundest human thought, and in the doing of things that surpass the utmost human skill. “Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and wonders.”