

THAT YOU MAY HAVE LIFE

(A Study of the Gospel of John)

Isa. 9:6-7 ⁶ For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ Of the increase of *His* government and peace
There will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even forever.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

INTRODUCTION: When **Jesus** walked upon the earth, He **performed many** astounding **miracles**.

- **He multiplied fish and bread and fed 5,000 families.**
- **He calmed the storm tossed sea by His command.**
- **He expelled demons who were controlling and devastating the lives of people they possessed.**
- **He made the lame walk,**
- **the blind see, and**
- **called for the dead man to walk out his tomb.**

But folks, when we consider that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God and that all power in heaven and earth belonged to Him, **what really should amaze us is not the miracles He did, but the ones He did not do.**

Jesus could have

- made every sick person well
- made every poor person rich
- made every dead person come out of the grave.

He could have, but He didn't. In fact, a frank evaluation of His ministry based on the four gospels shows us that Jesus practiced an economy of miracles.

Diligent students identify 37 miracles that are specifically described in one of the gospels. That's barely beyond one a month. Now that does not mean that there were

not others not recorded. John only tells of eight of Jesus' miracles, but he clearly says there were more than what he wrote down. I doubt that we know exactly how many miracles Jesus did, but my point is that the Biblical evidence is that we should probably count them by the dozens and not by the hundreds.

Now, I can tell that my exposing this fact disappoints some of you, but hear this: Do not be disappointed or discouraged by this.

- **The reason Jesus did not perform more miracles is not because of any lack of power.**
- **It was not because he had a limited allowance from His Father in heaven that restricted Him to only one miracle every four weeks.**
- **Like everything else in the very short human life of Jesus, the performance of every miracle was purposeful.**
 - It was not the purpose of Jesus to eradicate sickness in this world.
 - It was not the purpose of our Lord to grant every man and woman worldly riches, for He knew that riches made it harder for a man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.
 - It was not even our Savior's purpose to cause people to live forever in bodies stained by sin and a world tainted with the power of the evil one.

No! The purpose of Jesus was far greater than those things, far more expansive than benevolent minds could imagine then or now when we think what we would do if we had the miraculous power of Jesus at our disposal.

Jesus declared His purpose plainly and put it simply.

Luke 19:10 ... the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Now, have you noticed how clearly and carefully the Holy Spirit has revealed this to the Apostle John as he penned his gospel? In his writing, John only describes eight of the miracles of Jesus. Now John certainly knows that Jesus performed many others, in fact he says so. But he writes about these eight for the very same reason why Jesus only did dozens of miracles, rather than thousands. John says,

John 20:31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Every miracle Jesus did was purposeful beyond the solving of an immediate problem. Every miracle was also a sign. It signified something. It carried a message, and the message had something to do with the lost being saved, with people receiving the life Jesus came to offer to them, life eternal and abundant.

So folks, **when we read the account of one of the miracles of our Lord, we ought to ask,**

- **“What is the message here?”**
- **What is the Lord showing me about how I can have eternal and abundant life?”**

In our study through the Gospel of John, we are near the end of chapter four, and we will go into the first part of chapter five. Today we will read the account of two of the miracles of Jesus, and ask those questions.

John 4:46–54 46 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. 48 Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you *people* see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe.”

49 The nobleman said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies!”

50 Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.” So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, “Your son lives!”

52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” 53 So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives.” And he himself believed, and his whole household.

54 This again *is* the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

The first thing I want to note out of this text is an observation.

GENUINE FAITH IS PROMPTED BY THE WORD OF GOD.

- The nobleman from Capernaum had heard about Jesus.
- He traveled from Capernaum to Cana (17 miles) to implore Jesus to heal his son.
- He had probably heard that at the word of Jesus, the water at the wedding feast was transformed into wine.
- He had heard or perhaps seen other miraculous works of Jesus which He performed as He spoke a word.
- What is important for us to see here is that **it was the Word of Jesus, the Word of God, that caused faith to arise in the soul of a distressed father.**

Which of us is not at times in need of more faith, greater faith, stronger faith?

- **Nothing stirs faith in times of doubt**

- **Nothing promotes faith in times of uncertainty**
- **Nothing strengthens faith in times of weakness**

Better than the Word of God!

That is why it is important to read the Bible regularly.

It is best to read the Bible systematically rather than just letting it fall open to whatever passage.

- Sometimes God in His gracious providence will in a time of need let our bibles fall open to something like

Psalm 18:2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

- But sometimes He may let our eyes fall on something like

1 Chronicles 26:18 As for the Parbar on the west, *there were four on the highway and two at the Parbar.*

- If you read the Bible systematically, straight through, with your Lifechange Group Lesson, with a daily devotional you like, picking a book at a time and reading it – just some system to bring the Word of God into your life, you will be amazed at how often the Holy Spirit will cause just the right verse or whole passage to speak the word to your heart that you need to hear!
- This is a primary reason you need to be involved in small group Bible study!
- This is why you need to be in worship and sitting under the preaching of the Word of God. It is not because I have anything from Mike Claunch that is great to hear, but God's Word is great to hear and it stirs faith. It builds faith. It strengthens faith!

Secondly, would you notice with me a characteristic of genuine faith?

GENUINE FAITH BELIEVES GOD'S WORD.

This man refused to be discouraged.

Even when Jesus probed him with a firm statement.

The nobleman remained resolute in his request.

John 4:49 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"

Why did he remain insistent? Because he believed that Jesus could heal his boy!

And then Jesus says to him

John 4:50 Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.”

And do you know the rest of that verse?

So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.

And do you know how much this father believed? Listen intently to what happened next.

John 4:51–52 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, “Your son lives!” 52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”

Did you catch this? What did the daddy do after Jesus said his boy was healed?

He stayed in Cana!!!!!!

Jesus healed his son around 1 p.m. Capernaum was about a seven hour walk. It would be best not to go and arrive after dark, but not impossible for a man worried about a dying son. But the nobleman wasn't worried. He believed the Word of the Lord. He did not need to put himself at risk by traveling at dark, so he waited until the next day, because he knew when he arrived, his boy would not only still be alive, he would be well.

He believed the Word of God.

GENUINE FAITH BELIEVES GOD'S WORD.

- What word has God spoken to you through His Word of late?
- What word from Him are you wrestling with?
- Struggling to believe?

This morning, submit your will to the Lord and speak to Him in your heart and say, I will be a man of genuine faith, I will be a woman of faith, Lord I believe Your Word.

John 5:1–15 1 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. 4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. 5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been *in that condition* a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”

7 The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

8 Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.” 9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.

And that day was the Sabbath. 10 The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed."

11 He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.' "

12 Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" 13 But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in *that* place. 14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

15 The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

One principle thing I want us to draw from this story about faith.

GENUINE FAITH ACTS UPON THE WORD GOD GIVES.

- The man had been paralyzed for 38 years.
- Who knows how many years he had been carried each morning to the pool in hopes of a miracle and had been disappointed?
- But when Jesus told him to rise and walk, the Scripture says

John 5:9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.

Obedience has two parts

- Doing what God tells you to do.
- Doing it when God tells you to do it.

CONCLUSION:

1. Do you need faith this morning, more faith, stronger faith? Then commit to the Lord today to get yourself more under the Word of God by reading, by small group study, by the preaching of the Word.
2. Do you want eternal life? Believe what Jesus says called the gospel. Act on it. Now!
3. Do you want life more abundant? Have your life filled with the Word. When you hear it, believe it, do it, immediately. You will have more abundant life!