

Lessons From the Miracles of Christ (Go To Meeting)

Russell Kemp—May 3, 2024

2-Timothy 3:16: “**All** Scripture is God-breathed... [inspired by God] ...and is profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Note the fact that it mentions *all* Scripture! So, it is with the miracles of Christ. Today I want to take a look at some of those miracles and see just what kind of lessons we can learn from them. I’m going to start with the marriage.

The Marriage

The first miracle of Christ is found in John 2. As Christ begins His public ministry, He begins to fulfill the promises that He made to Nathaniel in John 1.

John 1:49: “Nathanael said to Him, ‘How did you know me?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Before Philip called you, *when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.*’”

And because of this response, v 50: “Nathanael answered and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.’”

The fact alone that Christ knew about Nathaniel surprised him; then Christ gave him this response:

Verse 51: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Because I told you, “I saw you under the fig tree,” do you believe? Greater things than these shall you see.’”

Clearly as Christ begins His miracles, we shall see the things that He does.

John 2:1: “Now on the third day, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.”

You know, as this miracle unfolds, we will see that apparently Mary was there for some very important capacity. We don’t know what it was, but she was there for some very important capacity.

Verse 2: “And Jesus and His disciples were also invited to the marriage *feast.*”

Jesus and His disciples were also invited, which certainly indicates there that they had some important status involved in this marriage.

There are some things that we certainly don’t know about this marriage.

1. we have no idea who’s getting married; it doesn’t tell us
2. we don’t know any of the details about whoever it is that’s getting married

However, we can certainly make a few speculations concerning this marriage when you think about it. The parties getting married were probably some relative of Mary or Joseph. Obviously, Mary’s prominence at this wedding indicates some kind of family wedding.

Notice the close association that Jesus had with His disciples. His invitation to the wedding included the disciples. Perhaps we should learn a lesson here, that where we go, Christ goes with us, also; we’re not alone. There’s also some good advice we can glean from the wedding.

Verse 3: “And *when* there was a shortage of wine, Jesus’ mother said to Him... [this is very interesting] ... ‘They have no wine.’”

A problem arises, there is no wine. It seems that weddings are always a great place to have problems. I remember one of our daughter’s weddings in Jacksonville Beach, Florida. Her husband’s—actually they’re divorced now—family still was drinking and wanted to drink more at midnight, so I had to buy a whole other keg of beer; then they all left shortly thereafter. Doesn’t matter; but weddings always have problems.

However, Mary does handle the problem. Notice what she does; she takes the problem to Jesus. This should be a good example for us *when we have problems crop up, we should take them to Jesus!* Then comes Mary’s good advice in:

Verse 5: “*Then* His mother said to the servants, ‘Whatever He says to you, do.’”

We should always be ready to do what Christ tells us to do; I don’t care what it is. As quoted in 2-Tim. 2, the Bible is full of wisdom and knowledge on what we should be doing. Some advice for us here:.

Verse 4: “Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what *do you desire to have Me do?....*’”

- Christ is ready
- He’s willing
- He’s waiting for us to ask for His help

Verse 6: “Now, there were six water vessels of stone standing there...”

Like this problem, we will have to face our problems beginning as they are. Let's deal with what we have at hand. What do you have at hand?

Verse 7: "Jesus said to them, 'Fill the water vessels with water.' . . ."

Notice that solving the problems may require some label on our part, as well, not totally relying on Jesus. They filled them to the brim. And like them, we need to do the same. We need to act on faith, and notice how faith affects others.

Verse 9: "Now, when the master of the Feast tasted the water that had become wine, not knowing from where it had come (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom."

What an inspiration that must have been to those servants!

Verse 10: "And said to him, 'Every man serves the good wine first; and when the *guests* have drunk freely, then *he* serves the inferior wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.'"

You know the lesson of the wine. Christ always keeps the best for last. For those who believe the best is yet to come, ***the marriage to Christ, the best yet to come!***

We're going to go to that wedding ceremony. We know it comes with the Kingdom of God, and every day with Christ is better than the day before. So, there are a few lessons ***from the miracle of the wine!***

➤ **The Man with the Withered Hand**

To establish the precedence for this miracle; Mark 2:23: "Now, it came to pass that He went through the grain fields on the Sabbaths; and as His disciples made *their way through the fields*, they were picking *and eating* the grain."

Also, notice here the response of the Pharisees, v 24: "Then the Pharisees said to Him, 'Look at them! Why are they doing that which is not lawful on the Sabbaths?'"

They were apparently not aware of Who they were dealing with that created the Sabbath. They had already polluted the Sabbath with man-made rituals and lulls anyway.

