

The Miracles Of Jesus

Jesus' First Recorded Miracle

(Jn 1:43-51)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
 - a. Greetings...
2. Series of lessons on "The Miracles Of Jesus."
 - a. Last week we looked into the introductory material on our topic at hand.
 - i. **Jn 20:30-31** "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."¹
 - b. This week we will be examining "Jesus' First Miracle."
 - i. **Jn 1:47-48** "Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, 'Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!' 48 Nathanael said to him, 'How do you know me?' Jesus answered him, 'Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.' "
3. I researched "Jesus' First Miracle."
 - a. I started the process of gathering information on the topic at hand.
 - b. I started looking to see what miracle people consider Jesus' first.
 - c. What I found actually shocked me.
 - i. Most contend Jesus' first miracle was in Cana at the wedding.
 1. We will be discussing this next week.
 2. If you "google" Jesus' first miracle this is what you find.
4. I never considered the wedding to be where Jesus performed His first miracle.
 - a. I always looked right before it.
 - i. When Jesus spoke to Nathanael and "saw him under the tree" though He was not there.
5. Why would so many overlook this?
 - a. There is only one reason I could think of.
 - i. The age of miracles has ceased, for which we can be assured.
 1. **I Co 13:9-10; Mk 16:20; II Pt 1:3; Ja 1:27**
 - ii. God can "see" everyone at all times even though the miraculous has ceased.
 1. Therefore many think of this not as a miracle.
6. However this doesn't quite add up to me because...
 - a. First, this ignores that fact that miracles require human involvement.
 - i. Remember their purpose.
 1. **Mk 16:20**

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

The Miracles Of Jesus

- b. Second, this ignores that fact that Jesus is both God and Man.
 - i. **Jn 1:1, 14** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
 - c. Thus, when God “sees all” as He does from heaven that is not a miracle but for “man” in any form to do such that is a miracle. Considering Jesus is both God & Man it therefore was a miracle and subsequently His first miracle.
7. With this in mind let us examine “Jesus’ First Miracle.”

I. Jesus Performs The Miracle

- A. Jesus knows Nathanael is one with “no deceit”
 - 1. A basic timeline from Jesus’ baptism to present.
 - i. This is two days after Jesus’ baptism.
 - a. **Jn 1:35, 43** “The next day...”
 - ii. This is the day after Jesus called Andrew, Peter, James & the writer John.
 - a. **Mt 4:18-22; Mk 1:16-20; Jn 1:37ff**
 - iii. This is right after Philip had been called by Jesus to follow Him.
 - a. **Jn 1:43**
 - 2. Philip goes to get Nathanael.
 - i. Now Nathanael is most likely Bartholomew.
 - a. First: The name Bartholomew is simply a family name like our last names today and as such he would have another name.
 - b. Second: John never mentions Bartholomew and the other gospel accounts never mention Nathanael.
 - c. Third: Bartholomew is listed next to Philip in gospel accounts lists of the apostles.
 - d. Fourth: All the other disciples listed in this chapter become apostles yet none receive as high a commendation as Nathanael.
 - 3. Nathanael goes to see this one Philip is talking about “Jesus of Nazareth.”
 - i. Here Jesus produces “food for thought” for Nathanael.
 - a. Jesus makes a twofold statement.
 - 1. He calls Nathanael an Israelite indeed.
 - i. He is one that fulfills the true idea of what an Israelite ought to be.
 - 2. He calls Nathanael one with “no deceit.”

The Miracles Of Jesus

- i. He is one that has “no self-deception, and no disposition to deceive others.”²
 4. Though Nathanael is unaware of the miracle Jesus has just performed, knowing the heart of one He has not met, he will so find out.
 - B. Jesus sees Nathanael under the fig tree.
 1. Jesus “proves” He is speaking for God with His next statement to Nathanael.
 - i. “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”
 2. The fig tree.
 - i. This was a place where many a person would go for shelter from the sun as this tree gave the densest shade possible.
 - ii. Due to the dense nature of the tree it was used by many Jews as a place to go and meditate and pray alone out of the heat.
 - a. **Mi 4:4** “but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.”
 1. **Zc 3:10**
 3. How can one man be seen by another man who is not there...by the miraculous.
 - C. Thus...
 1. We find Jesus performed the miracle of seeing and knowing Nathanael.

