

DID PAUL BELIEVE IN A JESUS WHO DID MIRACLE/MAGIC SIGNS?

Paul was authorised supposedly by Jesus and the apostles to preach the gospel. He provided the earliest Christian writings. The whole atmosphere when you read them is that Jesus is like a mystical saviour and nothing in his life is mentioned. The gospel account of how popular Jesus was because of his miracle working does not translate into the philosophical and moral focus of the Church that Paul was part of. You get the feeling that the gospels lied about the miracles.

Paul complained that the Jews were looking for signs (1 Corinthians 1:22) to determine if the wisdom of God as understood in Christianity and the cross of Christ was true. So there were no miracles he could tell them about to please them. He even said it was folly to look for signs. If you consider the miracles to be signs then it was not folly because they were signs and it would be blasphemy to say they were folly. He said Jews meaning all Jews for he would have written some Jews otherwise. Christians would reply that he means the Jews want to see signs themselves first hand before they will consider believing. But you can look for signs without seeing them. For nearly everybody it is enough to check out the information and interview and cross-examine the witnesses. He never said they just wanted to see it all themselves.

The Jews accepted most prophets without miracles for the law said miracles were useless anyway except to get people's attention. They just observed if their predictions came true and if the prophet was a true believer and that was enough (Deuteronomy 18). So they did not want to see the miracles themselves. They found no evidence of prophetic ability in Jesus or in the Church which was to witness to him. The gospels never say that the Jews pestered Jesus for proof of prophetic powers showing that they were made up. They could have discredited him on that line and we do not read what he said about that. Jesus did make prophecies but none that were seen fulfilled the time Paul was writing and none which might have been more than educated guesses. What Paul is indicating as well is that Jesus did no miracles as a sign that he should get attention for his prophecies for he made none that were known to have been fulfilled. When Jesus then did not attract attention to himself as a prophet through using miracles that means he made no prophecies either. Paul's Jesus was not a prophet or a miracle worker.

Paul said that we including himself live by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). Paul confessed that he needed to stay alive for the sake of the Christians though he would like to die and go to Jesus (Philippians 1). This informs us that nobody could do his job for him though he had plenty of helpers – this indicates the laziness and lack of faith in the Jerusalem apostles. He had made his testimony concerning the resurrection of Jesus so it could still convert sinners without him. He is suggesting that he was the only reliable witness to the resurrection. We have his testimony that the Judean Church which founded the roots of the gospel is not to be trusted.

He is also inferring that Jesus did not raise people from the dead for if he did these testimonies could back up Jesus' own claim to have risen but Paul could not use such arguments. The best Paul could do was use the apostles testimony and say that if Jesus did not rise the dead must be lost and that is unbearable so Jesus must have risen!

Paul said that Jesus was revealed as the Son of God by his resurrection (Romans 1:4) which shows that he did not manage to reveal this by his miracles (indicating that he never did any) and the resurrections he performed during his ministry (GA Wells Replies to Criticisms of his Books on Jesus). Why does he stress Christ crucified even above Christ risen and triumphant?(1 Corinthians 1:22-23). This implies that the resurrection was only to prove that Jesus had died to save sinners – vicariously I might add for had it been anything else it would not have been stressed so much – and it was not great proof when it could not be brought to the fore. It was selfish of Paul to care more about Jesus dying than rising. This stress on the cross suggests that Jesus never worked any wonders.

Paul is good evidence that the gospels were made up and if the gospels were lies even the Christians did not care. It was the later Church that gave importance to those books.

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BIBLE VERSION USED

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