THE QUESTION

Did Jesus do His miracles by His own divine power or by the Holy Spirit?

Asked by a THF member on June 8, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 9 numbered quotations · the 22 early Christian passages and 137 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/did-jesus-do-his-miracles-by-his-own-divine-power-or-by-the-holy-spirit

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

The early writers here do not make it either-or. They say the Spirit rested on Jesus and anointed Him as a man, and the Gospels show Him filled with the Spirit. Yet they also say He worked His miracles by His own authority and word, and they point to those miracles as proof that He is God.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

IN THIS STUDY

1	The Spirit anointed the Word made flesh	2
2	Jesus began His work filled with the Spirit	2
3	Irenaeus also says He acted as God	3
4	Arnobius: miracles by His own authority	3
5	He commanded sickness, demons and seas by word	3
6	His miracles show that He is God	4
7	Origen: Jesus showed His power was divine	5
	What these passages don't tell us	5
	The Sources: 22 early Christian passages and 137 Bible verses, with links	5

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POINT 1 OF 7

The Spirit anointed the Word made flesh

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus says the Word of God took flesh and was anointed by the Spirit from the Father. Because the Word became a man from the line of Jesse and Abraham, the Spirit rested on Him to send Him out to preach.

1

"He took on flesh, was anointed by the Spirit from the Father, and became Jesus Christ, as Isaiah also says, "A rod will come forth from the root of Jesse, and a flower will rise from his root; and the Spirit of God will rest upon Him: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and piety, and the spirit of the fear of God will fill Him. He shall not judge by appearance, nor reprove by mere words; but He will dispense judgment to the humble, and reprove the arrogant of the earth.""

later in the same passage

"Since the Word of God was man from the root of Jesse, and a son of Abraham, the Spirit of God rested upon Him, anointing Him to preach the Gospel to the lowly."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book III* (c. 175–202 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 4, page 6 Read it in the library ›

POINT 2 OF 7

Jesus began His work filled with the Spirit

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

In Tatian's harmony of the Gospels, Jesus comes back from His baptism full of the Holy Spirit, is led by the Spirit into the wilderness, and then returns to Galilee in the Spirit's power.

2

"Jesus returned from the Jordan, filled with the Holy Spirit. Immediately the Spirit took him out into the wilderness to be tried by the devil."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tatian,** *Diatessaron* 4 (c. 150–180 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 2, page 6 Read it in the library ›

3

"Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tatian,** *Diatessaron* 5 (c. 150–180 AD)
THF's updated English

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POINT 3 OF 7

Irenaeus also says He acted as God

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Right after speaking of the Spirit resting on Jesus as man, Irenaeus adds that because He was God, He did not judge by outward looks. So he holds both truths together in the same passage.

4 “But as He was God, He did not judge by appearances, nor reprove with mere words.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book III* (c. 175–202 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 4, page 6 **Read it in the library ›**

POINT 4 OF 7

Arnobius: miracles by His own authority

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Arnobius says Christ used no outside help, ceremony or method. He did His miracles by the power of His own authority, as fits the true God.

5 “And yet everyone agrees that Christ performed all those miracles He did without any help from outward things, without observing any ceremony, and without any fixed method of procedure. He did them only by the power of His own authority.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Arnobius,** *Against the Heathen* 1 (c. 290–330 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 20, page 7 **Read it in the library ›**

POINT 5 OF 7

He commanded sickness, demons and seas by word

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Cyprian describes Christ driving out demons by His word and healing by the command of His voice. Even the winds and seas obeyed Him like servants.

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6 “Therefore, when Christ Jesus, in keeping with what the prophets had foretold earlier, drove demons out of people by His word, and by the command of His voice gave strength to the paralyzed, cleansed those with leprosy, gave sight to the blind, gave the lame power to walk, raised the dead again, and forced the elements to obey Him like servants—the winds to serve Him, the seas to obey Him, and the lower regions to give way to Him—the Jews, who believed that He was only a man because of the humility of His flesh and body, considered Him a sorcerer because of the authority of His power.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 17, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 7

His miracles show that He is God

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Ignatius argues from the miracles: one who raises the dead and heals the sick must be God. Hippolytus says Christ's human side shows in His hunger and tiredness, while His divine side shows in His miracles.

