
JESUS: The Miracle Worker



A Series of Sermons on the Miracles of Jesus

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Series Introduction

Text: Mark 4:36-41

- A. In the fourth chapter of the gospel of Mark, Jesus is in the midst of His initial ministry in Galilee which followed His temptation by Satan in the wilderness.
1. Having already chosen the twelve men who will accompany Him for the duration of His earthly sojourn, He is establishing Himself and His mission before the people.
 2. The works He is doing and the truths He is teaching are attracting large multitudes of people to Him. So great is the press of the people upon Him, He leaves them on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and assumes a position in a boat just off-shore where He imparts great spiritual truths concerning the kingdom of God to them.
 3. His teaching is in the form of parables because opposition to Him has already arisen.
 4. When evening comes, He takes leave of the multitude.
 - a. He instructs His disciples to “cross over to the other side.” (Mark 4:35)
 - b. A number of little boats accompany them.
 5. Read the text: Mark 4:36-41.
- B. The ability of Jesus to speak and calm the wind and the sea had a profound effect upon those in the boat with Him.
1. Even though they had seen Him perform miracles previous to this, they were still awed by the open demonstration of the power of God before them.
 2. Alfred Edersheim, in commenting on this incident wrote:

“In all this we perceive already, in part, the internal connection between the teaching of that day and the miracle of that evening. Both were quite novel: the teaching by Parables, and then the help in a Parable. Both were founded on the Old Testament: the teaching on its prediction, the miracle on its proclamations of the special Divine Manifestations in the sea; and both show that everything depended on the view taken of the Person of the Christ...When ‘He was awakened’ by the voice of His disciples, ‘He rebuked the wind and the sea,’ as Jehovah had of old—just as He had ‘rebuked’ the fever, and the paroxysm of the demonised. For, all are His creatures, even when lashed to frenzy of the ‘hostile power.’ And the sea He commanded as if it were a sentient being: ‘Be silent! Be silenced!’ And immediately the wind was bound, the panting waves throbbed into stillness, and a great calm of rest fell upon the Lake...But over these men who had erst wakened Him with their cry, now crept wonderment, awe and fear. No longer, as at His first wonder-working in Capernaum, was it: ‘What is this?’ but ‘Who, then, is this?’” (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. I, 600-602)

C. In this series of lessons we will seek to show how the miraculous works of Jesus answer the question posed by those men in the boat with Him that day, "What manner of man is this?" We will consider miracles and their purposes, the relationship of Jesus' miracles to Old Testament prophecy, how His miracles validated both His teaching and His person, and how they demonstrated a power superior to that of Satan.

The Miracles of Jesus: Types and Purposes

Introduction

1. In order to understand and appreciate the miracles of Jesus, one first has to understand what a miracle is and then consider why the Christ would make them such an integral part of His ministry.
2. Unfortunately, there seems to be a great deal of misunderstanding, even among those who claim to be children of God, as to their meaning.

I. Miracle Defined

- A. A miracle is often defined as an intervention of natural law.
 1. Yet, such a definition is not specific enough to adequately explain what is represented in Scripture as miraculous.
 2. The *New Unger's Bible Dictionary* says of miracles, "In general terms miracles may be defined as supernatural manifestations of divine power in the external world, in themselves special revelations of the presence and power of God; and in connection with other special revelations to which they are subservient, as aiding in their attestation, establishment, and preservation." (872)
 3. A good working definition of a miracle is an event in the external world wrought by the immediate power of God and intended as a sign or attestation.
- B. The miracles of Jesus fit into the latter two definitions because they are described in Scripture as:
 1. *Wonders*. (Mk. 2:12; Acts 2:43, 22)
 2. *Signs*. (Heb. 2:3, 4; 2 Cor. 2:12; Jn. 2:18; Mt. 12:38)
 3. *Mighty works/deeds*. (Acts 6:8; 10:38; Rom. 15:19; cf. 2 Cor. 12:12; Mt. 7:22; Mk. 6:14; Lk. 10:13; Acts 2:22; 19:11; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28; Gal. 3:5)
- C. R.C. Trench, in applying these terms to the miracles of Jesus, said,