Verse 25: "And He said to them, 'Have you never read what David did when he was hungry and in need of *food*, he and those with him? How in *the days of Abiathar* the high priest, he entered into the house of God and he ate the showbread, which it is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and he also gave *it* to those who were with him?'" (vs 25-26).

Notice how He uses the Scripture—which was common knowledge obviously to the Pharisees. They were familiar with this—***to make His point!*** In other words, here was a similar situation.

Verse 27: "And He said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, *and* not man for the Sabbath.'"

Here Christ makes it very clear that the Sabbath was established as a blessing for man and not a burden.

Verse 28—*He tells them:* "Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

I'm sure that created quite a stir. Wow! What a shock that that comment must have been to the Pharisees. All of this led up to the miracle in Mark 3. He had just finished criticizing the Pharisees and making it clear that He was the Lord of the Sabbath.

Then He moves on to the synagogue to make His message clear. Here He meets and he heals a troubled man on the Sabbath in spite of the consequences to Himself. Didn't make any difference.

Mark 3:1: "And again He went into the synagogue, and a man who had a withered hand was there."

- What did this withered hand do for this man physically? *He was obviously handicapped as a worker!*
- How much more difficult is it to work with just one hand? *It probably caused him to be dependent on others!*
- How did this affect the man emotionally? *Think about that when you have a handicap!*

He probably felt self-conscious. It probably made him feel inferior to others, and he probably envied those that had normal bodies.

- What did this affliction do for him spiritually? *He obviously knew Christ and came to Him believing He could help him!*

He was apparently in the synagogue there to pray!

Sometimes we look at the blessings of the afflictions that actually bring us closer to God. It seems at times it does take sicknesses and injuries and other problems to bring us closer to God.

Let's notice the compassion of Jesus toward this man, the compassion of Jesus. But also see how His enemies, the Pharisees, were aware of His compassion and they knew He would stop to heal this hurting man. ***They knew it!***

Jesus was always moved by the needs of the people. And understand that's true for you and me, as well, today.

Verse 2: "And they were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbaths, in order that they might accuse Him."

Remember what He had just told them in chapter two when He told them that the Sabbath was made for man, and that He—Christ—was Lord of the Sabbath. Think about that!

Verse 3: "Then He said to the man who had the withered hand, 'Stand up *here* in the center.'"

He noticed that He wanted them to see what He was about to do. He wasn't going to hide the fact. He was not about to back away from the challenge before Him.

- *Jesus knew* when He told the man to stand in the center that it would bring Him criticism
- *He knew* that these words would require *the faith of the man*
- *He knew* that the words would unite His enemies

Verse 4: "And He said to them, 'Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbaths, or to do evil?... [take your pick] ...To save life, or to kill?' **But they were silent.**" *These cowards wouldn't even answer His question!*

Verse 5: "And after looking around at them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.'"

Christ told the man, 'Show Me your weakness.' ***He wants us to show Him our weaknesses and our sins so he can heal us, as well!***

"...And he stretched *it* out, and his hand was restored *as* sound as the other" (v 5).

Christ has care, compassion, love, and concern for all of us! He wants to heal our weaknesses.

- we may have a withered hand that we're trying to hide
- perhaps it's something that makes you feel inferior
 - Could our withered hand be fear?
 - an untamed temper?
 - the tantrums that we have?
 - even an uncontrolled tongue that hurts others?

Sometimes we need to stretch forth our withered hand asking for healing!

➤ **Free At Last**

Very interesting. Once again, we have a prelude to this encounter. This is where we have the story of Jesus crossing of the Sea of Galilee.

Mark 4:35: "Now on the same day, when evening came, He [Jesus] said to them [the disciples], 'Let us go over to the other side.' Now on the same day, when evening came, He said to them, 'Let us go over to the other side.' [people following along]...And a violent windstorm came up, and the waves were crashing into the ship so forcefully that it was rapidly filling up" (vs 35-37).

Verse 38: "Now, He was at the stern sleeping on a cushion. And they aroused Him, and said to Him, 'Master, don't You care that we are perishing?'"

Sidebar: I can truly tell you as a sailor many years and we were leaving Vietnam after delivering some stuff, and I was on a fleet ocean going tug, not a very big ship. When we were off the coast of Guam on the way back, we had a horrendous storm.

This is back in the days when we didn't have all the satellite communications and all that. I'm telling you, it was a horrible! This ship was in dire straits and the captain came to me, I was in communications and the captain said, 'Kemp, we have got to have weather data to get out of this mess that we're in.'

