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A Taste of Future Grace; Matt 15:29-31

GPBC

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Introduction – Packed into these three verses is a record of an untold number accounts of wonder-working, miracle-making, marvelous-healing power of Jesus. Sometimes the gospel writers tell us specific stories of the miracles of Jesus, like the preceding passage where Jesus heals the mother's daughter. One person – one instance – one miracle. But sometimes the number and the people and the miracles are so numerous, the writers are forced to speak in an overarching, generalized manner. There are simply too many miracle stories here to tell them one by one. God sat down on the mountainside beside the Sea of Galilee and healed every sick and diseased individual that was brought to Him. The miracles of Jesus. God-wrought wonders. Sometimes isolated, singular events. Sometimes widespread, all-inclusive, large scale events.

Which brings up the question, what are we to think about the miracles of Jesus? How are we to apply them to our lives today? What do these miracles tell us? The 3 points of the sermon this morning will address what I believe the Bible teaches us about the miracles of Jesus. The Bible directs us to how we are to interpret and apply these miracles. However, before we take a look at how we are to rightly view these miracles, I want to briefly address in the introduction one popular way of viewing Jesus' miracles that is an error of interpretation and that we should strongly avoid. In fact, I would go so far as to say when we encounter this teaching, we should respond to the teachers of this error in the same way Jesus instructed the disciples to respond to the error of the Pharisees in 15:14 – Let them alone.

Some read the miracles of Jesus and conclude that Jesus means to physically heal and materially prosper every true believer who expresses enough faith. Theologians call this error an over-realized eschatology. Meaning the fault is reading the promises of God for our glorification in heaven are understood to be fulfilled here in this life. There are few theological errors that are more damaging to true faith. On one hand this teaching is detrimental to those true believers who go through life beaten down and discouraged because since they haven't been healed, they believe they must not have genuine faith. On the other hand this teaching becomes a false gospel by declaring eternal blessings to be earthly

rewards. Jesus will say in Matthew 18:6 that it would be better for that teacher to have a millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea than to bring such harm to His children.

The Bible itself refutes this error over and over again. Jesus teaches and exemplifies that suffering will come to His followers. Hebrews 11 upholds the heroes of faith by recounting their suffering in hope of glory. Paul would pray time and time again to be freed from the thorn in his flesh, but God would tell him “No, I mean to use your weakness to highlight my sufficient grace.” So then what are we to think of Jesus’ miracles?

I. Miracles as Signs

- a. The gospel writers oftentimes refer to Jesus’ miracles as signs. They are not intended as an end in themselves but rather as pointers to something greater.
 - i. Ill. A stop sign on the road has no power in and of itself. It’s just a metal board on a metal post. It points to an authority beyond it. The law of driving and public safety. If you ignore the sign, you are subject to the law and to the destructive consequences of ignoring the sign.
- b. In a similar way, so are the signs of Jesus’ miracles. They carry no eternal, salvific significance. A healed leg will still one day be a dead leg. But it does point to a higher authority, a greater power, an eternal, salvific reality.
- c. Matthew 11:1-6
- d. The miracles of Jesus are signs pointing to Jesus as the One!
- e. Just like that stop sign, if you adhere to these signs and embrace their meaning, you enjoy the benefits, but if you ignore these signs, you face the consequences.

II. Miracles as Illustrations

- a. The miracles of Jesus are not only signs, they are also visual, literal illustrations of two great truths.
- b. First, the miracles of Jesus demonstrate the power of God to reverse the corruption and stain of sin.
 - i. Before sin entered God’s good creation in Genesis 3, there were no lame, blind, crippled, mute, demon oppressed, and

more. But when sin came in, so did death and decay and corruption.

- ii. The miracles of Jesus testify that there is only one solution for sin. There is only One who is able to restore what sin has robbed.
 - iii. Matt 9:27-31.
 - iv. But the power of Jesus to reverse sin's corruption is not restricted to the physical realm. He is able to reverse sin's damage entirely, even in the spiritual realm. That's why Paul writes in 2 Cor 5:17 that if you are in Christ, you are a new creation! He reverses sin's corruption and restores our soul.
- c. Second, the miracles of Jesus demonstrate the power of God to remove the corruption and stain of sin.
- i. The physical miracles of Jesus illustrate His power to heal us spiritually. The physical healing is an illustration. It's not an end in itself. It illustrates a greater reality. Physical healing is temporary; spiritual healing is eternal!
 - ii. That's why in Matthew 9 before Jesus says to the paralytic the incredible command to, Rise, pick up your bed and go home, He first says to the paralytic a word that is even more astounding and marvelous and eternal, "Son, your sins are forgiven."
- d. Physical healing illustrates spiritual healing. The only One who can open eyes is the only One who can open hearts! John 20:30-31!

III. Miracles as a Taste of Future Grace

- a. The miracles of Jesus are a microcosm view of the coming Day of the Lord when Jesus will make all things new. The eternal, glorified state when the old earth will pass away, the new heavens and earth will appear, the presence of sin will vanish, and the souls of all of God's people will be united with glorified bodies, created for eternity, created to withstand the presence the God, created for glory!
- b. The miracles, particularly these region-wide massive demonstrations of miracles, show us on a small scale what God will do on a much larger scale when Christ returns! It's as if in these 3 verses, God opens a time portal window and allows us to peek into eternal glory!
- c. They do so in these 5 ways:

- i. Everyone who comes to Jesus is healed.
 - ii. Every sickness and disease are healed.
 - iii. The number is multitude.
 - iv. The corruption disappears.
 - v. When the crowds see the work of the Son, they glorify the Father!
- d. Rev 21:1-4

Conclusion – Justified For Evermore