"In the name *wonder*, the astonishment which the work produces upon the beholders...is transferred to the work itself...to act as a summons to him that he now open his eyes to the spiritual appeal which is about to be addressed to him...But the miracle is not a 'wonder' only; it is also a *sign*, a token and indication of the near presence and working of God...They are *signs* and pledges of something more than and beyond themselves...valuable not so much for what they are, as for what they indicate of the grace and power of the doer, or of the connexion in which he stands with a higher world...legitimizing acts, by which he claims to be accepted as a messenger from God...Frequently also the miracles are styled *powers* or *mighty works*, that is, of God. As in the term 'wonder' or 'miracle,' the effect is transferred and gives a name to the cause, so here the cause gives its name to the effect." (*Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord*, 3-5)

II. Classes of Miracles Jesus Performed

A. A classification of the miracles Jesus performed showed Him to have power over:

1. Nature. (Mt. 14:22-33)
2. Disease. (Mt. 8:5-13)
3. Demons. (Mk. 5:1-19)
4. Material things. (Mt. 14:13-21)
5. Death. (John 11:1-44)

B. In classifying Jesus' miracles, James Stalker wrote,

"The miracles of Jesus, taken altogether, were of two classes—those wrought on man, and those wrought in the sphere of external nature, such as the turning of water into wine, stilling the tempest, and multiplying the loaves. The former were by far the more numerous. They consisted chiefly of cures of diseases less or more malignant, such as lameness, blindness, deafness, palsy, leprosy, and so forth...But the most extraordinary of the miracles of Jesus upon man were the instances in which He raised the dead to life. They were not frequent, but naturally produced an overwhelming impression whenever they occurred." (*The Life of Jesus Christ*, 63-64)

III. The Purposes of the Miracles of Jesus

A. As to the purposes of the miracles of Jesus, please understand, that since miracles have always been a part of God's divine plan in every dispensation, many of the reasons for which Jesus used miracles are the same as those men of God who worked them in Old Testament times.

B. Miracles have always been used to:

1. Create and assure faith. Jesus used them for that very purpose. (Jn. 4:46-53; 20:30-31; Lk. 7:20-23)
2. Confirm His word. Again, the miracles of Jesus serve that purpose. (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4; Acts 8:5-6)
3. Identify and verify the credibility of the worker or messenger. Jesus' miracles likewise accomplish that end. (Rom. 15:19; 2 Cor. 2:12)

C. There are some purposes, though, for which Jesus used miracles which are peculiar to Him. He utilized them to:

1. Show His Messiah link. (Isa. 42:7; 61:1)
2. Demonstrate beyond doubt His personal love and compassion for mankind (Heb. 1:1-3; 1 Jn. 4:16 - 5:1), a love that was distinct. (Jn. 13:34)
3. Show that He was from the Father. (Jn. 5:36; 9:3-4; 10:25, 37)

D. Stalker said of Jesus, "Thus His miracles were a natural and essential part of His Messianic work. They were an excellent means of making Him known to the nation."
(66)

The Miracles of Jesus in Relation to Prophecy

I. Two Passages from Isaiah Which Are Obviously Messianic Speak of the Miraculous Work of Jesus

A. Isaiah 42:1-7.

1. It talks of the "Elect One in whom My soul delights." (vs. 1)
2. Verse seven says that this Elect One would be sent, "To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house."

B. A similar passage, Isaiah 61:1, says, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound."

C. To show that these passages relate specifically to Jesus, consider what Keil and Delitzsch say on this passage.

"The prophet never speaks of himself as a prophet at any such length as this;...wherever any other than Jehovah is represented as speaking, and as referring to his own calling, or his experience in connection with that calling, as in ch. xlix. 1 sqq., 1. 4 sqq., it is the very same 'servant of Jehovah' of whom and to whom Jehovah speaks in ch. xlii. 1 sqq., lii. 13-liii., and therefore not the prophet himself, but He who had been appointed to be the Mediator of a new covenant, the light of the Gentiles, the salvation of Jehovah for the whole world, and who would reach this glorious height, to which He had been called, through self-abasement even to death." (*Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 7, 424-425)

D. Matthew Henry, in commenting on Isaiah 61:1, said,

"He that is the best expositor of scripture has no doubt given us the best exposition of these verses, even our Lord Jesus himself, who read this in the synagogue at Nazareth (perhaps it was the lesson for the day) and applied it entirely to himself, saying, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears (Luke iv. 17, 18, 21.) and the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, in the opening of this text, were admired by all that heard them. As Isaiah was authorized and directed to proclaim liberty to the Jews in Babylon, so was Christ, God's messenger, to publish a more joyful jubilee to a lost world." (*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Vol. II, 857)

II. Jesus' Application of Isaiah 61:1

A. Jesus not only applied this prophecy to Himself while in the synagogue at Nazareth (Lk. 4:16-21) but also in Matthew 11:1-6 when John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to Him to ask Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" (vs. 3)

1. Jesus responded by saying, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:

The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (vss. 4-5).