7 “And how can He not be God, who raises the dead, heals the lame, cleanses lepers, restores sight to the blind, and either multiplies or transforms existing substances, like the five loaves and the two fishes, and the water that became wine, and who defeats your entire host with just a word?”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Ignatius of Antioch,** *Epistles of Ignatius* (c. 98–117 AD) **Source 1, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

8 “On the other hand, the divine side in Him is just as clear when He is worshiped by angels, seen by shepherds, awaited by Simeon, testified about by Anna, searched for by wise men, pointed out by a star, turns water into wine at a wedding, rebukes the sea when it is stirred up by violent winds, walks on the deep, makes a man see who was blind from birth, raises Lazarus after he had been dead for four days, does many wonders, forgives sins, and gives power to His disciples.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Hippolytus,** *Exegetical Fragments* 1 (c. 200–236 AD) **Source 9, page 6** Read it in the library ›
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POINT 7 OF 7

Origen: Jesus showed His power was divine

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen says Jesus wanted each person who could see it to recognize that His power was divine, as far as that person was able.

9 “So Jesus wished to show that His power was divine to each person who was able to see it, and according to the measure of that person's ability.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 67 (c. 215–254 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 11, page 6 **Read it in the library ›**

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- None of these passages sets the two answers against each other or asks the question in this exact form.
- They do not explain how the Spirit's anointing and Christ's own divine power worked together in a single miracle.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 22 early Christian passages and 137 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–22, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 23–63, in Bible order), then 96 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

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EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *22 passages from 12 writers*

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · source 1*

1 *Epistles of Ignatius* (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 4** “how can He be but God, who raises up the dead, sends away the lame sound of limb, cleanses the lepers, restores sight to the blind, and either increases or… [continues online] **read ›**

Tatian, *c. 150–180 AD · sources 2–3*

2 *Diatessaron* 4 (1885 English) **Quote 2, page 2** “43 Luke 4:1a And Jesus returned from the Jordan, filled with the Holy Spirit… [continues online] **read ›**

3 *Diatessaron* 5 (1885 English) **Quote 3, page 2** “Luke 4:14a And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee” **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · source 4*

4 *Against Heresies: Book III* (1885 English) **Quotes 1, 4, pages 2, 3** “the Spirit of God shall rest upon Him: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and piety, and the spirit of… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 5–7*

5 *Against Marcion* 8 (on point 1) and the fear of the Lord. "To another, the gifts of healing, and to another the working of miracles." This will be the spirit of might. "To another prophecy, to… [continues online] **read ›**

6 *On the Flesh of Christ* 5 (1885 English; on point 1) “His powers were not without the Spirit in like manner, were not His sufferings without the flesh… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *Against Marcion* 3 (on point 6) necessary, because He was going to prove at once that He truly was the Son, the One sent, and the Christ of God, by the evidence of His wonderful works… [continues online] **read ›**

Hippolytus, *c. 200–236 AD · sources 8–9*

8 *Against the Heresy of Noetus* 1 (on point 6) “is Jesus of Nazareth, who was invited to the marriage feast in Cana and turned the water into… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Exegetical Fragments* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 8, page 4** “the divine in Him, on the other hand, is equally manifest, when He is worshipped by angels, and seen by shepherds, and waited for b, y Simeon, and testified of… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 10–13*

10 *Against Celsus* 6 (1885 English) “even if it be impossible to show by what power Jesus wrought these miracles, it is clear that Christians employ no spells or incantations, but the simple name of Jesus… [continues online] **read ›**