II. Jesus Receives The Right Response

- A. Nathanael recognizes Jesus as the Son of God
 1. As we talked about in our introductory sermon Jesus’ use of the miraculous was twofold.
 - i. First to prove what He was preaching was from God.
 - ii. Second to prove that He was the Son of God, the Messiah.
 2. Nathanael recognized a miracle had occurred by the One Philip had mentioned as being He who was written about by Moses and the prophets.
 - i. We can be fully assured that Nathanael did not fully understand what he was proclaiming here else Peter would have been instructed by Nathanael.
 - a. **Mt 16:16-17** “Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.”

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The Miracles Of Jesus

- B. Nathanael recognizes Jesus as the King of Israel
1. Once again we must keep in mind the “custom theology” of the time concerning the Christ.
 - i. The Jews, even the apostles, believed the Messiah would come and establish an earthly kingdom even up to the point of the ascension.
 - a. **Ac 1:6** “So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ ”
 2. So, once again, we can be assured that Nathanael did not fully realize the totality of what he was saying but never the less he made the right claim.
- C. Thus...
1. We find through Jesus’ miracle that the proper response was found.
 - i. Nathanael realized Jesus was speaking the Oracles of God and thus speaking on God’s behalf.
 - ii. Nathanael realized Jesus was not just a prophet from God but God Himself.

III. We Need To Strive To Be Like Nathanael

- A. When Jesus saw Nathanael, He, most likely, found him praying and meditating.
1. What a powerful thing to be found doing when Christ “sees” you.
 - i. Marvin Vincent wrote, “To be construed with εἶδον σε, I saw thee; i.e., I saw thee under the fig-tree. The preposition with the accusative case, which implies motion toward, indicates his withdrawal to the shade of the tree for meditation or prayer.”³
 2. As we consider our preparation for Jesus’ return is there any better motivation for worship than knowing one day He will come back?
 - i. This applies to our daily lives.
 - a. I recognize not all aspect of life are worship but knowing Jesus will return should motivate us to worship God at every possible moment.
 1. **Ps 29:2** “Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.”
 - ii. This applies to specific times set aside for assembled worship.
 - a. When faced with a choice of coming to worship services or not one should ask themselves, “what would I do if I knew Jesus was coming back during Sunday morning Bible class, Sunday evening service, or Wednesday evening service?
 1. **He 10:25** “not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

³ Vincent, M. R. (1887). Word studies in the New Testament (Vol. 2, p. 75). New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons.

The Miracles Of Jesus

- B. When Jesus sought to learn about Nathanael, He found him with no deceit
1. In other words Jesus found him without any desire to deceive others or himself.
 - i. He wasn't one that used trickery and falsehoods against people.
 - a. Keep in mind that current Israel was full of such people i.e. the Pharisees and Sadducees.
 2. As Christians today we ought to be known for our honesty.
 - i. This is the sign of a maturing Christian.
 - a. **Lk 8:15** "As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience."
 - b. **Lk 6:45** "The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."
 - ii. I remember what a wise, faithful brother, once said to the college age class who was fixing to go into the work force.
 - a. Christians ought to be the most honest people in the world not even taking "sick days" when they are not "sick."
 1. An example from secular work where "sick days" are given by employers to their employs and by which are often used for extra vacation days.
- C. When Jesus proved Himself to Nathanael, He found him receptive
1. Nathanael immediately was receptive to Jesus upon proof that He was the Messiah.
 - i. Keep in mind Nathanael earlier was not so receptive.
 - a. **Jn 1:46** "...Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"
 - ii. However after the necessary facts were presented Nathanael believed and acted on that belief, i.e. obedience, and followed Jesus.
 2. As Christians today we must stay vigilant in our pursuit of obedience in Christ by having a willingness to change when we find fault in ourselves or our understanding of Scriptures.
 - i. **Ro 12:2** "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."
 - ii. **I Th 5:21** "but test everything; hold fast what is good."
 - iii. **II Ti 2:15** "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

The Miracles Of Jesus

D. Thus...

1. We as Christians today must strive to be more like Nathanael in our daily walk with God.

CONCLUSION

1. Brethren as we go through this study let us be ever mindful of the majesty of Jesus the Christ and the power of His Word.
 - a. Let us bolster our confidence in Jesus as the Anointed One.
 - b. Let us fight the good fight of faith with confidence in Jesus as our Savior.
2. Question: When you examine Nathanael's character do you stack up?
 - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not why not?
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**