

● “The Works I Do... Testify Of Me” – Part 2

(John 10:24-25)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Three weeks ago, we began looking at the recorded **miracles** of Jesus and their importance to our faith. And I want to return to that topic today in hopes of finishing my thoughts.
 - A. Miracles, of course, are far more than just amazing events or accomplishments, but are as the **Merriam-Webster Dictionary** rightly defines them, “extraordinary events **manifesting divine intervention** in human affairs.
 - B. The miracles of Jesus are particularly amazing in that His presence here on the earth as “God in the flesh” *manifested divine intervention in human affairs*—a miracle doing miracles!
2. My purpose in examining Jesus’ miracles is that I believe the Bible’s claim that these miracles are in fact strong **proof** that Jesus is the Christ, the very Son of God, as was stated by...
 - A. Jesus (John 10:24-25 – “The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, “How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.”²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe; **the works that I do in My Father’s name, these testify of Me.**”).
 - B. John (John 20:30-31 – “Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but **these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**; and that believing you may have life in His name.”).
- 3. Of course, the question we struggle with is how we can know that the **miracles of Jesus** recorded in the Scriptures are **real**, that **they actually happened**.
 - A. Answering this question is the focus of these lessons.
 - B. As we return to this issue, I want to begin by reminding you of some things we looked at last time that give us some perspective on the miracles of Jesus that impact our faith.
 - ● ● C. We saw how if the miracles of Jesus were spread out over the whole of Israel, it only covered 8000-10000 sq. miles, or less than a 4th of Tennessee, or about the area of New Jersey.
 - D. We saw how the miracles of Jesus performed in His Galilean ministry were mostly confined to a space of 8-10 miles long on the northern end of the Sea of Galilee.
 - i. So, in other words, Jesus did the bulk of His miracles an area 1/3 the distance from here to Lawrenceburg.
 - ii. If we eliminate the miracles seen only by Jesus’ close disciples, we have 31+ incidences of a miracle being performed in front of multiple witnesses who were not disciples.
 - iii. 22 of these incidences claim *crowds* were present, 11 being *large crowds*.
 - iv. 6 occasions in Matthew alone where Jesus is said to have done *multiple miracles* at one time before *very large crowds*.
 - v. There are two occasions where 4,000/5000 men, not counting women and children were fed, indicating easily 12,000 and then 15,000 people experienced being miraculously fed by Jesus.
 - vi. What is claimed by the gospels is that over three short years Jesus performed **100’s**, even **1000’s**, of miracles before at **10s of thousands of witnesses** in a very small area.
4. With these points in mind, I want to focus today on some more miracles performed by Jesus, not in Galilee, but in **Jerusalem**, the very heart of the Jewish nation.
 - A. I do this in hopes that as before, you will gain a greater appreciation of these miracles and see their positive value to your faith.
 - B. In the end, I hope you will come to faith in Jesus and be saved, or that your faith in Jesus will grow to help assure your salvation in Him.

BODY:

- **I. Miracles in/near Jerusalem:**
 - A. To grasp the significance of these miracles, you should know that this city covered less than a square mile and was home to 25,000-50,000 Jews.

1. Jerusalem's population would grow to 150,000-200,000 during festivals!
2. This city was quite full when Jesus' miracles were said to have occurred.
- B. At the pool of Bethesda Jesus is claimed to have healed a **lame man (John 5:1-18)**.
 1. Note the specific details about the man and the situation in which this healing took place.
 - a. Before the miracle:
 - i. It took place during a **feast of the Jews**, which would mean Jerusalem would have been packed with Jews, indicating a great many would have seen/heard of this!
 - ii. It happened at a **specific place** where many sick, blind, lame, and withered people continually gathered in hopes of being healed when its waters were stirred.
 - iii. The lame man had been lame for **38 years** indicating:
 - 1) The ease at which such a man could have been identified. People would have known of him and his condition.
 - 2) The amazing power Jesus showed in healing him, seeing his muscles would have had no strength, training, etc.
 - iv. He had apparently been there at this pool **more than on this one occasion**, seeing he mentions how previously others had gone into the waters before him.
 - b. Note the specifics after the healing took place:
 - i. The man was seen openly among the many Jews present at the feast.
 - ii. The Jews accused him of breaking the Sabbath in carrying his pallet.
 - iii. Once healed he entered the temple, though he may have not been allowed before (if Lev. 21:17-18 applied), which would have created quite a memorable stir.
 - iv. The Jews *persecuted* Jesus for *healing on the Sabbath* and supposed Him guilty of *blasphemy* for claiming equality with God.
 2. Why would the disciples have hoped a fabricated miracle such as this would have ever been believed?
 - a. What sense would it make to claim it happened in such a small place as Jerusalem, during a feast day with so many witnessing, to a specific man, with a specific aftermath of criticism and persecution?
 - b. Did this man exist, and these events take place? The truth of this record could have easily been checked, including those about the man himself! For, if John was alive to write this, there would be those who would have witnessed still alive as well.
 - c. To fabricate a charge of *blasphemy* concerning Jesus would have only served to cloud the amazing nature of this event...unless it all happened just as it was presented.
- C. Outside the temple Jesus is claimed to have healed of a man **born blind (John 8:58-9:11)**.
 1. Jesus saw this man as Jesus was leaving the Temple where they were wanting to stone Him for blasphemy, having claimed to be "I AM," or Yahweh/Jehovah, which indicates *there was much attention on Jesus at that time* (8:58-9:1).
 2. Claiming that Jesus healed this man at that time outside the temple is significant because:
 - a. This would have been a very *public* miracle
 - b. It involved a man who was personally known by many, as well as **known of** by a great number of people, to have been blind and to have continually begged by the temple!
 - c. Think about how man thousands of people would have seen this man!
 - 3. **Was there or was there not such a blind beggar healed by Jesus?**
 - a. To claim this man existed, that he was blind from birth, that he sat outside the temple and begged regularly, and that he was healed by Jesus right outside the temple is all a fabrication of John is *incredible*!
 - b. Such an outrageous, unproveable, claim would have been easily dismissed by the Jews and used as justification for rejection of Jesus and the gospel!
 - c. Yet, Jews believed in Jesus, and they believed in great numbers. So, why was that true?
- D. I also want to include the account of Jesus **raising Lazarus** from the dead, though it happened in the city of Bethany two miles from Jerusalem (John 11:1-3, 17-19, 38-48).