I said, 'With the atmosphere the way it is, we're not getting the normal high-frequency communications we use to communicate.' And he said, 'Can you not do anything?'

I remember telling him, 'The only thing I can do, we have a small 100 watt little transmitter down here and I can go out and send an SOS and see if somebody will respond.'

He said, 'Do whatever you got to do.' Well, I did! I went out, and believe it or not, someone in Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam responded. I gave him our coordinates and where we were at and I said, 'Please send us weather data.'

Of course I'm typing it up because it's all in Morse Code. This wasn't talking to somebody, it was all in Morse Code. But anyway, we eventually did get out of that bad weather. We did have some problems. It had actually cracked the hull a little bit on that ship.

Verse 39: "And after being awakened, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Silence! Be still.' And the wind died, and there was a great calm.

And He said to them, ‘Why are you so fearful? Why do you not have faith?’” (vs 39-40).

Verse 41: “But they were afraid, and said to one another in great fear, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?’”

It’s amazing how quick we move from peace to problems in this world that we live in today. Perhaps this incident in sea actually prepared them for the next encounter:

➤ **The Man Who Makes His Home in the Cemetery**

Mark 5:1: “And they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. And as soon as He had left the ship, *there* met Him from out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, **who had his dwelling among the tombs**; and no one had the power to restrain him even with chains... [had some demons] ...for he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but the chains had been torn to pieces by him, and the fetters had been shattered; and no one had the strength to subdue him. And continually, night and day, in the mountains and in the tombs, he was screaming and cutting himself with stones” (vs 1-5).

Boy, what a frightening encounter, an experience to encounter with a man after crossing the sea.

Everything in the cemetery speaks of the past, but Christ would give this man a new future. This man had an unclean spirit.

- unclean thoughts
- unclean words
- unclean deeds

He was an outcast from society and obviously from what we just read, a very violent man. The demons had made their home with this man.

Verse 6: “But when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him [Christ].”

Now, the demons recognized Jesus immediately; they knew who He was.

Verse 7: “And crying *out* with a loud voice, he [the demon] said, ‘What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of God the Most High? I adjure You by God, do not torment me.’”

Christ had the authority over these demons and they knew it!

Verse 8: “For He was saying to it, ‘Unclean spirit, come out of the man.’ And He asked it, ‘What *is* your name?’ And it answered, ‘My name *is* Legion, because we are many’” (vs 8-9).

A legion in Rome at that time was about 6,000 people.

Verse 10: And it begged Him again and again that He would not send them out of the country. Now near the mountain, there was a large herd of swine feeding; and all the demons pleaded with Him, saying, ‘Send us to the swine, so that we may enter into them.’ Then Jesus immediately permitted them *to go*. And the unclean spirits went out *of the man and* entered into the swine; and the herd stampeded down the steep *slope* into the sea (now, they were about two thousand), and they *all* drowned in the sea” (vs 10-13).

Christ destroyed the now demon-possessed swine.

Verse 15: “And they came to Jesus and saw the man who had been possessed by demons, the one who had the Legion, sitting and clothed and of a sound mind; and they were afraid.”

What a strange and yet not so strange reaction from the demons who did not want Jesus to make His home with them.

- the swine meant more to them and their sanity
- pigs meant more to them than peace
- hogs meant more to them than happiness in God’s Kingdom

Jesus granted their request and departed. In other words, Jesus doesn’t stay where He’s not wanted. He’s not going to stay.

This man wanted to stay with Jesus, however.

Verse 18: “Now when He boarded the ship, the one who had been possessed by demons begged Him that he might be with Him.”

I would certainly feel that way and understand; the man’s finally been healed. But Jesus denied that request. But he sent the man home with a message: ‘Selah’; now you think on this!

Verse 19: Jesus tells the man, “...‘Go to your house and to your own, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and *how He* has pitied you.’ Then he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed” (vs 19-20).

What a homecoming that must have been. What a miracle! You know, we’ve been given the same commission today. Do we tell our family and our friends what a blessing that Christ has been for us?

Do we show our faith by putting our trust in Christ as this man did?

➤ **Be Clean**

This one really hits home with me sometimes; I don't know why.

Matt. 7, Jesus had just completed His 'Sermon on the Mount' and the people were astonished by His teaching.

Matthew 7:28: "Now, it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching; for He taught them as One Who had authority, and not as the scribes" (vs 28-29).

This sets the setting; as he comes down off the mount for His next miracle, He comes down from the mountain to minister to the sick and the multitude followed Him and they were met by a leper (Matt. 8:1-2).

