

MIRACLES

I was with someone the other day who was lamenting the lack of miracles in the Church today. Is God still in the miracle business?

The Gospel of John tells of the very first miracle Jesus performed. He turned water into wine. This miracle is unusual for several reasons.

1. It seemed like a minor miracle, more like a magician's trick than the work of the Messiah. It prevented a little embarrassment but did not attend to any human suffering like the healing miracles.

2. It was a private miracle. Not done publicly.

3. John chose to begin his Gospel with this story. Why? What was so important?

WATER INTO WINE (JOHN 2)

Let's look at the story in closer detail. Begins with a wedding in Cana. A small village in Galilee. Weddings were the biggest and most important celebration among the Jewish people. At times it was a week long party. Joyous occasions. Good reason for celebration.

MIRACLES: Jesus often used miracles in the physical world to demonstrate spiritual truths.

e.g. He healed people to show that he had authority to forgive sin. He healed on the Sabbath to show his authority over the Sabbath. He fed thousands to show that he was the 'bread of life'. What spiritual truth was Jesus demonstrating by this miracle?

DEFINITION OF A MIRACLE: A miracle is an event that cannot be explained by any natural or scientific laws.

WATER INTO WINE

Six stone water containers nearby. These were jars used for ceremonial washing. Each jar held more than 20 gallons of water. That's a lot of water. Jesus instructs the servants to fill them to the brim. The servants draw out some of the 'water' now turned to wine and take it to the master of ceremonies who is surprised at the amazing quality of the wine. "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now"

WHAT SPIRITUAL TRUTHS ARE BEING DEMONSTRATED?

Jesus changed **ceremonial** water into wine. Imagine, if the guests came to perform their ceremonial washing. They go to the water pots and find every one filled with wine. Their would be no water for their ritual.

What was the lesson? Jesus had fulfilled the rituals and replaced them with something much better. His 'blood'. The spiritual cleansing of Jesus blood was far superior to the ritual washing in water.

When Mary said, "They have no more wine." It symbolised the fact that the Jews had no spiritual meaning left in their ceremonies. The containers were filled to the brim. In the messianic age there would be no room left for ritual washing. It was all superseded by the blood (wine) of Jesus. This miracle signaled the death knell of the ritual cleansing. Taking it one step further, it was the end of the old covenant ritual. The new had come, it was now at hand.

WHY ARE THE MIRACLES OF JESUS IMPORTANT?

The miracles of Jesus were not just idle tales of wonder. They have a vital purpose. They help us to "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God".

When the disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus they asked him, "Are you the one who is to come or should we look for another?" Jesus replies. "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, the poor have the Gospel preached to them". In other words, the miracles were proof that Jesus was the Messiah as had been prophesied.

THE GREATEST MIRACLE OF ALL

Is God still in the miracle business. Even today. Dramatic miracles do take place even today. What is this miracle?

The calling of God to spiritual understanding and a new way of life.

The Holy Spirit bridges the gap between our fleshly humanity and the mind of God. The Pentecost miracle would occur again and again in the minds of people all through the ages. The Holy Spirit is still being poured out on all flesh.



SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

John 2:1-12

Jesus Changes Water Into Wine

1 On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, **2** and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. **3** When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

4 "Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6 Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

8 Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, **9** and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside **10** and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

11 What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

12 After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

John 20:28-31

30 Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. **31** But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Matthew 13:11

11 He replied, "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them."

1 Corinthians 2:14-15

14 The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

Galatians 2:20

20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

John 20:29

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Colossians 3:3

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.