1. Claiming Jesus did this miracle is a most significant thing because:
 - a. It was said to have been witnessed by a great many Jews.
 - b. It involved a man known by many people to have not only died, but to have been dead for four days *before Jesus arrived*.
 - c. This same large group that knew Lazarus had been dead four days also witnessed his resurrection to physical wholeness!
 - d. It claims that some honestly evaluated the miracle and *believed*, while others went away and *told the Pharisees*.
 - e. It also states that Lazarus became famous in that area with crowds coming to see him because he had been raised from the dead and a source of faith in Jesus (Jn. 12:9-11 – “The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead.¹⁰ But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also; ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus.”).
 2. Did this or did this not happen?
 - a. Was there a man named Lazarus in Bethany that Jesus knew that had sisters named Mary and Martha?
 - b. Did this man die, was he put in a tomb, and was he in that tomb four days?
 - c. Did Jesus raise this man whole and unscathed by decay in front of this crowd of people?
 - d. Did people believe while others went and told the Pharisees of Jesus’ miracle?
 - e. Did crowds come to see him because they heard/knew he had been raised?
 3. To claim this kind of miracle and response to it happened just two miles from Jerusalem would, again, be ludicrous if it were not known by the Jews to be true!
 - a. How easy it would have been to determine whether these things were true! If John was alive to write these things, there were people alive who would have witnessed them!
 - b. How do you lie about such matters, especially with such detail, and hope for any success among such a hostile crowd as the Jews?
 - c. Yet, the first words preached at Pentecost after reading from Joel was “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know” (Acts 2:22)!
- **II. We can trust the Bible’s record of Jesus’ miracles!**
- A. For, how could the apostles and writers of the N.T. have hoped to succeed in lying about Jesus...
 - 1. Performing in His Galilean ministry **100’s+** of prominent **miracles** witnessed by **10s of 1000s of people in an area of only 8-10 miles?**
 - 2. Did truly amazing miracles in public and **in Jerusalem** and its immediate vicinity, unless these were also events known to be true by the Jews and likely others as well?
 - B. Do not forget that the apostles and prophets who wrote and preached of Christ’s miracles **never recanted** despite suffering and dying for doing so!
 1. Why do this unless they knew it to be true!
 2. Peter (2 Pet. 1:16-18 – “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.¹⁷ For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”¹⁸ and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”).
 3. John (1 Jn. 1:1-3 – “What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—² and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ what we have seen and

heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”).

- C. There are secular references to Jesus’ miracles.
 1. **Josephus**, the Jewish historian, wrote that Jesus “was a doer of wonderful **works** (*paradoxa*)” and who “drew over to him many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles” (1987, 18:3:3).
 - a. *Paradoxa* is the same word used in Luke 5:26 to describe the **healing works** of Jesus.
 - b. Why would Josephus describe Jesus like this if nothing like this ever happened, was ever talked about, etc.?
 2. The **Jewish enemies** of Christ in their *Babylonian Talmud* stated, “On the eve of the Passover Yeshu [Jesus] was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, ‘He is going forth to be stoned because **he has practiced sorcery** and enticed Israel to apostasy....’ But since nothing was brought forward in his favour he was **hanged** on the eve of Passover” (Shachter, 1994, 43a)
 - a. Why would the enemies of Jesus accuse Him of **sorcery** if there were no miracles performed by Him?
 - b. Does not this charge seem to indicate that the Jewish leaders were in a predicament because they wanted to kill Jesus but knew the people had seen His amazing works?

CONCLUSION:

1. I hope I have shown that the record of Jesus’ miracles can be trusted and, therefore, that they are in fact proof that He is the Christ, the Son of God.
2. And it is my hope that your faith has grown stronger or that you are now convinced to put your faith in Jesus as your Lord and Christ and choose to respond to the gospel today in R-C-BP so your sins can be forgiven and you can live in the hope of eternal life in Heaven for the faithful.
3. Will you come to Jesus today?