Amazing! You don't want to come in close contact with lepers. But now this multitude would have been in no mood to be confronted by this leper, because leprosy is an infectious disease. And back then many were actually required to wear special clothing or walk around ringing a bell to warn the people to stay away. Leprosy is spread by direct contact.

So, this leper was an outcast from society and no one wanted to come near him. Yet, these people ***should have been on a spiritual high*** after the 'Sermon on the Mount.'

The great sermon that this was should have inspired them *to care and to serve!* You know, leprosy, in a way, pictures what sin has done for you and I. Similar! Like this leper, we were all unclean without Christ. We were all unclean!

Romans 3:10: "Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—**not even one!** There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have **all** gone out of the way; together they have **all** become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes'" (vs 10-18).

Verse 23—Paul *makes it exceptionally clear*: "For **all**... [not one or two] ...have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

That includes you, and that includes me! And like this unclean leper, our sins have earned us a death penalty.

Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death..."

Do we have the compassion, the love, and the concern that Christ had for the sick and for the unclean? Do we? *This leper came to worship Christ!*

Matthew 8:2: "And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, if You will, You have the power to cleanse me.'" *Faith! I believe it!*

Notice the fact that this leper called Him 'the Lord' and apparently had the faith that *Christ could and would* heal him.

- the thief on the cross called Jesus 'Lord' (Luke 23:42).
- the woman taken in adultery called Him 'the Lord' (John 8:11).
- the leper believed that Jesus could do anything

Jesus was moved with compassion for this leper; there's no doubt about it.

Mark 1:41^[transcriber's correction] "Then Jesus, being **moved with compassion**, stretched out *His* hand *and* touched him... [Who wants to touch a leper?] ...and said to him, 'I will. Be cleansed.'"

Compassion is to feel what another person feels. Do you ever put yourself in that position? Jesus identifies with the pain of this dying man. He also identifies with our pain when we reach out to Him. We all deal with pain at some time or another in different ways we all deal with pain.

Jesus was not afraid to touch the untouchable. Is this our attitude, as well? We're like our older Brother Christ. Do we feel the compassion for the unclean?

Matthew 8:3: "Then Jesus stretched out *His* hand *and* touched him, saying, 'I will. Be cleansed.' And immediately *he* was cleansed *from* his leprosy." *Faith!*

We're so fortunate that we have been touched by Christ. Who have you and I touched lately?

➤ **Touched the Hem of His Garment**

There's so many miracles performed by Christ that He gave us inspiration, hope and courage. But this one in Luke 8:43-48 should touch us all.

There have been songs and poems and multiple sermons on this Scripture. This is the story of a woman in trouble. It talks about her desperation, her determination, and then her miraculous delivery.

And more importantly, her experience relates to us today. I want you to think on that.

This is the story of a woman's desperation and her problem is revealed in one verse:

Luke 8:43: "And a woman who had been *afflicted* with a flow of blood for twelve years, and had spent *her* whole living on physicians, *but* could not be cured by anyone."

Pretty desperate! This woman had a tremendous incurable disease. She had spent all the money that she had on physicians. And she was certainly considered ceremonially unclean. She, in some ways, was much like the leper that we just talked about. How did this sickness affect her? *Several ways!*

1. *physically*, she was desperate; her health was gone
2. *financially*, she was desperate; her money was gone
3. *spiritually*, she was desperate; she couldn't even enter the temple because she was unclean

This woman, in many ways, pictures all people, all people who are separated from Christ.

- *Physically*, as humans, we are, every day moving, moving toward death.
- *Financially*, money can't buy what we really need. Solomon says, 'Everything is vanity and like chasing after a handful of wind.' And he had plenty of money.
- Finally, *spiritually*, our sins separate us from God!

We can all learn a lesson from this woman's determination:

Verse 44: "[She]came behind *Him* and touched the border of *His* garment; and immediately the flow of her blood stopped." *It was gone!*

There's so many conditions that could have stopped this woman from pressing on toward Christ. Think about this: There was a great crowd surrounding Him and it must have been difficult for her to try and press through that crowd.

Have you ever been to a major sporting event or, you know, at a football stadium or a concert or even maybe shopping or, you know, one of the big shopping seasons like Christmas or something like that? You have some idea of what the problem she faced trying to just get through the crowd. Christ was so popular, everyone wanted to get to Him. He was an important figure. Then there was the fact of her physical condition.

- she was pale

- she was poor
- she was pitiful
- she was weak

Still, her faith in his power to heal kept her pressing toward the goal of touching Him. I almost get touched thinking about this kind of faith.

Mark 5:28: "For she said, 'If I can only touch His garments, I shall be cured.'"

