

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST

A. There are three words for supernatural works in scripture:

1. Dunamis - translated "miracles" - These are designed to show God's power.
2. Teras - translated "wonders" - These are designed to show God's greatness
3. Semeion - translated "signs" - These are designed to reveal God's message or purpose.

B. Not all of Christ's miraculous signs are recorded in scripture

John 20:30-31 - John did not record all Christ's signs. He recorded certain ones so that people might place their trust in Christ. Their faith would not only focus on His death and resurrection but on the facts that He was:

1. The Christ, i.e. the anointed one or promised king.
2. The Son of God, i.e. possessing the nature of God Himself

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART TWO: TURNING WATER INTO WINE

John 2:1-11

John 2:1-2 – Including Christ in our social functions

1. Jesus attended social functions such as weddings. He was not a social recluse.
2. Application: Is Christ part of your wedding and do you take Christ with you when you attend weddings?

John 2:3 – Taking our problems to Christ

1. Problem: No wine to serve guests
2. Application: No matter how trivial the problem, we should not fear to talk to Jesus (cp. 1 Pet. 5:7).

John 2:4 – Be willing to wait for Christ's timing

1. Weymouth Translation: "Leave the matter in my hands," he replied. "The time for me to act has not yet come."
2. Mary knowing the true nature of Jesus and the fact that He was the promised king may have been expecting Jesus to roll out the blessings of the coming kingdom in the form of bountiful wine as in Jer. 31:12 and Amos 9:13-14.
3. Jesus emphasized that His hour had not even yet come (i.e. the time for Him to be crucified and glorified). The cross would have to come before the full manifestation of the kingdom. The idea of His hour had not yet come is expressed here and in John 7:30; 8:20; 12:23,27; 13:1; 17:1 and refers to His crucifixion and glorification.

John 2:5 – The need for obedience

1. Jesus' mother was used to emphasize the need to obey Christ's word.
2. Application:
 - a. Do what Christ commands (i.e. obey the N.T.) regardless of what it tells us to do - logical or illogical.
 - b. By obeying His word, the servants were blessed to know how He did the miracle (2:9).
 - c. If we want to see Christ's supernatural working, we must obey His word - "whatever."
 - d. Like Mary we need to encourage others to obey His word.

John 2:6 - Jesus' use of the water pots

1. Contained used wash water. Christ made something great out of something gross.
2. These provided for the external man as did the Old Covenant (Heb. 9:13-14) whereas Christ provided for the internal.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

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John 2:7-8 - Jesus ordered the water pots filled. It is not clear whether the new water was added to the water already in the water pots or whether the water pots were emptied and filled with new water.

1. Word of Christ given.
2. Word of Christ obeyed - human responsibility
3. Had to obey this command in order to be told another command which they had to obey in order to see the supernatural working of Christ.

John 2:9 – Christ's supernatural working

1. The head waiter, bridegroom and guests are examples of people who experience and enjoy the benefits of Christ's supernatural working without knowing how it came about.
2. The servants are examples of those who obey the word of Christ, i.e. the New Testament and better understand the supernatural working of Christ (cp. 2:5-7).

John 2:10 – The ways of God vs. the ways of the world

1. The world's order is the good first and then the poorer or bad later.
2. God's order is the good first and then the outstanding later.
3. Those who do not understand the supernatural working of Christ give credit to people instead of Christ.

John 2:11 – Christ's miracles promote faith

1. This was the first miraculous sign of Jesus. This shows that so-called accounts of Jesus' earlier life and miracles are probably false.
2. This miracle manifested or revealed Christ's glory (Heb. 1:3; John 1:14).
3. His disciples who had not been believers became believers. Discipleship has three phases:
 - a. Unbelieving learner or hearer of God's word (here and John 6:60-66)
 - b. The point of time salvation occurs or becoming a believer (Acts 6:1, 7).
 - c. Full discipleship (John 8:30-32; Luke 9:23; 14:33).

SUMMARY:

1. Christ showed Himself to be the creator-God. He made minutes-old wine which appeared to have passed through the processes being planted as grapes, harvested, being made juice, and then allowed to ferment. This sheds great light on the whole creation account of Genesis where God made a world in six days which appeared to have passed through certain processes which ordinarily would take much longer.
2. 1 Tim. 6:17 - Christ gives all things richly to enjoy.
3. Ephesians 3:20 - Christ does above all we ask or think.
4. Christ's first miracle (water to wine) spoke of grace while Moses first miracle (water to blood) spoke of judgment (Exodus 7:19-21).

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART THREE: THE HEALING OF THE NOBLEMAN'S SON

John 4:46-54

John 4:46 - Two-fold problem

1. The son was badly ill with fever.
2. The son was in a different town from where Jesus was at the time.

John 4:47 – Problem addressed

1. He came to Jesus, i.e. he brought his problem to Jesus. His son was about to die.
 - a. Someone had to tell him of Christ's availability.
 - (1) We are responsible to tell of His availability to save.
 - (2) We are responsible to tell of His availability to answer prayer.
 - b. His coming to Jesus to ask involved some effort, i.e. going from one town to where Jesus was. Prayer involves effort - Colossians 4:12
 - c. We can come to Jesus in prayer.
 - (1) Individually: Acts 7:59-60
 - (2) Corporately: Matthew 18:19-20
2. Two fold specific request
 - a. Go to the town where the sick son was.
 - b. Heal the son.
3. His prayer was persistent - "kept on requesting"
- Luke 11:5-10; 18:1-8

John 4:48 - It is not clear whether this is a rebuke or a statement of fact. However, see John 20:30-31 where it says these signs were written that people might place their faith in Christ. It would appear to be a statement of fact.

