



GOING DEEPER: WHEN PIGS FLY



MIRACLES IN THE BOOK OF JOHN (WEEK 2 OF 4)

(JOHN 6:16-21) JESUS WALKING ON WATER

We have been looking at the phenomenal events in Jesus' life called miracles. John refers to them as "signs" that direct people to see Jesus as God's promised Messiah. There are many signs in life we can easily recognize, and ones we can just as easily misunderstand or ignore. When this happens, the significance of the sign is lost. We often hear the phrase, "Actions speak louder than words." In some ways, the adage applies to Jesus' miracles. His actions speak. The question is, what are His actions saying, and what are His "signs" pointing to? How are they significant in our lives? The miracle of Jesus walking on the water may have been a turning point in life for John and the rest of Jesus' disciples. Let's take a look at the possible significance of this sign for His disciples and for us today.

- 1) Why should we believe and trust in Jesus alone for life here and for life in the world to come? How does John express this abundant life in Christ? (John 20:30-31, 3:16-18, 3:36, 4:14, 5:21-24, 6:35, John 10:10-15), (1 John 1:1-4)
- 2) Why was Jesus not with the disciples? (John 6:16-21, Mark 4:45-52) They are exhausted by feeding 20,000 people earlier that day and now are trying to row through a stormy sea. How did fear paralyze them? How does fear and its companions—worry and anxiety—rob us of the life God intends for us?
- 3) What are the only words Jesus says in this miracle? How do these words connect with the "I Am" statements that John frequently uses? What kind of response did Jesus expect when He told the disciples, "Do not be afraid"?
- 4) Mark 4:48 says Jesus saw the disciples were "getting nowhere." With Jesus' presence "now here," how does 6:21 describe the progress to the other side of the sea? How is Jesus "now here" for us when we encounter fear?
- 5) As Jesus was walking on the sea, Mark 4:48 says He "meant to pass by them," but when He saw the disciples fear He got into the boat instead. Describe the "gladness" the disciples may have felt when Jesus entered their boat. Would they be just as "glad" if He was with them the entire trip?
- 6) What significance does the miracle of Jesus walking on the water have for the disciples? For us?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: Thank you for sending Jesus to be our comforting presence during storms that paralyze our life. Keep us aware that Jesus has already conquered the devil, sin, and death, and that nothing can stop Him from bringing us home to be with You eternally. Inspire us to point others to this Good News, so they can share in our abundant life in Jesus. Amen.



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MIRACLES IN THE BOOK OF JOHN (WEEK 3 OF 4)

(JOHN 9:1-41) JESUS HEALS A MAN BORN BLIND

John's Gospel is famous for the "I Am" sayings of Jesus. "I Am the bread of life" was Jesus' claim at the feeding of the 5000. When Jesus walked on the water, He said "Be comforted, I Am". When Jesus says "I Am," He is claiming the name of God for Himself. For example, when He says, "Before Abraham was born, I Am," He is saying He was God earlier in history. These "I Am's" often connect to the miraculous signs in John. Before healing the man born blind, Jesus says, "I Am the light of the world." God is the one who gives real light—physical and spiritual.