2. In His response, Jesus not only cited the prophecy of Isaiah but He specifically applied it to the miracles, signs and wonders He was working among the people.
- B. The *Wycliffe Bible Commentary* states, "Jesus' kindly reply called attention to his works, which John would recognize as Messianic credentials (Isa. 29:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1)." (947)
- C. Albert Barnes said of the response of Jesus,
- "An answer was therefore ready to the inquiries of John....Jesus referred them for an answer to these miracles. They were proof that he was the Messiah. Prophets had indeed performed miracles, but no prophet had performed so many, or any so important. Jesus, moreover, performed them 'in his own name' and by his own power. Prophets had done it by the power of God. Jesus, therefore, performed the works which none but the Messiah could do, and John might easily infer that he was the Christ." (*Notes on the NT, Matthew and Mark*, 118)

IV. Fulfilled Prophecies Show Miracles to Be an Integral Part of Christ's Ministry

- A. This fulfillment of prophecy reveals that the miracles which Jesus performed before the people were a key part of His mission and of the purpose of God.
- B. *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary* says,
- "Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus answered this question Himself. When in prison, John the Baptist sent some of his disciples to Jesus to see if He was the 'one to come' (Matt. 11:3). Jesus told them to inform John of what He had done: 'The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor' (11:5). With these words, Jesus declared that His miracles were the fulfillment of the promises of the Messiah's kingdom as foretold by Isaiah (24:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1). Jesus' miracles were signs of the presence of the kingdom of God (Matt. 12:39)." (847)

The Miracles of Jesus: A Validation of His Teaching and Person

Introduction

As seen from the response He gave to the disciples of John in Matthew 11:5, Jesus used the miraculous works He was performing as evidence of His identity, that He was the Messiah sent from God.

I. John 5:1-39

A. In this text, Jesus cited five credible witnesses which gave testimony that He was the Anointed One sent from the Father.

1. He spoke of His own testimony (vs. 31; cf. Jn. 8:14); the testimony of John the Baptist (vss. 33-35); that of the Father Himself (vs. 37); that which is derived from the Scriptures, the word of God (vss. 38-39); and that of His works (vs. 36).
2. He said of those works, "But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me." The miraculous works of Jesus, fairly considered, can result in no other conclusion.
 - a. Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews who came to Him by night, knew that Jesus had come from God because of the works he had seen Jesus do. He said, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." (Jn. 3:2)
 - b. To this Stalker agrees. He said, "First, He wrought miracles because His Father gave Him these signs as proofs that He had sent Him. Many of the Old Testament prophets had received the same authentication of their mission, and although John, who revived the prophetic function, worked no miracles, as the Gospels inform us with the most simple veracity, it was to be expected that He who was a far greater prophet than the greatest who went before Him, should show even greater signs than any of them of His divine mission. It was a stupendous claim which He made on the faith of men when He announced Himself as the Messiah, and it would have been unreasonable to expect it to be conceded by a nation accustomed to miracles as the signs of a divine mission, if He had wrought none." (64)

II. The Content and Purpose of John's Gospel

A. In his gospel, the apostle John related seven miracles, signs, which Jesus did for the express purpose of getting his readers to believe in Jesus as the Christ so that they might have life in his name. (Jn. 20:30-31)