John 4:49 – Urgency of the prayer

1. Prayer will sometimes be based on desperation.
2. We need to ask the Lord to act timely.

John 4:50 - Faith is always based on God's word or command and evidenced by works.

1. God's word/command: "Go your way, your son lives."
2. Faith: The man believed God's word through Christ.
The Greek verb tense shows that this faith is a point of time response.
3. Works/obedient action: The man started off.

John 4:51 – Obedience and prayer

- When he obeyed God's word through Christ, he learned his prayer had been answered.

John 4:52-53a – Some prayers answered quickly

1. He learned when his prayer was answered.
2. Healing was instant.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

3. God's word has sufficient power to heal without the presence of Christ. In other words Christ or His followers do not have to be present for the power to heal.

John 4:53b - Result of this sign

1. Intent of this sign - John 20:30-31
2. This man trusted Christ for salvation.
3. Those in his household trusted Christ for salvation.

Obviously this man had to testify for them to believe. We must share Christ's supernatural working with others.

John 4:54 – Clarification of this sign

1. This is not Jesus' second sign or miracle. Rather it is His second sign or miracle when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.
2. He had done other signs after turning the water to wine, just not in Galilee - John 2:23; 3:2.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART FOUR: THE HEALING OF THE INVALID MAN

John 5:1-16

John 5:1 – Meeting with God's people

- Jesus was faithful to meet with God's people and we need to be too.

John 5:2-4 – Healing depends on God's choice

1. God used an angel to stir the waters of the pool of Bethesda to heal one person each time. This shows God's sovereignty and selectivity. He only provided for one person at a time based on who entered the water first.
2. Jesus encountered a multitude of sick, blind, lame and paralyzed persons. Yet Jesus only healed one of them.
3. Certainly Jesus did not lack the power or compassion to heal them.

John 5:5 – Don't give up on answered prayer for healing

1. The condition of the man - 38 years without healing.
2. We should never let the length of the infirmity make us conclude that it is not God's will to heal.
3. The onset of this illness seemed to have followed some sin - cp. John 5:14.

John 5:6 – Christ's awareness of our problems

1. Jesus saw this man. As God he sees our circumstances and problems. He certainly saw the condition of the others.
2. Jesus knew how long he had been there in his condition. As God Jesus knows how long our struggle or difficulty has been.
3. Jesus asked this man - but apparently no one else - if he wanted to get well. This shows that Christ as God does not owe everyone equal opportunity for salvation or healing (cp. Mt. 11:21-23).
4. Example of Christ for us to follow: We may see a multitude of people but be able to help only one or a few. There were many Jesus could have helped. Yet he helped only one. We need to do the same when we have the means to do so.

John 5:7 - False objects of faith

1. Things - "the pool"
2. Other people - "No one to help me"
3. Self-effort - "While I am trying to get in"

John 5:8 – God's word and faith

1. Jesus gave God's word to the one in need.
2. The one in need heard God's word
 - Hearing God's word is required for someone to exercise faith (Romans 10:17).

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

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John 5:9a-b – Faith, obedience and enablement

1. The man demonstrated his faith by his obedient works (James 2:18).
2. His response was immediate (Psalm 119:60).
3. Jesus Christ did a supernatural work in this man's life that enabled him to obey - "the man was cured".
 - Principle of divine enablement (Phil. 4:13).

John 5:9c-10 – Scripture trumps tradition

1. Religion attacks the deeds of true faith by appealing to tradition rather than scripture.
2. While they were appealing to Exodus 20:8-10, they were misusing it by adding to it (Deuteronomy 4:2) with their tradition.

John 5:11 – Testimony of Christ and His word

1. The man testified of Christ.
2. He pointed out Christ's word was his authority for what he had done.

John 5:12 – Religion maligns Christ

1. Religion seeks to know more about Christ to discredit His person and His work rather than to learn from Him.
2. There are those who attack what the Bible teaches about Christ both within and outside of the professing church. They try to discredit His person (His deity, humanity, sinlessness) and His work (substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, ascension and return).

John 5:13 – Follow-up needed

1. This man, who had experienced Christ, did not know Christ well at all. Christ was not central to His life just out in the crowd.
2. This is why new believers need follow-up so that they have a fuller understanding and apprehension of Christ.

John 5:14 – Christ's benefits remind us to forsake sin.

1. Jesus continues to seek us after we experience Him.
2. His word reminds us of the benefits we have received.
3. Christ warns against sin and its consequences.
4. It appears that sin had brought on this man's condition and would bring on something worse if continued.
 - Sin does not cause all sickness (John 9:1-3)

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART FOUR: THE HEALING OF THE INVALID MAN

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John 5:15 – Follow-up with new converts sharpens their testimony

1. After experiencing Christ again, this man was able to testify more completely and accurately about Christ.
2. If we are to testify more effectively for Christ, we must experience Him in more than just that initial moment of faith.

John 5:16 – Religion persecutes violators of tradition

1. This man's testimony and works concerning Christ brought persecution from religion against Jesus for disobeying tradition.
2. As Christ lives His life in us by our continuing faith in Him we will find that religion will persecute us (John 15:18-20).

