

Apologetics

Today's Miracles (Jn 20:30-31)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Evening
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on "Apologetics"
 - a. Last week we looked at "Manuscript Evidence For The New Testament"
 - b. This week we are going to look at "Miracles."
3. "Today's Miracles"
 - a. People have since for thousands of years claimed to be able to do the miraculous.
 - b. Many today claim the same type of reality like being able to heal the sick, or raise the dead.
 - c. It doesn't matter...
 - i. That these people have been exposed as frauds by secular &/or religious groups.
 - ii. That one can easily prove scripturally that the Bible clearly teaches there are no miracles today.
 - d. It doesn't matter because people want to believe in them still.
4. However what if we compared the miracles of today with the miracles in the New Testament.
 - a. That is what we will do today is compare N.T. miracles with so called modern miracles today.
 - b. Doing so will allow us to have yet another defense against a devastating false doctrine in the world today.
 - i. It's devastating because people expect miracles & when they don't get them they blame God.

I. Miracles Were Undeniable

- A. In the N.T. Jesus' miracles could not be denied
 1. **Jn 3:1-2** "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.""
 2. **Jn 11:46-47** "But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. 47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs."
 3. **Mt 12:24** "Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.""
 - i. They could not deny He did a miracle so they tried saying it was Satan instead.

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- B. In The N.T. the disciples miracles could not be denied
 - 1. **Ac 4:14-16** "And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it."
- C. Modern miracles have been denied and proven as fraud over and over
 - 1. "A. A. Allen was a faith healer operating in the 1950's and 1960's out of a ranch in Miracle Valley, Arizona. A physician from the nearby town of Sierra Vista, Dr. Kenneth A Dregseth, told an interviewer: "I have seen no miracles. In fact, I've had to run diabetics to the hospital when they've stopped taking their insulin, believing they had been cured in Miracle Valley."" (<http://tinyurl.com/3hk228a>)
 - 2. Paul Cain modern faith healer said this" ...I know some of you are going to **disagree with this**. Don't you even stop to disagree. Revelation 12:5. If you disagree, just file it in 'miscellaneous' and check it out. And donut bother with it; when we get to heaven we'll check it out and you'll find out I'm right..." (<http://tinyurl.com/4xe9e2j> [emphasis mine])

II. Miracles Were Instantaneous

- A. There was no time of recovery.
 - 1. Hemorrhaging
 - i. **Mt 9:20-22** "And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. 21 For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well." 22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour."
 - 2. Blindness
 - i. **Mt 20:30-34**
 - 3. Fever
 - i. **Lk 4:38-39**
 - 4. Leprosy
 - i. **Lk 5:12-13**
 - 5. Paralysis
 - i. **Lk 5:17-25**
 - 6. Deformity
 - i. **Lk 13:11-13**
 - 7. Infirmity
 - i. **Jn 5:5-9**
- B. They process of modern miracles often times has a recovery aspect.
 - 1. Oral Roberts built a hospital.

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III. Miracles Were Complete

- A. Whatever was wrong the person was made whole
 1. **Mt 12:9-13** "Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. 10 And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—that they might accuse Him. 11 Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? 12 Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." 13 Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other."
- B. They had their full capabilities
 1. **Ac 3:6-10, 16** "Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." 7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God. 10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. 16 And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all."
- C. Modern faith healers do anything but this
 1. "Consider the case of Ernest Angley, a faith healer from Akron, Ohio. Angley, a flamboyant actor with a flair for the dramatic, normally puts on a good show, but even the best performers have off nights. On one occasion, Angley was trying to heal a man who was hard of hearing. He stuck his fingers in the man's ears, twisted them around a few times, and then prayed that the man's hearing might be restored. When Ernest was finished, the man's wife whispered "Honey?" into one of his ears. The man said, "Yes." Then she whispered in his other ear, "Baby?" Once again, the man replied "Yes." With a face filled with amazement and bliss, Ernest Angley lifted his eyes toward heaven and cried with a loud voice, "Hallelujah!" The man looked at Ernest with a quizzical expression and replied, "Not bad. How are you?"" (<http://tinyurl.com/3jf7rg7>)
 2. "A. A. Allen's monthly publication Miracle Magazine, with a circulation of 350,000 was produced at Miracle Valley. He/Allen was careful to publish a disclaimer concerning the wild claims of healing that appeared in his magazine, sent in by enthusiastic "healees." Here is what he put, "Utmost care has been taken to assure the accuracy of all testimonies before publication and A.A. Allen Revivals, Inc. and "Miracle Magazine" assume no legal responsibility for the veracity of any such report, nor do they accept responsibility as to the degree or permanence of reported healings, deliverances or miracles ..." (<http://tinyurl.com/3hk228a>)