- B. In commenting on this, Merrill Tenney wrote, "These seven miracles, then, are preeminently *signs* because they point to those aspects of Jesus' ministry in which He demonstrated His transcendent control over the factors of life with which man is unable to cope. Quality, space, time, quantity, natural law, misfortune, and death circumscribe humanity's world. Daily existence is a struggle against their limitations. Christ's superiority over them as revealed by these events called signs was proof of His deity and a clue to understanding what the writer desired to say about Him." (*John: The Gospel of Belief*, 31)
- C. R.C. Trench has an interesting observation on how the miraculous works of Jesus represent His identity especially as John presents them in his gospel.
1. "Eminently significant is another term by which St. John very frequently names the miracles. They are constantly for him simply *works* (v. 36; vii. 21; x. 25, 32, 38; xiv. 11, 12; xv. 24; cf. Matt. xi. 2); as though the wonderful were only the natural form of working for Him who is dwelt in by all the fulness of God; He must, out of necessity of his higher being, put forth these works greater than man's....The great miracle is the Incarnation; all else, so to speak, follows naturally and of course. It is no wonder that he whose name is 'Wonderful (Isai. ix. 6) does works of wonder; the only wonder would be if He did them not." (6-7)
 2. What Trench was saying is that it was just natural for Jesus, based on who He was, to perform works and wonders superior to those of mere men.
- D. Stalker, along the same line of thought, adds, "The miracles of Christ were the natural outflow of the divine fulness which dwelt in Him....It was natural, when such a Being was in the world, that mighty works should manifest themselves in Him. He was Himself the great miracle, of which His particular miracles were merely sparks or emanations. He was the great interruption of the order of nature, or rather a new element which had entered into the order of nature to enrich and ennoble it, and His miracles entered with Him, not to disturb, but to repair its harmony." (65)

III. The Credibility of the Message of Jesus

- A. The miracles of Jesus not only established His identity but also made His message credible.
- B. The healing of the paralytic in Matthew 9:1-8 supports this idea.
1. While in the city of Capernaum, a paralytic was brought to Him to be healed.
 2. Seeing the faith of the man and those who had carried him, He said, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." (vs. 2)
 3. The scribes immediately thought Him to be a blasphemer reckoning that only God can forgive sins but they did not openly express it. Jesus, though, knowing their hearts (which is also something that is the exclusive property of God [Acts 1:24; 15:8]), said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins..." (vss. 4-5)

- C. Jesus' primary reason for coming into the world was not to perform miracles. His goal was to "to seek and to save that which was lost." (Lk. 19:10)
1. The works He performed, though, were a means to that end but just that and no more.
 2. While His miraculous works caused many people to follow Him in order to be healed, fed, etc., He wanted them to follow Him for His message of salvation.
 3. It was for that reason that He used this incident in Capernaum to make that point.
 4. Henry Emerson Fosdick wrote, "When Jesus, therefore, 'healed many,' all Galilee soon heard of him and throngs gathered. At the center of his ministry, as they saw it, not his teaching but his 'mighty works' were paramount. To them he was first and foremost a miracle man...." (*The Man From Nazareth*, 57)
- D. It is evident, then, that Jesus was using the miracle performed on the paralytic to show to all who witnessed it that He had the power to forgive sin and, in reality, that forgiveness of sins was of greater concern to Him than physical healings.
1. By telling the paralytic his sins were forgiven, Jesus emphasized the most important aspect of His sojourn on earth.
 2. Albert Barnes said, "It may seem remarkable, since the man came only to be 'healed,' that Jesus should have first declared his sins forgiven....Jesus might be willing to show his power to forgive sins. Had he stated it without any miracle, the Jews would not have believed it, and even his disciples might have been staggered. In proof of it, he worked a miracle; and no one, therefore, could doubt that he had the power. The miracle was performed in 'express attestation' of the assertion that he had power to forgive sins. As God would not work a miracle to confirm a falsehood or to deceive people, the miracle was a solemn confirmation, on the part of God, that Jesus had the power to forgive sins." (97)
 3. Adam Clarke states, "[For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?] Both are equally easy, and equally difficult; for both require unlimited power to produce them. And everything is equally easy to that power which is unlimited. A universe can be as easily produced by a single act of the divine will as the smallest elementary part of matter." (*Clarke's Commentaries*, Vol. V, 108).
 4. To this, Matthew Henry adds, "He undertakes to make out, that the Son of man, the Mediator, has power on earth to forgive sins;...how he proves it, by his power in the kingdom of nature; his power to cure diseases. Is it not as easy to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, as to say, Arise and walk? He that can cure the disease, whether declaratively as a Prophet, or authoritatively as God, can, in like manner, forgive the sin....This is a general argument to prove that Christ had a divine mission. His miracles, especially his miraculous cures, confirm what he said of himself, that he was the Son of God; the power that appeared in his cures

proved him sent of God; and the pity that appeared in them proved him sent of God to heal and save. The God of truth would not set his seal to a lie." (Vol. III, 67)