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART FIVE: FEEDING THE 5000

John 6:1-15; Luke 9:10-17; Mark 6:32-44; Matthew 14:13-21

1. Place of the miracle:
 - a. Opposite side of the Sea or Lake of Galilee also known as Tiberias (and at one time Gennesaret) - John 6:1
 - b. Lonely or isolated place selected after the ministry of the twelve (Mark 6:30-32) for rest and after learning of John the Baptist's death (Matthew 14:12-13).
 - c. Luke 9:10 places the location at least at or near Bethsaida.
 - d. Mark 6:31 - The plan was to rest for a while, but Christ taught them and he teaches us that God often has greater plans.
2. The crowd
 - a. Followed Christ on foot from the cities with some even running (Matthew 14:13; Mark 6:33).
 - b. Their reason for following Christ: Seeing the signs he was performing on the sick (John 6:2). The signs were to help people to saving faith in Christ (John 20:30-31) and to authenticate Him as the promised Messiah (Isaiah 35:5-6 cp. Matthew 11:2-6).
3. His activity
 - a. Matthew 14:14; Mark 6:34 - felt compassion for the crowd.
 - Reason: They were like sheep without a shepherd. They need His authority over their lives and so do we. This is exercised through His word Luke 6:46; Matthew 28:20. Christ feels for those who lack the proper authority base in their life and we should have that same compassion.
 - b. Christ spoke about the kingdom (Luke 9:11). This would deal with how it was being revealed at that point, how it was going to function in the period between His ascension and His second coming, and how it would be established over the earth from David's throne at His second coming
 - c. Christ healed diseases of those who needed healing because of His compassion (Luke 9:11; Matthew 14:14). Christ does heal according to God's will even today but people must recognize their need and also need to appeal to His compassion in praying for those who are ill.
 - d. Jesus began to teach them many things (Mark 6:34). There is a strong need to see that people are taught so that they might come to Christ by faith for salvation and so that they might go on to learn how to live for Him under His lordship.

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John 6:1-15; Luke 9:10-17; Mark 6:32-44; Matthew 14:13-21

4. The Questions

- a. Jesus was sitting on the mountain with his disciples (John 6:3).
 - (1) The disciples sitting was the position to receive instruction - cp. Luke 10:39 and Acts 22:3 (educated or trained = brought up at the feet of).
 - (2) It is important as a disciple to be teachable (Luke 6:40; Isa. 50:4-5).
- b. The time
 - (1) The Passover was at hand - John 6:4.
 - (2) It was toward the end of the day - Matthew 14:15; Mark 6:35; Luke 9:12.
 - (3) Because of the time the disciples saw no further opportunity for Christ to effectively work. We must not let the time circumstances limit our faith in His ability to work, even if we are tired or exhausted ourselves.
- c. Jesus' question to Phillip was where are we going to buy bread to feed this crowd? - John 6:5-6.
 - (1) The purpose of the question was to test Phillip. In the same way God's word asks us tough questions to test us?
 - (2) Jesus knew exactly what He was going to do. As we face tough questions from God's word or apart from God's word, Jesus knows what He is doing with us (cp. Job 23:10).
 - (3) Jesus then issued the command to the disciples to give them something to eat (Matthew 14:16; Mark 6:37; Luke 9:13). The commands of Christ sometimes seem absurd or impossible to us. We forget that the one who commands us gives us the power to carry out that command. The purpose of such situations in our life is to develop our faith.
- d. The disciples' question to Jesus: Are the 200 days' wages sufficient to do this? - John 6:7; Mark 6:37
 - They recognized what was needed at the very least to solve the problem but were looking to themselves and not to Christ to solve the problem of what seemed to be an impossible command.
- e. Jesus asked them to see how many loaves they had? - Mark 6:38
 - (1) God's word will often suggest another solution to what seems to be impossible if we keep listening. The disciples kept listening to Jesus and He showed them another possible solution?
 - (2) John 6:8-9 -A boy had 5 barley loaves and two small fish which he made available to Christ's disciples. No matter how inadequate what we have to give might seem, we need to be willing to give it to the Lord to bless and use. Even children can find themselves used of Christ.
 - (3) Andrew questioned Christ's sufficiency - John 6:8-9

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART FIVE: FEEDING THE 5000

John 6:1-15; Luke 9:10-17; Mark 6:32-44; Matthew 14:13-21

- (4) The disciples suggested that they might go to nearby villages to buy food for the people - Luke 9:13. The disciples were thinking naturalistically instead of super-naturalistically. How often are we guilty of this?
5. Christ's Word provides the solution
- a. Jesus had the five loaves and fish brought to Him - Matthew 14:18. Jesus many times does not work supernaturally unless we bring what we have - no matter how inadequate it may seem.
 - b. Christ commanded the disciples to command the people to sit down in the grass (John 6:10) in companies or groups (Mark 6:39) of about 50 (Luke 9:14, i.e. the men only). Organization and order is necessary to carry out God's work (1 Corinthians 14:33,40) and is done through leaders appointed by Christ (1 Timothy 5:17).
 - c. The disciples obeyed this command to exercise leadership (Luke 9:15) and we need to do so too if called to lead (1 Peter 5:2).
 - d. The people obeyed the command by sitting down in groups of 50 and 100 (Mark 6:40, i.e. probably the women and children sitting down in groups of 100 since the men were in groups of 50 according to Luke 9:14). It is important that believers obey those Christ has set over them (Hebrews 13:17).
 - e. Christ took the loaves and fish and gave thanks (John 6:11) and blessed them and broke the loaves (Matthew 14:19; Mark 6:41; Luke 9:16). Thanksgiving for food is taught in scripture and is not just a tradition - 1 Timothy 4:3-5.
 - f. Christ kept giving the bread and fish to the disciples who gave them to the crowd - Matthew 14:19; Mark 6:41; Luke 9:16.
 - (1) Human responsibility of the disciples to distribute what Jesus had provided. We are responsible to distribute what Christ has provided spiritually in terms of evangelism and follow-up.
 - (2) Human responsibility of the crowd was to receive and partake of Christ's provision. There is the responsibility to receive what Christ has provided for salvation and for Christian living.
 - g. All the people appropriated what Christ provided.
 - (1) As much as they wanted - John 6:11.
 - Christ is able to meet our desires
 - (2) They were filled - John 6:12.
 - Christ is sufficient
 - (3) They were satisfied - Matthew 14:20; Mark 6:42; Luke 9:17.
 - Christ is able to satisfy
 - h. Christ commanded that the leftovers be gathered up - John 6:12
 - Principle: not to waste Christ's provision.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART FIVE: FEEDING THE 5000