11 *Against Celsus* 67 (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 5** “accordingly, wished to show that His power was divine to each one who was capable of seeing it, and according to the measure of His capability… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Against Celsus* 46 (1885 English; on point 1) “I think the wonders wrought by Jesus are a proof of the Holy Spirit's having then appeared in the form of a dove, although Celsus, from a desire to… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Against Celsus* 8 (on point 1) “the Holy Spirit gave signs of His presence at the beginning of Christ's ministry, and after His… [continues online] **read ›**

Novatian, *c. 240–258 AD · sources 14–16*

14 *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 29 (on point 1) “their hearts and minds, who marked out the Gospel sacraments, who in them was the enlightener of divine things. And when they were strengthened, for the sake of the Lord… [continues online] **read ›**

15 *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 24 is no distinction between the Son of God and the Son of man. For if a distinction were made, Jesus Christ would easily be proved to be both man and… [continues online] **read ›**

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16 *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 28 (on point 4) Father. For He also is the image of God the Father. So this point is added as well: as the Father works, so the Son also works. And the Son… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · source 17*

17 *Treatises* (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 4** "Therefore when Christ Jesus, in accordance with what had been previously foretold by the prophets, drove out from men the demons by His word, and by the command of His… [continues online] **read ›**

Archelaus, *c. 270–300 AD · source 18*

18 *Disputation with Manes* 1 (on point 4) so that he might feed the people with it in the wilderness. Here, my Lord Jesus by His own power satisfied five thousand men in the wilderness with five loaves… [continues online] **read ›**

Methodius, *c. 270–311 AD · source 19*

19 *Oration on the Psalms* 1 (1885 English; on point 6) "if they had never yet seen their Benefactor, and Him whom divine miracles, beyond the power of man, had made famous and renowned… [continues online] **read ›**

Arnobius, *c. 290–330 AD · source 20*

20 *Against the Heathen* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 5, page 3** "And yet it is agreed on that Christ performed all those miracles which He wrought without any aid from external things, without the observance of any ceremonial, without any definite… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · sources 21–22*

21 *Divine Institutes* 15 (on point 4) "that time He began to perform the greatest miracles, not by magical… [continues online] **read ›**

22 *Divine Institutes* 15 (1885 English) "account of these powers and divine works wrought by Him when a great multitude followed Him of the maimed, or sick, or of those who desired to present their sick… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *41 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

23 **Matthew 1:18** Now the birth of Jesus Christ was like this: After his mother, Mary, was engaged to Joseph, before they came together, she was found pregnant by the Holy Spirit. **read ›**

24 **Matthew 3:16** Jesus, when he was baptized, went up directly from the water: and behold, the heavens were opened to him. He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming on him. **read ›**

25 **Matthew 9:8** But when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such authority to men. **read ›**

26 **Matthew 10:1** He called to himself his twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every sickness. **read ›**

27 **Matthew 15:31** so that the crowds marveled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel. **read ›**

28 **Mark 2:12** He rose immediately, took up the mat, and went out in front of them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!" **read ›**

29 **Mark 5:30** Immediately Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" **read ›**

30 **Luke 1:35** The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you. Therefore also the holy one to be born shall be called the Son of God. **read ›**

31 **Luke 3:22** and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, saying, "You are my beloved Son; in you I am well pleased." **read ›**

32 **Luke 4:1** Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness **read ›**

33 **Luke 4:6** The devil said to him, "I will give you all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I want. **read ›**

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34 **Luke 4:14** Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and news about him spread through all the surrounding area. **read ›**

35 **Luke 4:36** Amazement came on all and they spoke together, one with another, saying, “What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!” **read ›**

36 **Luke 6:19** All the multitude sought to touch him, for power came out of him and healed them all. **read ›**

37 **Luke 9:1** He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. **read ›**

38 **Luke 9:43** They were all astonished at the majesty of God. But while all were marveling at all the things which Jesus did, he said to his disciples, **read ›**