Conclusion

1. We can conclude, therefore, that the miracles of Jesus established His role as the Messiah, the Savior of the world.
 - a. In many cases, His miracles were symbols of His primary work, saving lost mankind.
 - b. Mankind, in general, is beset upon by thousands of evils because of sin.
 - a. Everything of an adverse nature which afflicts mankind is a consequence of sin.
 - b. The misery of the world is in the shadow of its sin.
2. When Jesus came working wonders among the people and healing them of their afflictions and diseases, He was, in a way, showing them the deliverance they could have from their greatest affliction, sin.
 - a. I. Howard Marshall wrote, "As the Saviour of men Jesus brought to them the blessings associated with the reign of God. His mighty acts of healing were signs on the physical level of the presence of salvation. The era of fulfilment had come (Mt. 11:2-6), and the disciples of Jesus were privileged to behold it (Lk. 10:23-24)." (*The Work of Christ*, 33)
 - b. Stalker said, "When He (Jesus) healed bodily blindness, it was a type of the healing of the inner eye; when He raised the dead, He meant to suggest that He was the Resurrection and the Life in the spiritual world as well; when He cleansed the leper, His triumph spoke of another over the leprosy of sin; when He multiplied the loaves, he followed the miracle with a discourse on the bread of life; when He stilled the storm, it was an assurance that He could speak to the troubled conscience." (66)
3. The *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* in commenting on the evidential value of the miracles of Jesus, said, "They prove beyond doubt that He had supreme command over Nature; that not only the winds and the sea, but the human soul and body obeyed him....This is the grand fact which the miracles establish. They are not like external evidence performed in attestation of a doctrine. They are direct and eloquent evidence, performed in attestation of the cardinal truth of our faith, that Our Lord possessed powers which belong to God Himself. But they are not less direct evidence of the special office He claimed toward the human race—that of a Saviour. He did not merely work wonders in order that men might believe His assertions about Himself, but His wonderful works, His powers—*virtutes*—were direct evidence of their truth. He proved that He was a Saviour by doing the works of a Saviour, by healing men and women from their diseases of both body and soul....The essential message of the miracles is that they exhibit Our Lord in this character—that of one who has alike the will and the power to save. Such is Our Lord's own application of them in His answer, already quoted, to the disciples of John the Baptist (Mt 11 4.5)." (2064)

The Miracles of Jesus:

Demonstrations of a Power Superior to That of Satan

Introduction

1. As was already noted, a good and honest heart when witnessing the miracles of Jesus would come to the conclusion that He had to be from God for His works could only be accomplished by the power of God.
2. Yet, not all of those who witnessed that power attributed it to God.

I. The Casting Out of the Demon in Matthew 12:22-29

A. A summary of the text.

1. A man was brought to Jesus who was demon-possessed.
2. The demon caused him to be blind and mute. Jesus cast the evil spirit from the man and he was once again able to speak and see.
3. The multitudes were amazed at what had happened. They asked, "Could this be the Son of David?" (vs. 23), a reference to the Messiah, the one who would sit on the throne of David.
4. The Pharisees who witnessed the miracle said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons" (vs. 24).
5. Knowing their response, Jesus used it to teach that His power was the power of God.

B. Jesus' response to the charge of the Pharisees.

1. In His response, He first used the logical argument that a "house divided against itself will not stand." He said, "If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?" (vss. 25-26)
2. His next argument shows how illogical their charge was.
 - a. He knew they claimed that some among them had the ability to exorcize demons so He asked, "If I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges." (vs. 27)
 - b. By this He showed that whatever they said of Him, they, in turn, would have to say of themselves.
3. His third argument established not only that His power was of God but also that the kingdom of God was coming upon them. He stated, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man?" (vss. 28-29)

C. *Nelson's* states, "Jesus also understood His miracles as evidences of the presence of the kingdom in His ministry (Matt. 11:1-5; 12:28). Every miracle story was a sign that God's

salvation was present. But not only did the kingdom come; it came in great power, because the dead were raised (Is. 26:19; Luke 7:11-15) and Satan was bound (Mark 3:27).” (847)