John 6:1-15; Luke 9:10-17; Mark 6:32-44; Matthew 14:13-21

6. The Outcome of the Miracle

- a. Matthew 14:20; Mark 6:43; Luke 9:17; John 6:13 - Christ does above or beyond what we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20)
- b. The number of people who benefited:
 - (1) Mark 6:44; Luke 9:14; John 6:10 - 5000 men. Luke and John tell us that this was an approximate not an exact figure.
 - (2) Matthew 14:21 - This figure of 5000 was the men and did not include the women and children.
 - (3) Christ's supernatural working benefits large numbers of people and crosses the line between genders and age groups. His working is not just for children nor is it just for adults.
- c. John 6:14 - People realized he was the promised prophet.
 - (1) Prophesied in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19 and shown fulfilled in Acts 3:22-26.
 - (2) A miracle of this nature convinced them that Christ was the promised prophet because Elisha had done a smaller scale miracle of this nature in 2 Kings 4:42-44.
- d. John 6:15 - The people wanted to make Jesus king by force
 - (1) During Christ's earthly ministry, this aspect of His kingdom was not to be an earthly one - John 18:36. The earthly aspect of His kingdom awaits His second coming - Rev. 20:4-6 cp. 5:9-10.
 - (2) The cross had to come before the crown. Jesus had to be the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) before He could be the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah." (Revelation 5:5-10). Genesis 49:9-10 shows that the concept of the Lion is related to His authority to rule.
 - (3) The kingdom was not to be given to him by humans but by the Father - Psalm 2:6-9; Daniel 7:13-14.
- e. Jesus dismissed the crowd - Matthew 14:22; Mark 6:45-46. God's purpose for His life was more important than popularity. What about us? Jesus sent the disciples away in a boat knowing they were going to face a storm because that was far better than allowing them to remain and be swept up in the emotion of the moment. Many times we obey God's word only to find ourselves with a lot of problems not realizing what worse problems we would have faced had we not obeyed.
- f. Christ withdrew to the mountain by himself to pray - Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:46; John 6:15. Our reaction after such an amazing display of God's power would have been to celebrate with the disciples yet we see Christ showing us the need to get alone with God and pray.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SIX: JESUS WALKS ON WATER

Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-51; John 6:16-21

John 6:16-17a - Principle of being obedient to
God's word - Matthew 14:22; Mark 6:45

- The disciples went down to the sea and got into a boat and started to cross the sea.

John 6:17bc - The circumstances were not the best.

1. It was dark. Jesus has put us in a spiritually dark world that we might see our need for Him and learn to trust Him.
2. Jesus was not visibly present. Presently Jesus is not visibly present with us. We know based on His word that He is present (Matthew 28:20) because we walk by faith not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

John 6:18 - The circumstances grew worse

1. Stormy sea due to a strong wind. Circumstances appear to work to disturb our peace. We are promised such circumstances in John 16:33, but we are also promised that we can have peace through His word because He is greater than these circumstances.
2. The only visible means of security they had were very vulnerable, i.e. the boat, since it was being battered by the waves - Matthew 14:24. God permits adverse circumstances to attack our means of security that we might learn to trust Him (2 Corinthians 1:8-9) and not lean to our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5).
3. The wind was against them. They were unable to make progress in obeying Christ - Matthew 14:24; Mark 6:48. This is why we are challenged in Colossians 2:6 to walk in Christ in the same way we received Him which is by faith (Galatians 2:20).
4. Jesus saw them from the land in the dark straining to make progress in rowing the boat about 3 to 4 miles out - Matthew 14:24; Mark 6:47-48 cp. John 6:19.
 - a. Jesus is all-knowing (John 1:48; Colossians 2:2-3) and all-present (Matthew 28:20)
 - These are qualities of being God - Psalm 139:11-12; Proverbs 15:3; 1 John 3:20.
 - b. Christ sees our struggles and our circumstances along with our vulnerability.

John 6:19 - Jesus walked out to the boat 3 to 4 miles from the land.

1. His initial intent was to pass by them - Mark 6:48.
2. The time was the fourth watch of the night, i.e. between 3am and 6am - Matthew 14:25. Many times Christ does not provide us prompt relief in our trials. These men had to struggle for hours. Christ does this to teach us perseverance and patience in waiting on Him.
3. The disciples' reaction was fear - Matthew 14:26; Mark 6:50; John 6:19.
 - a. Their lack of faith kept Christ from His initial purpose (Mark 6:48) which might have enabled others to see the miracle.
 - b. They did not think it was Jesus for real. They thought they were seeing a ghost - Matthew 14:26; Mark 6:49.
 - c. Principle: Fear hinders the extent of Christ's work to others and the reality of His work to us.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SIX: JESUS WALKS ON WATER

Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-51; John 6:16-21

John 6:20 - God's word through Christ is given to address our fears

1. It shows Jesus is God. The phrase "It is I" = "I am" - Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50; John 6:20 (refer to the Amplified Bible translation).
 - a. This phrase identifies Him as God - cp. John 8:58 with Exodus 3:13, 14.
 - b. Two commands - Matthew 14:27; Mark 6:50:
 - (1) Positive command in response to this truth - "Take courage".
 - (2) Negative command - "Do not be afraid".
2. Peter's response and lesson - Matthew 14:28-31
 - a. Speaks to the Lord and asks for His guidance to show him His reality.
 - b. Jesus gives Peter His word, "Come".
 - c. Peter's faith and effort got him out of the boat.
 - d. Peter supernaturally enabled by faith walked on water and came toward Jesus.
 - e. Peter's focus changed from Christ to circumstances.
 - f. Peter's faith faltered and was replaced by fear.
 - g. Peter's faltering in faith created a problem, "beginning to sink".
 - h. Peter's response was a prayer of faith in calling on the Lord Jesus to help him. "Lord save me"
 - i. Christ answered Peter's prayer of faith and "took hold of him."
 - j. Through Christ's word applied to his experience, he learned that his faith was little.
 - k. He also learned that his problem had been caused by doubt.

John 6:21 - Impact of God's word and Christ's presence

1. The disciples were willing to receive Jesus into the boat.
 - a. As believers we need to allow Jesus into areas of our life that are not secure.
 - b. They were willing to receive Him because of His word.
 - c. People will not receive Christ into unstable areas of their life apart from God's word because God's word is necessary to produce faith (Romans 10:17).
2. Christ's presence worked on their behalf
 - a. He stopped the wind. Christ can alter the adverse circumstances that destabilize our lives and hinder our progress - Matthew 14:32; Mark 6:51
 - b. Christ stopping the wind showed His deity as Jehovah - Psalm 107:29.
 - c. They worshipped Christ which shows Jesus is God - Matthew 14:33 cp. Revelation 22:8-9 and Matthew 4:10 cp. Deuteronomy 6:13..
 - d. They confessed His deity as the Son of God - Matthew 14:33 cp. John 5:18.
 - e. The men were greatly astonished by Christ's presence - Mark 6:51.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SIX: JESUS WALKS ON WATER

Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-51; John 6:16-21

- f. The reason for their astonishment - Mark 6:52.
 - (1) Their heart was hardened.
 - (2) They failed to gain insight from the incident of the loaves
 - (3) The incident of the loaves had taught them that Jesus could provide, but they failed to apply their understanding to the new situation and realize that Jesus could protect.
- 3. The boat was immediately at land
 - a. The 5000 were fed at Bethsaida on the northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee - Luke 9:10.
 - b. They were headed for Bethsaida by boat. Mark 6:45 says they were headed for Bethsaida and John 6:17 says they were headed for Capernaum on the north-central coast of the Sea of Galilee. There were actually two Bethsaida's. One is mentioned in Luke 9:10 and the other one mentioned in Mark 6:45 is a suburb fishing community of Capernaum. This second Bethsaida is not shown on the map in your Bible.
 - c. Although they had set out for Capernaum/Bethsaida, they landed at Gennesaret which is on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee to the west of their destination - Matthew 14:34; Mark 6:53.
 - d. The distance was about 8-9 miles. They had rowed 3-4 miles when Jesus got into the boat so they ended up going another 4-5 miles immediately - John 6:19,21.
 - e. The disciples had obviously decided that all they wanted to do was to get to land and God in His sovereignty through Christ had taken them to Gennesaret.

Some Concluding Principles:

- 1. Testing often follows great deeds worked by the Lord (Here the feeding of the 5000).
- 2. In this test Jesus was not visibly present with them but was praying on high (Mark 6:46). Right now Jesus is not visibly with us but praying at the Father's right hand (Romans 8:34).
- 3. In this test Jesus was not visibly with them but was spiritually with them as He saw them (Mark 6:48). In the same way Jesus is not visibly present with us but is spiritually present with us (Matthew 28:20).
- 4. Their problem was not "no faith" but "small faith" (Matthew 14:31) and doubt which is double-mindedness (James 1:6-8).
- 5. We benefit even from failing tests because it exposes the smallness of our faith.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SEVEN: THE MAN BORN BLIND

John 9:1-41

John 9:1 – Extent and cause of the suffering

1. The situation: The man had been blind from the time of his birth.
2. Pictures the spiritual condition of the unsaved - Acts 26:18; 2 Corinthians 4:4

John 9:2-3 - Causes of suffering and infirmity

1. Our own personal sin - John 5:14; Acts 12:20-23
2. Our parents' sin - 2 Samuel 12:13-15
3. To display God's works as in this passage
4. To glorify God - John 11:4

John 9:4 – Limited opportunity for good works

1. God has a plan of good works for us - Ephesians 2:10; Titus 3:8.
- Our life has purpose.
2. We must be involved in doing good works. This involvement is corporate in two senses:
 - a. Our working with other believers - 2 Timothy 2:22.
 - b. Our working with Christ - Colossians 1:29.
3. This emphasizes that our opportunity to do good works is limited just as Christ's opportunity was limited (Galatians 6:10) and there will come a time when we cannot do the works (Revelation 14:13).
 - a. Day would appear to refer to our life, i.e. here Christ's life.
 - b. Night would appear to refer to our death, i.e. here Christ's death.

