

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

(Part One – Introduction to series)

TEXT: John 6:26-35

INTRODUCTION: The Western world's preoccupation with miracles comes and goes over time. In the Age of Reason, the miracles of Christ and His apostles were either denied or explained away. Thomas Jefferson composed his own New Testament by stripping it of Christ's incarnation, resurrection, and miracles.

By the 20th century, however, the pendulum had swung the other way. There was a revival of interest in miracles and the sign gifts as Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement swept over much of the world, crossing denominational barriers. "Claim your miracle today!" is still the buzzword of many pastors and TV evangelists, pandering to the fascination of the masses with the sensational and supernatural.

It cannot be denied that the New Testament writers claimed that Jesus of Nazareth was a miracle-worker. More than 30 definite miracles of various types are ascribed to Christ in the gospels. Why did He perform them? What do they prove? Does He expect us to reproduce them? These are important questions that demand an answer. No one can understand the mission of Jesus unless he believes in His miracles.

OUTLINE: Before we examine these miracles individually, we need to understand several characteristics of miracles in general.

I. The Purport of "Miracle" (meaning)

- A.** "Dunamis" – the mighty power of God
- B.** "Teras" – wonder
- C.** "Ergon" – work
- D.** "Semeion" – a sign for teaching

II. The Purpose for Christ's Miracles

- A.** To point to His deity (Mk. 2:7)
- B.** To support His Messianic claims (Isa. 35:3-6; Matt. 11:5,6, Jn. 3:2; 10:24-25)
- C.** To illustrate deeper spiritual truth (Jn. 6:32-35)
- D.** To demonstrate Christ's compassion and mercy (Matt. 14:14; Lk. 7:13)

III. The Periods of Miracles

- A.** The giving of the Law under Moses (Ex. 14:31)
- B.** The contending with apostasy under Elijah and Elisha (1 Kgs. 18:36-39)

- C. The attesting to truth with Christ's first advent (Jn. 3:2)
- D. The establishing of the new covenant and church under the Apostles (Heb. 2:14; Acts 14:3)

IV. The Passing of Sign Gifts

- A. Tongues (1 Cor. 13:8; 14:21,22)
- B. Healings and predictive prophecy (Eph. 2:20; 2 Cor. 12:12)

CONCLUSION: The miracles of Jesus bear powerful witness to His divine mission. It is impossible to separate the two. Any teaching or preaching about Christ that omits His miracles or discounts their importance amounts to a distortion of His work as our Redeemer. We cannot understand Christ if we do not receive His miracles that culminated in His own resurrection, proving that "all power" has been given unto Him in heaven and in earth. He is the One Who empower us as we obediently proclaim His saving gospel.