

## These Signs Shall Follow

*Mark 16:17-18*

*17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*

*18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

1. Introduction
1. Jesus' last words before He ascended into heaven are recorded at the end of all four gospels and at the beginning of Acts.
2. Death could not hold Him down, so in the 40 days following His resurrection from death, He made several appearances to His disciples and spoke many things.
3. You would be amazed at the truths Jesus passed along in those final words when you lay them all side-by-side.

4. There amazing parallel truths that pretty much restate the truth of Acts 2:38.
5. Of course, I believe everything Jesus said was true and important, but we often put much weight on people's final words, so we are going to put some emphasis on those final words found in the gospel of Mark.

## II. Great commission from Mark

1. Just picking those from the end of Mark as our starting point, this is what we read:

2. *Mark 16:14-18*

*14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided [rebuked] them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.*

verse 11 says they did not believe the witness of Mary Magdalene and verse 13 says they did not believe the words of two He met on the road when He changed His

appearance. This is likely a reference to Luke 24:15, where a man named Cleopas and another unnamed man, who spoke with Jesus on the road to Emmaus.

3. Now with Jesus standing in front of them, He said, “So why did you not believe their witness?”
4. Yes, Jesus rebuked them for their unbelief. And it is true to this day that Jesus still rebukes or convicts of our sins, our doubts, our unbelief.
5. Going on, from there, Jesus said:  
*15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*  
*16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*  
*17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*  
*18 They shall take up serpents; and if they*

*drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

6. As you go and preach and baptize, more is going to happen than preaching and baptizing. There will be signs that follow the believers as they go and minister.
7. Notice how that in verse 14 Jesus was addressing His words to the 11 apostles. But in verse 17 He directs promises to a much larger group than just the 11.
8. Jesus broadened it to “them that believe,” which is likely a reference back to 16, or those who are saved.
9. That is like a code-phrase used in the early days of the church for the new believers, the saints, ultimately the members of the church.
10. That is important because although there were only 11-12 original apostles, there have been millions and millions of believers down through the ages.

- III. These signs
  - A. What are the signs?
    - 1. Tonight we are going to examine the four signs that would follow believers, and a fifth one that was preceded by an “if”, if this than that:
      - a. They will cast out devils
      - b. They will speak in new tongues
      - c. They will take up serpents
      - d. They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover
      - e. If they drink a deadly thing, it won't hurt them
  - B. The “if statement” regarding deadly drink
    - 1. The one “If” statement dealing with drinking a deadly thing, would of course refer to accidental drinking, perhaps like drinking water from a poisoned well, or if someone tried to poison them, they would not be harmed.
    - 2. Has that ever happened to you?

3. Well it is not likely that you would know about it. In the unlikely event that someone tried to poison you, it is even more unlikely that they would tell you later that is what they were doing.
4. And if God prevented you from getting sick after drinking a deadly thing, you didn't get sick so you would not necessarily know about it.
5. I do believe it is important to pray over the food we eat and drink, thanking God for it and also asking His blessing over it.
6. Paul wrote that when receiving food, receive it with thanksgiving:  
*1 Tim 4:4-5*  
*4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:*  
*5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

7. That makes praying over your meal part of this promise Jesus made to the believers in Mark.
- c. Serpents cast in the fire
1. So moving on beyond the “if” statement in Mark 16, let’s focus on the “they will” statements.
  - a. They will take up serpents
  - b. They will cast out devils
  - c. They will speak in new tongues
  - d. They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover
2. I’ve grouped the first two in a way that seems practical when you lay these beside other apostolic practices and teachings in Acts and the epistles.
3. In fact, to see how these fit into promises made, it is wise to look at the promises fulfilled.
4. We know that Paul accidentally got a hold of a poisonous serpent, or we should say, it

intentionally got a hold of him, as he was gathering fire wood.

5. I'm sure that snake was singing, "wow, there's power in the blood! And the Holy Ghost and fire is keeping him alive."
  6. By God's protective intervention, Paul shook it off into the fire and was not harmed.
  7. And that event caused the onlookers to believe in Paul's preaching.
  8. That is one of the things that these signs will do. Increase faith in Jesus.
  9. However, there is another application of that promise.
- D. Casting out serpents and devils
1. It is very likely that when we preach and baptize and pray for people as they repent and are filled, we likely stir up serpents and devils.
  2. Jesus told the disciples when they went out preaching that:



*Luke 10:19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*

3. There is no telling how many serpents and devils we have cast out just from praying for people at the altar.
4. Remember, it is likely that the man possessed with a legion of devils, which could have been thousands of devils, was unable to stop the man from running to Jesus.
5. Now the man did have some very vile behaviors caused by the demons.
6. However, even with thousands of devils on him, he was able to fall at Jesus' feet and worship him.
7. But that encounter with Jesus ended with the demons gone and the man clothed and in his right mind.
8. So it is certainly that devil spirits are cast out when people are praying through

repentance and as they receive the Holy Ghost.

9. When the apostles preached, they certainly stirred up devils, but not worry. Jesus told us to expect that, but also to exercise authority over them in the name of Jesus Christ, because they cannot cause us harm.
10. That is what believers will do.
11. They will take up serpents
12. They will cast out devils
- E. Speak with new tongues
1. Then we move on to the next two.
  - a. They will speak in new tongues
  - b. They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover
2. Seeing how the experiences of the early church played out, we see these things right at the start of the church in Acts 2 and 3, and then many, many more times throughout Acts and the epistles.

3. In Acts 1, Jesus promised the believers would be baptized with the Holy Ghost in a few days and promised they would receive power after the Holy Ghost came upon them.

4. Let's notice the first of those two right at the beginning of Acts 2:

*Acts 2:1-4*

*2 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

*2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

*3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*

*4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

5. Jesus promised that believers would speak with new tongues, and as soon as the

believers fully became believers for the first time, that is exactly what happened.

6. But speaking in tongues is not the same as being taught a language other than what you know. It is a result of the Spirit giving the utterance, meaning as the Spirit enabled them.
7. We find much evidence all throughout the Old Testament that when the Spirit of the Lord came upon a person, it caused them to prophesy and do things they would not otherwise do.
8. And when we read the New Testament, particularly Acts, when the Holy Ghost came upon believers, they spoke with tongues, some prophesied, and every one of them received power through the Holy Ghost.
9. And Romans 6:4 speaks of baptism and the Spirit causing us to walk in a newness of life:

*Rom 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ*

*was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

10. When we are filled with the Spirit, we will speak with new tongues. That is something that believers will do.

11. The Holy Ghost will flow out of us like a river:

*John 7:38-39*

*38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*

*39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*

12. Did you notice that the Holy Ghost will come on they that believe!

F. Lay hands on the sick

a. They will speak in new tongues

- b. They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover
- 1. Finally, believers would lay hands on the sick and they would recover.
- 2. The first time that happened in the church was:

*Acts 3:6-7*

*6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.*

*7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.*

- 3. And also:

*Acts 5:16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.*

- 4. And also:

*Acts 9:34 And Peter said unto him, Aeneas,*

*Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.*

5. And also:

*Acts 9:40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.*

6. And of course, 1 Cor 12:9 speaks of gifts of healing that are given to believers.

7. So laying hands on the sick and seeing them recover is part of the scriptural promise.

*James 5:14-15*

*14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:*

*15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

8. And of course these are based on:  
*Isa 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

#### IV. Conclusion

1. These signs shall follow them that believe:  
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