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IV. Miracles Were Diverse

- A. They were not only diverse in medical measures but in nature
 - 1. Jesus...
 - i. Calmed the storms
 - a. [Lk 8:24](#)
 - ii. Walked on water
 - a. [Mt 14:26-27](#)
 - iii. Fed 5,000
 - a. [Mk 6:44](#)
- B. Today they stick to matters of health usually
 - 1. "Several years ago, Lewis Grizzard wrote an article entitled "Miracles are Few, But Laughs are Many" in which he poked fun at today's faith healers. Mr. Grizzard said, "The first time I became suspicious of faith healers was when Brother Roy Dodd Hembree came to my hometown with his faith healing tent ministry. One year, Miss Inez Pickett, an old maid school-teacher who had been plagued with kidney problems her entire life, decided to see if Brother Roy Dodd could help her." "Brother Roy Dodd grabbed Miss Inez, proceeded to beseech the Almighty to try and remove her malady. With a great, joyous cry he proclaimed Miss Inez healed, and she commenced to jump around on the platform in her newly found healthy state. She became so excited, however, that she fell off the platform and broke her leg." "Somebody call an ambulance," said the first one to reach her. "No need for that," someone cried, "just get Brother Roy Dodd to heal her." However, Brother Roy Dodd declined. "I don't do broken bones," he said, "just vital organs."'" (<http://tinyurl.com/3jf7rg7>)

V. Miracles Were Not Staged

- A. Those healed were well known to the audience
 - 1. [Ac 3:9-10](#)
- B. Their illness was a matter of public knowledge
 - 1. [Mk 5:25-29](#)
- C. Modern healers do not work this way
 - 1. O. J. Willis of Groveton, Texas, told the story of an old-time faith-healer who came to town, promising to raise the dead. At the front of the big tent, the "deceased" was stretched out in a coffin, pale and gray, looking bereft of life, and asleep in Jesus. Before the services, crowds passed by the coffin, quietly viewing the body, until the unexpected happened. It seems some of the local boys were determined to follow I John 4:1, which says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." As one of these young whippersnappers passed by the casket, he produced a long straight-pin, which he proceeded to poke in the side of the prostrate body. Commotion and bedlam ensued as the lifeless man was prematurely, unexpectedly, and violently raised from the dead! (Another variation of this story says the man who welded the pin was John O'Doud, an old-time gospel preacher.) (Ibid)

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2. "Peter Popoff, a TV faith healer from Upland, California, was able to fool millions until foiled by debunker James Randi. Popoff was noted for "calling out" members of the audience and then healing them. While on stage, Popoff would call out the names and addresses of individuals to whom he had not spoken, identify their ailments, and then allegedly heal them. How was he able to know such details? Was God telling him? Not hardly. Investigators discovered that Popoff's staff subtly and shrewdly gathered information on individuals in the audience. Popoff wore a tiny "hearing aid" in his left ear, connected to a receiver tuned to a shortwave band. His wife, Elizabeth, carrying a transmitter in her handbag, broadcast to Peter the needed information and directed him to the right people. Thus he appeared to exercise a "gift of knowledge," identifying people by name and affliction." (Ibid)

VI. Miracles Were Verified

- A. There were many witnesses to the miracles so that it was without dispute in the N.T.
 1. The blind saw, sick well...
- B. This is not the case today
 1. Today's healers will not submit their miracles to the test.
 - i. **I Jn 4:1** "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."
 2. Perry Cotham debate - brought out a snake to a supposed snake bite healer. Man nearly hurt himself running from the snake.

VII. Miracles Failures Were Not Blamed On The One That Was To Receive The Miracle

- A. It was the faith of the healer not the one being healed in the N.T. that was important
 1. **Mt 7:14-21** "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. 15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them. 21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."
- B. Faith played a role sometimes
 1. **Mt 9:20-22** "And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. 21 For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well." 22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour."

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2. **Mk 10:51-52** "So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight." 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road."
- C. At other times it played no role at all
 1. **Ac 3:1-6** "Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. 2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; 3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. 4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." 5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.""

VIII. Miracles Supported Truth Not Error

- A. That was it's purpose
 1. **Mk 16:20** "And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen."
- B. It was the prophets of the O.T.'s evidence
 1. **Dt 13:1-5** "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst."
- C. We are warned over and over about false teachers
 1. **II Th 2:7-12** "For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

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2. **II Pt 2:1-2** "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed."
- D. Contrast that with modern day faith healers
1. "Modern-day fake healers are well-known for their false teachings and immoral lifestyles" (Ibid)

CONCLUSION

1. All evidence points to the fact that miracles today are no more.
 - a. The Bible teaches it.
 - i. **I Co 13:10; Ja 1:25**
 - b. The frauds confirm it.
 - i. Oral Roberts, A. A. Allen...on and on we could go.
 1. If Oral Roberts could heal people why did he need a hospital?
2. Let us each not fall into Satan's trap of lies and deceit. Let us not believe a lie just because it "sounds neat."
3. Invitation¹
 - a. God's Plan of Salvation
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **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**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**

¹ The sermon outline "Miracles of the New Testament" was of much help in putting this lesson together ((<http://tinyurl.com/3jf7rg7>))