39 **Luke 20:2** They said to him, “Tell us, by what authority do you do these things, or who gave you this authority?” **read ›**

40 **John 2:11** Jesus performed this first of his signs in Cana of Galilee. He manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him. **read ›**

41 **John 2:23** Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in his name, observing his signs which he did. **read ›**

42 **John 4:54** This again was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea into Galilee. **read ›**

43 **John 5:19** So Jesus answered them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself except what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son also does in the same way. **read ›**

44 **John 6:2** A great multitude followed him, because they saw his signs which he did on those who were sick. **read ›**

45 **John 7:39** But he said this about the Spirit, which those believing in him were to receive. For the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. **read ›**

46 **John 14:10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words I speak to you I do not speak of myself; the Father who remains in me does the works. **read ›**

47 **John 20:22** When he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit! **read ›**

48 **Acts 2:22** Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God through mighty works, wonders, and signs which God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— **read ›**

49 **Acts 7:14** Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his relatives, seventy-five souls. **read ›**

50 **Acts 10:38** how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. Jesus went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. **read ›**

51 **Acts 11:2** When Peter had come up to Jerusalem, those who were of the circumcision contended with him, **read ›**

52 **1 Corinthians 2:10** But God has revealed them to us through his Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. **read ›**

53 **1 Corinthians 2:13** These things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Holy Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual things. **read ›**

54 **1 Corinthians 12:3** Therefore I make known to you that no man speaking by God’s Spirit says, “Jesus is accursed.” No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” but by the Holy Spirit. **read ›**

55 **1 Corinthians 12:6** There are various kinds of workings, but the same God who works all things in all. **read ›**

56 **1 Corinthians 12:11** But the one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing to each one separately as he desires. **read ›**

57 **2 Corinthians 5:5** Now he who prepared us for this very thing is God, who also gave us the pledge of the Spirit. **read ›**

58 **Galatians 3:5** Therefore, he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you—does he do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? **read ›**

59 **Ephesians 1:20** which he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, **read ›**

60 **Ephesians 3:14** For this cause, I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **read ›**

61 **Philippians 2:13** for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. **read ›**

62 **Hebrews 2:4** while God also bore witness with signs and wonders, various miracles, and distributions of the Holy Spirit according to his will. **read ›**

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63 **1 John 5:6** This is he who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *96 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Isaiah 48:16

Matthew 2:13 · 2:16 · 4:2 · 5:8 · 7:22 · 8:26 · 10:22 · 10:34 · 14:25 · 14:26 · 17:2 · 17:5 · 21:10 · 21:15 · 21:32 · 24:24 · 24:31

Mark 8:15 · 8:38

Luke 2:21 · 8:29 · 9:5 · 9:26 · 10:27 · 16:16 · 19:37 · 22:15 · 22:44 · 23:34 · 24:39

John 1:5 · 1:14 · 2:7 · 5:5 · 6:11 · 6:38 · 9:9 · 10:18 · 10:34 · 11:44 · 11:51 · 12:34 · 14:6 · 14:7 · 14:8 · 14:9 · 14:12 · 14:15 · 14:16 · 14:18 · 14:23 · 14:26 · 14:28 · 15:1 · 15:9 · 15:20 · 15:21 · 15:25 · 16:7 · 16:13

Acts 2:17

Romans 8:7 · 8:9

1 Corinthians 2:2 · 2:12 · 4:15 · 7:29 · 7:40 · 11:3 · 11:5 · 11:7 · 11:9 · 11:10 · 11:18 · 11:23 · 12:1 · 12:4 · 12:8 · 12:12 · 12:31 · 13:1 · 14:21 · 14:25 · 14:26 · 14:34

2 Corinthians 4:13

Galatians 4:4 · 4:19 · 5:17

Ephesians 2:2 · 4:8 · 4:16

1 Timothy 4:1

2 Timothy 1:10

Jude 1:7

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Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

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THE END OF THIS STUDY