

# Galatians 3:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

## Analysis

**He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**

Paul returns to experiential argument, now focusing on God's ongoing work. The participle 'ministereth' (epichorēgōn, ἐπιχορηγῶν) originally described wealthy patrons generously supplying resources for public events—God as the lavish Supplier of the Spirit. The present tense indicates continuous action: God keeps on supplying the Spirit to them.

The phrase 'worketh miracles' (energōn dynameis, ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις) combines 'energizing' and 'powers'—God is actively energizing supernatural works among them. Both participles—'ministereth' and 'worketh'—are in the present tense, emphasizing God's ongoing miraculous activity in the Galatian churches. The logic is inescapable: God continues to supply the Spirit and work miracles in response to their faith (pistis, πίστις), not their Law-works (erga nomou, ἔργα νόμου).

The rhetorical question mirrors verse 2, but shifts from their initial reception (aorist tense) to God's continual supply (present tense). If God gave the Spirit by faith, and keeps giving the Spirit by faith, and authenticates this by ongoing miracles, how could anyone think Law-works are necessary? God's present activity testifies to the sufficiency of faith.

## Historical Context

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Miraculous phenomena (healing, prophecy, tongues, exorcisms) were common in apostolic Christianity, especially in newly founded churches (Acts 14:3, 10; 1 Corinthians 12-14). Paul appeals to ongoing charismatic activity in Galatia as irrefutable evidence that God's blessing rests on faith, not Law-observance. The same argument would prove decisive at Jerusalem (Acts 15:12). This verse refutes cessationist arguments that miracles were temporary—Paul treats ongoing miracles as normative proof of the Spirit's approval of the faith-righteousness gospel.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. Have you witnessed God's 'energizing of powers' in your church or life? How does this confirm the gospel of grace rather than works?
2. Why does Paul emphasize God's present-tense, ongoing supply of the Spirit rather than just past conversion experiences?
3. How should the expectation of ongoing miracles as evidence of faith-righteousness shape our church life and evangelism today?

## Interlinear Text

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οὐν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν  
G3588 **He therefore** that ministereth to you G3588 **the Spirit** and **worketh**  
G3767 G2023 G5213 G4151 G2532 G1754

δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς  
miracles among to you by the works of the law or by the hearing  
G1411 G1722 G5213 G1537 G2041 G3551 G2228 G1537 G189

πίστεως  
of faith  
G4102

## Additional Cross-References

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**Galatians 3:2** (Faith): This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

**Acts 14:3** (Word): Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

**2 Corinthians 13:3** (Parallel theme): Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

**Romans 15:19** (Spirit): Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

**2 Corinthians 10:4** (Parallel theme): (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

**2 Corinthians 12:12** (Parallel theme): Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.