John 9:5 – Provision and appropriation of light

1. The spiritual life Christ gives also provides spiritual light or understanding to people - cp. John 1:4.
2. This spiritual life with spiritual light or understanding was for everyone during Christ's earthly ministry - John 9:5.
3. When we trust Christ we receive that light - John 12:46.
4. When we follow Christ in discipleship, we have His light to guide us - John 8:12.
5. As believers we are light in Christ - Ephesians 5:8.

Application of Ephesians 5:8: We are to walk or live our lives as children of light while we are in this world.

John 9:6-7 – Sight gained

1. As God made man of dust, many believe that Christ used the clay to make new eyes for the blind man. In any case what Jesus did resulted in the man gaining his sight.
2. Notice that Jesus did something that we would consider gross to achieve something wonderful. In the same way God brings affliction to bring about good - Deuteronomy 8:16; Romans 8:28.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SEVEN: THE MAN BORN BLIND

John 9:1-41

3. Notice the order of events:

- a. Irritation: Eyes full of dirt and spit mixed together.
- b. God's word from Christ: Wash in pool of Siloam
- c. Faith: He went away
- d. Prescribed place: Pool of Siloam - cp. John 14:6; Acts 4:12
- e. Works: He washed
- f. sight

John 9:8 – Jesus brings visible change in people's lives

1. People saw his changed life.
2. Because he had sight, he did not do what he used to do. When someone comes to Christ, they will manifest a changed life - 1 John 3:6-10.

John 9:9 - Three lines of testimony

1. Those who said the changed man was the blind man.
2. Those who tried to explain it away by saying the man was simply someone who looked like him.
3. The testimony of the ex-blind man.

John 9:10 - The question from unbelievers provided opportunity to testify - 1 Peter 3:15.
Do you think there would have been any questions if the man had continued to behave like he did when he was blind?

John 9:11-12 - Elements of a good testimony

1. Work of Jesus - Tell people what Jesus did.
2. Word of God, i.e. through Christ - Tell people what was shared from God's word.
3. Response of the one who received the benefit - Tell people how you received the benefit.
4. One does not have to answer what you do not know. This man simply admitted he did not know rather than trying to come up with some answer.

John 9:13-14 – God's word vs. tradition

1. People let religious leaders decide on spiritual truth rather than God's word.
2. The questionable element of the spiritual reality was that Jesus had:
 - a. made the clay on the Sabbath
 - b. healed on the Sabbath
 - c. This violated an extended interpretation of the law. This is an example of so-called "logical extension" of God's command to the point where they contradict the priority principle of showing mercy (Hosea 6:6; Matthew 12:7; 23:23). We must rightly divide God's word on these matters - 2 Timothy 2:15.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SEVEN: THE MAN BORN BLIND

John 9:1-41

John 9:15 – Testimony of Christ vs. the critics of Christ

1. Religion questions Christ's work to find fault not to grow in understanding.
2. Model for our testimony: The testimony concerning Christ's work was simple and consistent.

John 9:16 - Christ's work brings about division

1. The opposition of tradition.
2. The support and belief of those who can see the obvious message in his miracles.

John 9:17 – Christ's working brings benefit and opposition

1. Religion questions people who benefit from Christ's work about Christ's person.
2. This formerly blind man had not yet trusted Christ for salvation (John 9:35-38). Yet he was strong in his understanding of Christ's person. He knew that Christ had to be a prophet at least.

John 9:18a - Religion does not believe the testimony concerning Christ.

John 9:18b – 23 – Overlooking the obvious

1. Religion seeks testimony to discredit Christ's work.
2. The testimony of the parents as observers who knew:
 - a. They affirmed the same man had experienced Christ's power.
 - b. They affirmed he was in fact blind but could now see.
 - c. Religious people who know the truth won't admit it for these reasons:
 - (1) Fear of man, i.e. the Jews - Proverbs 29:25; Isaiah 51:7, 12.
 - (2) Fear of ostracism or being excluded - John 12:42-43.
 - (3) Seeking glory (or better "honor") from men - John 5:44. They pass the buck to stay respectable.
3. There is a time a person is of age and no longer under parental authority - v. 23 cp. Hebrews 11:24.

John 9:24 - Indictment of religion against Christ.

1. They ask those who bear testimony for Christ to admit that He lacks miraculous powers and to retract their testimony.
2. There are those today who want Christians to admit that Christ did not have supernatural powers. They want a natural Jesus not a supernatural Jesus.
3. Religion seeks to lower Christ to the moral level of sinful man. They present him as a breaker of the law rather than a fulfiller of the law - Matthew 5:17-18.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SEVEN: THE MAN BORN BLIND

John 9:1-41

John 9:25 - The man's testimony was incomplete but accurate.

1. He did not know whether Christ was a sinner. The word "sinner" was used to describe anyone who broke the Law of Moses which was correct. But they also used it incorrectly of anyone who broke the traditions added to that law.
2. The strength of his testimony did not lie in what he did not know but in what he knew: His past condition (blind) and his present condition (able to see).

John 9:26 - Religion questions people who have experienced Christ for the purpose of trying to create confusion of the truth rather than clarification of the truth.

John 9:27 - Religion is confronted

1. Rebuke was not for lack of knowledge of the information concerning Christ's working but was for lack of belief demonstrated by their unwillingness to listen to what had really happened.
2. The blind man asked them if they wanted to become His disciples knowing fully well that they did not. In other words they were not teachable.

Application: We must be teachable regarding the working of Christ.

John 9:28-29a - The plight of those caught between religion and Christ

1. Religion insults them because of Christ.
2. Religion finds fault with them for taking their learning from Christ rather than them.
3. Religion purports to have an allegiance to someone or something superior to Christ alone.
 - a. If they had truly believed Moses, they would have believed Christ - John 5:45-47.
 - b. They refused to consider that Christ might be superior to Moses - Hebrews 3:5-6.
 - c. The large error of today consists of those who would believe that something more than Christ is needed either for salvation or for Christian living - Colossians 2:3-4, 8-10.

