



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“Miracle: Part I”

Ps. James Lowe– December 6, 2015

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

1. What do you understand a miracle to be?
2. What's the greatest miracle you have personally witnessed?
3. If you could to have a super power, what would it be?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org>

And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” Matthew 9:35-38

In this season of Christmas, we celebrate the greatest miracle of history; we celebrate the miracle of God becoming man in Jesus Christ. We may go through the season, celebrating a “miracle” while in desperate need of a miracle ourselves. When the promise of the birth of Jesus was given, Isaiah prophesied he would be called “Emanuel,” which means God with us. If God is with us, if we sing Emanuel, if we celebrate his advent, then we can be assured that he is with us, and he has the power do any miracle.

In the passage above, we see that Jesus performed miracles everywhere he went. He did so, because as he preached the Gospel, he had compassion for people. He was concerned for the eternal state of their souls, as well as for their current situation and affliction. Jesus didn't want them to be harassed and helpless. Neither does he want us to be that way today.

We will look at John 9:1-41, the story of the man born blind whom Jesus healed, to learn some facts about the way and the reasons God chooses to make miracles. (Read John 9:1-41)

Miracles show God's compassion

Jesus had compassion for the man that everybody else saw as a cursed one. The greatest miracle is how Jesus sees us and rescues us. The first thing we need for a miracle to happen is that Jesus would see our situation with his eyes of compassion.

The greatest affliction can be the way people see, despise and harass us; then, we end up believing we are worthless. Jesus comes and restores our value. Nevertheless, the harassment the blind man had suffered from people prepared him to be willing to receive some mud made out of saliva, and go wash in the pool. This man didn't have any pride left. He had suffered so much that he didn't question God's method of healing. He took the chance, and received Jesus' touch. The very circumstances we are facing, may be preparing us to receive God's touch.

Jesus showed his compassion, a compassion so great that he violated the religious traditions. Jesus healed the man on a Sabbath. He went later and met the man so he would not only experience a physical healing, but he would have a personal relationship with him. During the whole story, while the rest of the people were seeing this man, at best, as a case study, Jesus saw him as an individual in desperate need of a miracle, in desperate need of a Savior. Jesus gave him what he needed. Jesus is the answer to everything people need.

Miracles Reveal God's Glory

When asked why that man had been born blind, Jesus responded: no one had sinned; but this man's life will reveal the glory of God. Most of the people that were present in John 9, believed in miracles. They believed in the miracles God had performed in the Old Testament, but did not believe nor seek for a miracle in the present. Eighty per cent of people in America believe in miracles. They believe in the miracles of the past, but don't accept miracles in the present.

The religious leaders used their authority to bring intimidation to the former blind man; yet, none of their efforts could deny the fact that a miracle had happened. A blind man was healed. There was evidence of his healing. There were witnesses of his former blindness and his current sight. The glory of God was revealed in an unprecedented way. With the very words of the blind man, "*Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.*" We need to pray for miracles because they reveal God's glory.

Miracles Face People with a Choice

At the witness of such a great miracle, the religious leaders were looking for arguments to deny or at least question its validity. They went to great extents to interrogate the man and his parents. They used their position to bully people not to recognize the miracle. The reason they went to such extents, is that to accept miracles, is to accept Jesus as Lord and God. People choose to deny miracles, so they don't have to respond accordingly to an almighty God. The world tries to ridicule miracles to silence the voice that may confront them with their sinfulness.

On the other hand, the blind man, who had experienced the miracle, and met the ONE that healed his illness, that saw his need, that restored his value, responded by saying: "*Lord, I believe, and he worshiped him (v. 38).*" Miracles won't make a person believe, if he chooses not to. Miracles will nurture the faith of those who are desperate to know the truth, by showing God's great love, compassion, power and glory. Miracles open heaven and allow us to see God in our situation.

As we celebrate the miracle of incarnation, let's remember the Miracle Worker is with us, and he is the same today as he was 2000 years ago. It was Jesus' compassion that led him to reveal his glory by performing miracles so people would be drawn to him.

APPLICATION QUESTION (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another.

1. What do you need God to do that is outside of your own power or resources? How do you think Jesus sees your situation?
2. What keeps you from praying for miracles more often? How can you overcome that obstacle?
3. How can you use the God-given power and authority to share the Gospel with somebody?

PRAYER:

1. Pray for God to perform the miracle you are waiting on God to do.
2. Pray God to increase your faith to believe in his power and mercy.
3. Pray for God to show up in the life of the person you are trying to reach out to for Christ.