

Title:            **“STRANGE THINGS”**  
Text:             Luke 5:26  
Subject:        *Paradoxes Believers See and Experience*  
Date:            Sunday Morning – January 27, 2008  
                      Rescue Baptist Church — Rescue, CA

Introduction:

On a certain day during our Lord’s earthly ministry, a great number of people spent a good part of the day in the presence of the Son of God; and when the day was over, ***“They were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things today.”*** That is my subject – **“STRANGE THINGS.”**

**J. C. Ryle** — “The word translated ‘*strange things*’ is only used in this place in the New Testament. It is literally ‘paradoxes,’ things contrary to all common opinion and ordinary experience.”

God’s ways are not our ways; and his thoughts are not our thoughts. In fact, everything the natural man, or the lost religious man thinks about God and grace, salvation and providence, Christ and righteousness is always wrong. **The natural man does not and cannot know or in any way, to any degree understand...**

- The Grace of God.
- The Lord Jesus Christ.
- The People of God.
- The Work of God.

These are all strange things to those who are strangers to grace. Yet, the believer looks on those things the world calls strange and knows that, truly, his mercies and compassions are new every morning.

**Proposition:** Those who know the Lord have seen and experienced many strange things which cause them to be filled with wonder and adoration.

**Divisions:**

1. The Strange Things Of That Particular Day.
2. The Strange Things Of Our Lord’s Day.
3. The Strange Things That Are To Be Seen In Our Day.
4. The Strange Things Which Shall Be Seen In That Eternal Day.

**IN THE TEXT**

## “STRANGE THINGS”

First, I want us to consider **THE STRANGE THINGS OF THAT PARTICULAR DAY** which is mentioned in our text. It was a day full of wonders, so much so that the people were all amazed and said, “*We have seen strange things today.*” — **What did they see?**

1. **They saw four men acting in strong faith.**

**Luke 5:17-19** "And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them<sup>1</sup>. (18) And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him. (19) And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch into the midst before Jesus."

Here is a man who was completely paralyzed, who had four friends who believed on Christ. They knew that if somehow they could get their sick friend into contact with the Lord Jesus he could heal their needy friend.

- **They were caring.** — They had love and pity for a sick friend.
  - **They were thoughtful.** — They figured out a way.
1. **They were zealous.** — They would not be stopped.

**Mark 2:4** "And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay."

---

<sup>1</sup> The power of the Lord was present to heal the Pharisees; but they did not need healing! **Luke 5:17** "And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them." **Luke 9:11** "And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and **healed them that had need of healing.**"

## “STRANGE THINGS”

- **They were successful.** — They got him to the Lord.

I wish that I could find some men as zealous and caring about the souls of men as this. Let them adopt strange methods, let them be crude and abrupt, but give me such men as this! Such men were strange in that generation, and they would surely be strange in ours.

2. **They saw a man who was a sinner freely forgiven of all sin by the God-man.**

**Luke 5:20** "And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee."

Never before had a man come who claimed to have the divine right and authority to forgive sin. But this man could forgive sin, because he is the Son of God. Truly, this was a strange thing.

- The Pharisees were enraged.
- The Greeks were astonished.
- The sinner who was forgiven was filled with joy.
- My friends, the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man, is still in the business of forgiving sin! — All who trust him receive a full, free, complete, irreversible pardon. — God is faithful and just to forgive the sins of all his people, of every believer, through the blood of Christ. — Believe on Christ, and you too shall be forgiven.

**Psalms 32:1-5** “Blessed *is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* (2) Blessed *is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* (3) When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. (4) For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. (5) I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.”

**1 John 1:7** "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

“STRANGE THINGS”

**1 John 1:9** "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

3. **Here is something even stranger** — These people saw one man forgiven because of the faith of other men! Look at verse 20 again.

**Luke 5:20** "And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee."

4. **They saw a display of our Lord's omniscience.**

**Luke 5:21-23** "And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? (22) But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? (23) Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?"

The Lord Jesus perceived what the Scribes and Pharisees were thinking and answered their skepticism before they even spoke it.