John 9:29b-33 - The response of the uninstructed blind man to religion's lack of belief that Christ was of God.

1. Religion's blindness to Christ's origin is amazing - 9:30a
2. The quality of the sign - making a blind person see - showed that Jesus was God - 9:30b, 32.
3. The irrefutable logic of the blind man:
 - a. God does not hear sinners. Therefore, Jesus must not be a sinner - 9:31.
 - b. God hears those who fear Him and do His will. Therefore, Jesus must be one who fears Him and does His will - 9:31.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SEVEN: THE MAN BORN BLIND

John 9:1-41

- c. If Jesus were not from God, He could do nothing. Therefore Jesus is from God - 9:33. NOTE: The word "if" is a second class condition meaning that the speaker believes that the opposite condition is true.

John 9:34 - The false logic of religion

1. Those that benefit from Christ are sinners (i.e. lawbreakers and especially liars) from birth - cp. Psalm 58:3.
2. They refuse to be taught no matter how powerful the communication.
3. They ostracize those who testify of Christ - cp. John 15:18-20; Luke 6:22.

John 9:35 - Closing the deal in evangelism

1. Christ found the man. He seeks the lost, not vice versa - cp. Luke 19:10. Since Christ has sent us just as the Father sent Him, we are likewise to seek the lost - cp. John 17:18.
2. Christ called him to faith in Himself. We need to call people to faith in Christ.

John 9:36-37 – Make the issue clear to the lost

1. Lost people have questions. This one was about Christ.
2. Jesus clearly identified Himself as the proper object of faith. We must be sure to do the same in talking with the lost.
3. This man was clear that salvation was a matter of faith.

John 9:38 - Evidence that the ex-blind man trusted Christ.

1. The man confessed his faith in Christ with his mouth - Romans 10:9-10.
2. The man worshipped Jesus which shows he acknowledged Him as Jehovah/ God - Deuteronomy 6:13.
3. Worship is the proper response of a regenerate heart to Christ.

John 9:39 – Judicial blindness

1. Christ did not come to bring a final judgment of condemnation - John 3:17; 5:24. That awaits the resurrection of the lost - John 5:29.
2. Christ came to judge by judicially blinding those who saw (i.e. understood) but did not believe - John 12:37-40.
3. The question is: How is judgment related to helping those who do not see to be able to see?
 - a. In John 12:31-32 Jesus relates judgment of the world to His death on the cross. All the sins of the world were paid for by Jesus on the cross - John 1:29; 1 John 2:2. Of course, people must accept that payment in order to benefit from it - 1 Timothy 4:10.
 - b. When a person accepts this judgment by trusting Christ as Savior, his eyes are opened - Acts 26:18.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART SEVEN: THE MAN BORN BLIND

John 9:1-41

John 9:40-41 – The problem of the will

1. Religion understands Jesus' viewpoint but disagrees with it.
2. The problem was not the extent of their blindness to spiritual truth but their unwillingness to admit that they were in any way blind. People must be willing to admit they are blind and lost before they can be saved. For this reason, they remained in their sins - cp. John 8:21, 24.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART EIGHT: LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

John 11:1-46

John 11:1-2 – Suffering and our Christian walk

- Love service and devotion to Christ does not exempt our loved ones or us from suffering.

John 11:3 – Bring problems to Jesus

- As Mary and Martha enlisted Jesus' help, we should likewise do so in praying for those who are ill.

John 11:4 – Suffering allowed to glorify or spotlight God

1. The purpose of God allowing this man to be sick was not so that he would die but to glorify Himself and Jesus Christ.
2. God seeks to use our trials including illness to bring glory to Himself and Christ. Like the people in this passage we may not understand what God is doing at the time.

John 11:5 – Suffering does not negate God's love for us

1. Christ allowing us to get sick does not mean He does not love us.
2. Christ allowing our loved ones to get sick does not mean He does not love us or them.
3. Consider Romans 8:35, 38-39.

John 11:6 - Delayed answers to prayer

- Christ's delay in answering our prayers does not mean He does not love us, but in this case allowed Him to do something far greater.

John 11:7-10 – True light

1. Jesus emphasizes that the light of God's word must guide us and not the consideration of circumstances - cp. 2 Corinthians 5:7; Proverbs 3:5-6.
2. Light represents the new life (John 8:12) manifested in obedience to God's word - Psalm 119:105, 130.
3. Darkness and night represent the condition of the unsaved - 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8.

John 11:11-15 – Christ's purposes in suffering and death

1. Jesus communicates in symbols but these symbols are plainly explained.
2. Jesus stated His purpose in going was:
 - a. To raise Lazarus from the dead
 - b. So that His disciples might have faith.
3. In situations of sickness and death Christ often wishes to minister to our faith.
4. Christ had announced to them that He was going to do something they had not even thought to be possible - cp. Ephesians 3:20.

John 11:16 – Focus on Christ and not our losses

1. Thomas' remark shows that He did not fully apprehend that Jesus was going to bring Lazarus back to life.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART EIGHT: LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

John 11:1-46

2. To him if Lazarus was dead, they might as well die with him. We must remember our life is not a loved one. It is Christ (Colossians 3:4) and for us to live is Christ not our loved one - Philippians 1:21.

