

(3) By trying our hand at various kinds of service, in order to discern our aptitudes and inclinations

d. We need to submit to the Lordship of Christ, and to become willing to serve Him in whatever way He would be pleased to use us

e. We need to be hesitant to claim a particular gift until we have tested it in the crucible of experiential exercise, and then only after a period of time.

Anthony Hoekema, in Holy Spirit Baptism (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), pp. 70-71, 77-78, writes:

Summing up, then, we may say that, as far as the permanence of these miraculous charismata is concerned, we must at least raise some serious questions (their function was to authenticate the gospel when it was first preached and the apostles as the authoritative agents of God in founding the church; they have largely disappeared from the church). As far as the usefulness of these miraculous charismata is concerned, we must not only raise questions but honestly recognize the fact that, in the New Testament taken as a whole, it is not the miraculous charismata that are recommended for the continuing life of the church but the non-miraculous ones. There is no apostolic command to the church to continue to speak with tongues or to continue to exercise gifts of healing, but there are many apostolic injunctions to cultivate such non-miraculous gifts as ruling, teaching, ministering, giving, and showing mercy.

It is of course, true that the church must still manifest the power of the Holy Spirit in its life and worship today. That power, however, is to be seen, not first of all in miraculous phenomena of an ecstatic or spectacular sort, but rather in the life-changing dynamic of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is what the Scriptures stress. Note, for example, how the New Testament speaks of the gospel as the power of God for salvation (Rom. 1:16), of the power of the Spirit revealed in speech and preaching (I Cor. 2:4), of a power that is made perfect in weakness (II Cor. 12:9), of the "exceeding greatness" of God's power which is available to believers for victorious Christian living (Eph. 1:19-20), of the power whereby believers are guarded unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (I Pet. 1:5), and of a power through which we can do all things in Him that strengthens us (Phil 4:13). . . .