This was but one of those many incidental proofs of our Lord's deity. The Son of God perceives the thoughts of men. He knows our hearts. Nothing is hidden from him.

5. **And they saw a sick man, one who could lift neither hand nor foot, made completely whole by the word of Christ.**

**Luke 5:24-25** "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. (25) And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God."

Truly this was strange in their eyes. As an evidence of his true Messiahship and divinity, to prove that he had power as God to forgive sin, the paralyzed man was perfectly healed before their eyes; and they were all amazed.

You who are spiritually sick with the heart plague of sin and death may

“**STRANGE THINGS**”

come to Christ today and be healed. **He still performs miracles of mercy.** When the Son of God comes, the lame are made to walk, the blind are made to see, the deaf are made to hear, and the dead are made to live.

Hear Him, ye deaf, His praise, ye dumb,  
Your loosened tongues employ;  
Ye blind, behold your Savior come,  
And leap, ye lame, for joy!

**IN THE GOSPEL**

*Secondly*, I want to show you some of **THE STRANGE THINGS REVEALED IN THE GOSPEL.** If ever you have beheld the life and work of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the earth by faith, you have been amazed by the many strange things which you have seen.

**1. The Creator of men became a man.**

He that is infinite became an infant. He who made all things hung upon a woman's breasts. He who fills all things was laid in a manger. He who is the Son of the Highest was known as the Son of Mary. He who is the Lord of all became the servant of all. Truly, this was a strange thing that happened in the earth (Isa. 9:6; John 1:14; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 1:1-3).

**Jeremiah 31:22** "The LORD hath created a new thing in the earth,  
A woman shall compass a man."

**Isaiah 9:6** "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

**John 1:14** "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

**Philippians 2:5-8** "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made

## “STRANGE THINGS”

in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

**Hebrews 1:1-3** "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (3) Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

2. **This perfectly innocent, just, and righteous man died as a vile transgressor and common criminal under the wrath of God, because he was made to be sin for us.** — “*Cursed is he that hangeth on a tree.*”
  - He who knew no sin was made sin (2 Cor. 5:21).
  - The Son of God was forsaken by God the Father, when he was faithfully fulfilling his Father’s will.
  - The Just died in the place of the unjust, that the unjust might be made just. The Innocent One became guilty, that the guilty might become innocent. The Righteous One was made to be sin, that the sinful might be made righteous.
  - Death was conquered by the death of the God-man.
3. **Truly, the strangest, most mysterious, most unexplainable thing in all the world was the death of Christ at Calvary.**

Well might the sun in darkness hide  
 And shut his glories in,  
 When God the mighty Maker died,  
 For man the creature’s sin!

- There hangs an unjustly condemned man, praying for his executioners — “*Father, forgive them.*”
- There hangs One who saved others, but because he saved others he could not save himself.
- There is Christ, the innocent One, dying, while Barabbas, the guilty one

## “STRANGE THINGS”

is set free. — That is Substitution.

- There hangs the eternal Son of God, that One who is Life, and there he suffers and dies as a man.
- Truly, this is the strangest form of love, mercy and grace this world has ever seen (1 John 3:16; Rom. 5:5-8).

**Romans 5:5-8** "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

**1 John 3:16** "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren."

Amazing love! How can it be,  
That Thou my God shouldst die for me!

4. **Yet, nothing is stranger than the choice of God's electing love and saving grace.**

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29** "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: (27) But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; (28) And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: (29) That no flesh should glory in his presence."

**IN OUR DAY**

So, in the *third* place, I want us to think about **THE STRANGE THINGS THAT ARE TO BE SEEN IN OUR DAY**. To be sure, all who know the Lord Jesus Christ and have experienced his matchless grace are aware of many strange things they have seen. If our Lord is pleased to come and bless us here today, we will go home saying, "*We have seen strange things*

## “STRANGE THINGS”

today.”

**Illustration:** Many years ago an old puritan, I believe it was William Guthrie, visited a dying woman who was ignorant of the gospel and unconverted. Guthrie preached the gospel to her and she joyfully believed it. Before Guthrie left, the woman died. When he returned home, he said to his family, “I have seen a strange thing today. A woman whom I found in a state of nature, I saw in a state of grace, and left in a state of glory.”