John 11:17-22 – Looking to Christ when facing loss

1. The situation appeared hopeless and final because Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days and was beginning to decay - 11:17 cp. 11:39.
2. Many people had come to comfort Mary and Martha since Jerusalem was close by. We are called upon to comfort one another with the word of scripture - 11:18-19 cp. 1 Thessalonians 4:18; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4.
3. We need to seek to fellowship with the Lord when we lose a loved one. Notice how Martha went out to do just that while Mary delayed in doing this - 11:20.
4. Martha blamed the Lord and His lack of presence for the death of her brother. However, if Jesus had been there and prevented this death Martha would have been prevented from knowing Christ more fully - 11:21.
5. Martha knew the power of Christ's intercession and expressed faith and confidence in it - 11:22. When we face loss of loved ones, we must look to the power of Christ's intercession on our behalf.

John 11:23-26 – Assurance in the face of death

1. Promise of Christ regarding the one who has died: Future bodily resurrection. In Lazarus' case this was two-fold - 11:23:
 - a. His temporary bodily resurrection with a perishable body.
 - b. His future bodily resurrection with an imperishable body - cp. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.
2. Martha had assurance of the future bodily resurrection with an imperishable body. She was obviously not aware what Jesus was going to do on this occasion. We can have the same assurance as Martha based on God's word - 11:24 cp. John 6:40.
3. Jesus emphasizes that He is the resurrection in the sense of raising the body and the life in terms of giving new life to people at the moment they trust Christ - 11:25.
4. Two categories of believers - cp. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53
 - a. Those that place their faith in Christ will experience resurrection life even if they die physically - 11:25b.
 - b. Those who keep on living until Christ comes who have placed their faith in Christ will not experience physical death - 11:26ab
5. Martha affirms that she has placed her faith in Christ - 11:26c; 11:27.
 - a. In regard to the future resurrection as being provided by Christ.
 - b. That He is the Christ, i.e. the Messiah, lit. "Anointed one" a reference to the promised king.
 - c. That He is the Son of God, i.e. He is God - cp. John 5:18.
 - d. The one who comes into the world.

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART EIGHT: LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

John 11:1-46

John 11:28-31 – Our need for comfort in handling sorrow

1. When experiencing sorrow, we who have experienced Christ's presence and fellowship and the encouragement of His word need to encourage others who are mourning to avail themselves of Christ's presence and fellowship. We need to remind them that Christ has something to teach us and in wanting us to come to Him for fellowship - 11:28.
2. When Mary heard Martha's encouragement, she responded promptly to seek fellowship with Christ.
3. While she had people trying to comfort her, she sought her comfort from Christ.
4. The people were not understanding of her mindset. So it is that the mind the natural (unsaved) man and the mind of the carnal believer do not understand those who seek their comfort in Christ.

John 11:32-33 – Sharing in one another's sorrows inwardly

1. When Mary came to Jesus, she fell at His feet in submission.
2. Yet she expressed blame toward Christ for her brother's death.
3. Jesus did not rebuke her for her blaming but joined in her sorrow. We need to do the same knowing that it takes the working of God to help people move beyond that point.
 - a. He was deeply moved inwardly - cp. 11:33 with 11:38.
 - b. He was troubled in the sense of feeling sorrow with her.
 - c. These serve as models for us in sharing the grief of other believers - cp. Romans 12:15.

John 11:34-37 – Sharing in one another's sorrows outwardly

1. Jesus showed His concern about the burial place of Lazarus - 11:34.
2. Jesus shared their sorrow not only inwardly but outwardly by weeping. It also shows that it is not unmanly to weep - 11:35.
3. As sorrows are shared outwardly it shows others our love for the one who died - 11:36.
4. Knowing Christ's power, people often criticize Him for not using it not realizing that He has planned something greater - 11:37.

John 11:38-46 – Power of the word of Christ

1. Jesus is again moved by the criticism of God's working and the sorrow of the people. We need to be sensitive to the grieving of people even if they are critical of God's working - 11:38a.
2. The first barrier to Christ's supernatural working in this situation was the stone. God allows barriers to His working although quite obviously an angel could have been sent to move the stone - 11:38b
3. Jesus commanded that the stone or barrier be removed. This required human obedience and cooperation in order for Him to show His supernatural working - 11:39a.
4. Sometimes obedience to Christ's working appears to us to be repulsive and unreasonable - 39b

THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS OF CHRIST

PART EIGHT: LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

John 11:1-46

5. Christ's word for us is the same as His word to Martha: If we act in faith in His power, we will see the glory of God (Ex. 33:18-19, glory=all God's goodness) - 11:40.
6. The results of obeying His word - 11:41a.
 - a. Christ's prayer of intercession - 11:41-42
 - (1) always heard by the Father.
 - (2) thankful
 - (3) edifies by promoting faith in the hearers
 - b. Christ's power expressed by His word - 11:43
 - raises the dead with a command and a shout - cp. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
7. The response of Lazarus - 11:44
 - a. He showed that He was alive by coming forth. We show the new life we have by what we do.
 - b. He was freed from what bound him when he was dead. In the same way when the believer trusts Christ and receives new life, he is freed from what bound him when he was spiritually dead (Romans 6:16-18). His resurrection is a picture of what will happen to our body when Christ bodily raises those who have trusted Him from the dead (cp. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 and Romans 8:23).
8. The response of the onlookers – 11:45-47
 - a. Many placed their faith in Christ - 11:45 cp. John 20:30-31.
 - b. Others did not and went and told the Pharisees what had been done-11:46.
 - c. Despite the evidence they chose not to believe - cp. 11:47; 12:9-11. They did not doubt the authenticity of the miracle.