II. It Was Important for Jesus to Firmly Establish His Power Over Satan

- A. It was Satan who had a death grip on mankind.
 - 1. Because all had sinned, all were doomed to die. (Rom. 3:23; 6:23)
 - 2. Man was helpless to escape his clutches until Jesus came to grant victory over sin and death.
- B. In explanation of the power that cast out the demon in Matthew 12, David Brown said, “If this expulsion of Satan is, and can be, by no other than the Spirit of God, then is his Destroyer already in the midst of you, and that kingdom which is destined to supplant his, is already rising on its ruins.” (*Jamieson, Fausset & Brown’s Commentary*, 73)
- C. Jesus had to bring the dominion of Satan to ruins and bind the one who was over it so that He might grant freedom from sin and its penalty to all who would submit to His rule over them.
- D. Albert Barnes said, “The reign of Satan over people, and the reign of God are in opposition. If God expels Satan from his dominion over people, then his reign has come.” (131)

III. Christ: Man’s Only Hope in Overcoming Satan

- A. The power of Satan is great.
 - 1. Not a single person who ever lived, other than the Savior Himself, has been able to overcome it.
 - 2. All have succumbed to his power and his wiles at one time or another.
- B. The only hope is Jesus Christ.
 - 1. The miracles that He performed while on the earth, such as casting out the demon in Matthew 12, demonstrate His superiority over Satan.
 - 2. His resurrection from the grave punctuates that superiority forever.
- C. How fitting it was, then, that when the Jews who had witnessed the exorcism of the demonic man in Matthew 12 demanded a *sign* from Jesus that He answered them by saying, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Mt. 12:39-40).
 - 1. He was speaking of the resurrection, the ultimate sign, the ultimate triumph over sin, Satan, and death.
 - 2. The victor over Satan is able to grant victory to all those who would follow Him.

Series Conclusion

- A. "What manner of man is this?" (Mark 4:41 - KJV)
 - 1. He is like no other.
 - 2. He is Jesus the Christ, the Son of God.
- B. The confession of Peter. (Mt. 16:15-17)
 - 1. A summary of the text.
 - a. Jesus, prior to His announcement that He would build His church, asked His disciples, "But who do you say that I am." (vs. 15)
 - b. The apostle Peter responded, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (vs. 16)
 - c. Jesus told him he was blessed "for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven." (vs. 17)
 - 2. How had the Father revealed this fact to Peter?
 - a. He had heard the testimony of John the Baptist.
 - b. He had studied the Scriptures which contained prophecies that were fulfilled by Jesus.
 - c. There was the matter of inspiration but there were many things that the disciples at this time did not fully understand concerning Jesus and the nature of His mission.
 - d. One fact is clear. Peter was a witness to countless miracles, healings, signs, and wonders that Jesus performed.
 - 3. Peter was able to know the claims that Jesus made concerning Himself were true because the power of God had been demonstrated to him over and over again. Though later, in a moment of weakness, he would momentarily deny Jesus, as he stood before Him that day in Caesarea Philippi, he could not deny the overwhelming evidence of the miracles and teachings of Jesus—Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.
- C. It was Peter who, on the day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2, used those miracles as evidence that Jesus, the one whom they had placed on the cross, was who He claimed to be. He said, "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know — ..." (vs. 22)
- D. Peter again, during his discourse at the home of Cornelius, told "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him." (Acts 10:38)
 - 1. The one who had once denied Him would never deny Him again. He had witnessed the "miracles, wonders, and signs" which prove beyond doubt that Jesus is the Christ.

2. We must not deny Him today.
 - a. The miracles of Jesus recorded in the gospels provide ample evidence to keep us from it.
 - b. The *Pictorial Bible Dictionary* states, "Miracles are an absolutely essential element in Christianity. If Jesus Christ is not God manifest in the flesh, our faith is a silly myth. If He did not arise from the dead in bodily form, the grave being empty and His appearance being recognizable, then we are yet in our sins and of all men most miserable....If the miracle of grace is not verifiable, the transformation of the life of the one who puts his faith in Jesus as his Lord and Saviour, then our Christian Gospel is a miserable fraud."
(546)
- E. The gospel is not a fraud. Rather it is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16) because Jesus, the miracle worker, the Messiah, the Son of God, willingly gave His life to save all who would obey Him from the heart.

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