Now let me tell you of some strange things that I have seen and experienced in this day of grace.

1. I have seen a self-condemned and helpless sinner completely justified by Jesus Christ (Job 40:4-5; 42:5-6; Psa. 51:3-4; Eph. 2:1-5). I am that justified sinner.

**Job 40:4-5** "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. (5) Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further."

**Job 42:5-6** "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. (6) Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes." peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

**Psalms 51:3-4** "For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me. (4) Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest."

**Ephesians 2:1-5** "And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins: (2) Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (4) But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,



## “STRANGE THINGS”

(5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)."

I am telling you what I have seen for myself. I am not giving you second hand information, I am bearing faithful witness of those things which I have seen and experienced...

- The Lord himself came to me.
  - My soul was in dreadful despair, because of sin.
  - I feared the terrible righteousness and justice of God.
  - I knew that God could save me or damn me.
  - I knew that Christ died for sinners.
  - I simply trusted myself to Christ, leaning the whole weight of my soul upon him.
  - Immediately, the burden of my sin, that awesome load of guilt, rolled away!
2. **I have seen stout-hearted rebels broken and their hearts renewed by almighty grace.** — *“With God all things are possible!”* — Some have been converted suddenly. — Some have passed through a long ordeal of conviction and struggling. — Some have been rescued from a false hope. — Some have heard the word and were many years later converted.

**Illustration:** *The Old Man who heard Whitfield as a Boy*

But every instance of God’s marvelous saving grace is a strange thing in our eyes (John 3:8; 1 John 3:1-3).

**John 3:8** "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

**1 John 3:1-3** "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

“STRANGE THINGS”

3. **I have seen a soul preserved in spiritual life and faith by the grace of God amid many trials of great evil.**

Many of God’s people are like bushes burning, but never consumed. They live in the midst of constant trials, heartaches, and burdens. Yet, their faith does not grow dim.

Truly, these are strange things.

4. **I have seen evil turned into good by the gracious and wise hand of God’s providence.** — The hand of God’s providence has been evidently revealed to me many times in many ways.
  - Before Conversion.
  - After Conversion.
  - In My Personal Life.
  - In My Family.
  - In My Ministry.

Of a truth, his strength is made perfect in weakness; and his grace is sufficient for every day.

**IN ETERNITY**

And yet strange things still are to be seen. In the last place let me show you some of **THE STRANGE THINGS THAT SHALL BE SEEN IN THAT ETERNAL DAY.** Those things that shall yet come to pass will truly be strange things in our eyes.

1. **Strange things will be seen in the judgment.**

Good, moral, religious men and women will be sentenced to eternal damnation, while vile, wretched sinners who simply trusted Christ enter into eternal glory.

2. **Strange things will be seen in hell.**

- Men and women will beg for mercy, but not find mercy.
- People will long to die and not be able to die.
- Men will cry and scream like babies, but no one will cry for them.
- The bodies, souls, and consciences of men will burn in pain and torment and yet never die.

“STRANGE THINGS”

- The damned in hell will cause no grief among the redeemed in glory.
- 3. **And strange things will be seen in heaven.**
  - All the redeemed shall see Christ in his beauty.
  - All the redeemed shall be like Christ in glory.
  - All the redeemed shall be perfect, righteous, and blameless.
  - All of God’s elect shall be there.

**John Newton** said that heaven will be full of strange things. He once wrote — “When I get to heaven, I shall see three wonders there. The first wonder will be to see many people there whom I did not expect to see. The second wonder will be to miss many people whom I did expect to see. And the third and greatest wonder of all will be to find myself there.”

Here is the strangest of all strange things, the wonder of all wonders. This vile wretch of a man, simply trusting the merits of Christ’s blood and righteousness is an heir of eternal glory. And here is another wonder almost as great, you could be too, if you will simply trust the Son of God.

**Application:** Here are two other strange things, which I cannot understand:

1. Your unbelief is a strange things to me. Why will you die, when life is set before you?
2. It is a strange thing to me that we who have experienced so much love and grace in Christ return so little faith and love to him.

Amen.