- 1) Joshua Bell is a famous violinist whose experience in a subway was used in a sermon illustration at Messiah. Watch him play in a D.C. Metro station as hundreds of people walk by and ignore him. You-tube video: (https://youtu.be/hnOPu0_YWhw). Bell made \$32.17 for his efforts in the station. Many people have paid hundreds of dollars to listen to him in concert halls. Like the commuters who failed to notice a musical genius in their midst, could we be similarly moving through life so fast that we miss the miracles and majesty of the signs God is giving us?
- 2) Few of us are physically blind; however, we all experience darkness. How does being in the dark give us a taste of what blindness might be like? Of the many healings John could have recorded, why do you think he recorded the miracle of a blind man receiving sight?
- 3) The blind man is not alone in being "in the dark" in this story. John involves many different characters who are similarly situated. Describe the darkness of each character and their need for the light of Jesus.
 - vs.2 The Disciples - *"who sinned, this man or his parents, that he be born blind?"*
 - vs.8 The Neighbors - *"Is this the man who used to sit and beg?"*
 - vs.16 The Pharisees - *"this man is not from God since he does not keep the sabbath."*
 - vs.16 The Others - *"How can a man who is a sinner show such signs?"*
 - vs. 21 The Parents - *"we do not know who opened his eyes? ask him."*
 - vs. 24 The Pharisees (Again) - *"this man is a sinner."*
- 4) How do the following prophecies from Isaiah connect to the healing of the blind man? (Isaiah 42: 1-6, Isaiah 53:4-11, Isaiah 35:5-10)
- 5) Jesus is the only one not "blind" in this story. How do His "I Am the Light of the World" statements proclaim Him as the giver of true physical and spiritual light? (John 8:12, John 1:1-5, John 12:36 & 46)
- 6) Jesus came into a very dark world and tells us in the Great Commission to go into it. How are we to bring light into a dark world? (Matthew 5:14). How does John 4:4 emphasize the urgency? How do verses 5-6 give us confidence? Why do you think John uses the word "anointed" to describe the placement of mud onto the blind man's eyes? How does this action apply to our mission to be light to the world?

Prayer: Thank you Heavenly Father, for sending Your son Jesus to be the light in our dark world. Like the man healed from blindness, teach us to be a powerful witness to others as we say, "I once was blind, but now I see." Amen.



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MIRACLES IN THE BOOK OF JOHN (WEEK 4 OF 4)

(JOHN 11:17-27) JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD

The reason John wrote about miraculous signs is so we may believe that Jesus is the *Messiah*, and by believing we might have life (John 20:30-31). The Book of John is a love story of Jesus, God's living Word. We have seen Jesus as the bread of life who feeds our souls. We've seen him walking on water to comfort us when fear paralyzes us. Jesus is the light of the world that enables us to see truth in the darkness of our own lives. In the climactic story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus is lovingly and vividly portrayed as the "resurrection and the life." Those who believe in Him shall have life, for now and forever.

- 1) We do not always experience life as God intended. How was life meant to be? (Genesis 1:26) Why do we physically die? How did we spiritually die? (Genesis 3). How was the greater tragedy of forever living in this sin-infested world avoided?
- 2) (Read John 11:1-6) Mary and Martha sent an urgent request for Jesus to intervene on their brother's behalf. How do Jesus' words "this sickness will not end in death" indicate a bigger narrative? Why might His actions imply that Jesus simply did not care, especially to Mary and Martha?
- 3) (Read John 11:7-16) How do the disciples misunderstand Jesus' desire to "wake Lazarus up"? Why would it be easy for them to question Him when He said, "I'm glad I was not there when Lazarus had died"? How is Jesus leading them to see a bigger eternal story?
- 4) (Read John 11:17-37) What might Martha and Mary's words, "If you have been here, he would not have died," tell us about their faith in Jesus? How do you think they understood Jesus' statement, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall live"?
- 5) (Read John 11:38-44) What was Martha's response to Jesus' words "take away the stone"? What might this tell us of her understanding of "I am the resurrection and the life"? Why didn't Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead with words like "rise up," or "let there be life," or "live Lazarus!?" What words did He use instead? How was "the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it" revealed? (11:4)
- 6) What two contrasting responses did the Jews have as they witnessed this miraculous sign? (John 11:45 & John 11:53). The crucifixion and a tomb were deterrents used to control the citizenry. What kind of miraculous sign did they become instead? Connect with John 20:31.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father: Thank you for sending Your son Jesus to live with us, so that He might die for us. Assure us that we have life in His name, that He is the resurrection and the life, and that He has turned the tomb into a portal for life everlasting. In His name we pray, Amen.