This woman's deliverance came through faith and her contact with Jesus!

Luke 8:45: "And Jesus said, 'Who touched Me?' And as everyone began to deny *it*... ['Wasn't me, Lord, wasn't me!'] ...Peter and those with Him said, 'Master, the multitudes are thronging and pressing You, and You ask, "Who touched Me?"'"

Verse 46: "But Jesus said, 'Someone touched Me, **because I know that power went out from Me.**'"

Her deliverance came from her contact with Jesus. ***This was indeed a touch of faith!*** She exercised greater faith than those who were healthy around her. This woman made her declaration to Christ in:

Verse 47: "Then the woman, seeing that her *act* was not concealed, came trembling; and after falling down in front of Him before all the people, she declared for what cause she had touched Him, and how **she had immediately been healed.**"

This is touching! This woman came trembling to Christ for testimony. She confessed why she touched Him and declared to the crowd what had happened. Because of her faith in a multitude of people, you know, her words are still known today. In touching Jesus, she was able to touch others.

I don't know if this touches you, brethren, but it touches me. Do we have the faith to press through the crowd and to become part of God's Family? Notice how Jesus answered her:

Verse 48: "And He said to her, 'Be of good courage, daughter; **your faith has healed you. Go in peace.**'"

There are so many miracles described in the Bible that have meanings and lessons for us today.

- What do we take home from what we just read?
- What application do these miracles have for our lives?

By now a pretty clear picture should be emerging about the lessons of these miracles. But to drive home the picture, let's just look at one more miracle.

➤ **waking on the water**

Matt. 14—in this chapter, we read about John the Baptist being beheaded. Can you imagine how that affected Jesus when John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod? *And after hearing of this, Christ departed into the wilderness!* I don't doubt that at all.

Matthew 14:14: “And after going out, Jesus saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion toward them, and healed their sick.”

And then we see the miracle of feeding the multitude (vs 15-21). Even in the state of condition, he must have felt about John the Baptist.

Verse 22: “And immediately Jesus compelled His disciples to enter the ship and go before Him to the other side, while He dismissed the multitude.”

At this point, it appears that Jesus needed time alone to pray. You ever had needed time alone to pray?

Verse 23: “And after dismissing the multitude, He went up into the mountain apart to pray; and when evening came, He was there alone. But the ship was now in *the* middle of the sea, being tossed by the waves, because the wind was contrary” (vs 23-24).

Once again, Christ was there where they needed Him.

Verse 25: “Now in *the* fourth watch of the night, Jesus went to them walking on the sea.”

- Can you imagine that?
- Can you even imagine that?

Sidebar: You know, I joke sometimes and I did tell a story about walking on the sea. I was somewhere in one of the Caribbean islands that our ship had been in, and I was probably waist deep in water. all of a sudden, the guys on shore, because I was facing the shore and they did their faces were white and they turned around and pointed behind me and it was a shark fin sticking up out of the water. Trust me, I walked on the water to get out of that water.

Verse 25: “Now in *the* fourth watch of the night, Jesus went to them walking on the sea.”

An obvious lesson here is that ***Christ is always there when you need Him!*** It's always there. Then Jesus encouraged them in:

Verse 26: “And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled and said ‘It is

an apparition!’ And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘Be of good courage; ***it is I. Do not be afraid!***” (vs 26-27).

Now comes Peter's challenge, v 28: “Then Peter answered Him *and* said, ‘Lord, if it is You, bid me to come to You upon the waters.’” Notice Christ simple response:

Verse 29: “And He said, ‘**Come.**’....”

Notice that word *come* is an invitation. It invites someone to do something. The Bible has probably 1900 invitations. Let's consider a few of those invitations.

Notice in Matthew 11:28—*Christ tells us, like he told Peter:* “Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Do we do that in this world today? *What a shaky world we live in!* We labor and we are probably overburdened with what's taking place. This is an invitation for us to find real rest in Christ.

Matthew 19:14: “But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.’”

We should come to Christ with that same attitude as a child!

John 7:37: “Now, in the last day, the great *day* of the Feast, Jesus stood and called out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.’”

That's a challenge! That's a promise! He's inviting us to partake of his Holy Spirit.

Verse 39: “But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, which those who believed in Him would soon receive; for *the* Holy Spirit was not yet *given* because Jesus was not yet glorified.” *He is now!*

We're told when the Father calls, we are invited to come. We know this Scripture:

John 6:37: “All whom the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

These are all promises! We have an invitation to come to Christ with the humility of a child, casting all of our burdens on Him and receive the Holy Spirit, which many of us have been to the baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit. **Do we fully put our trust in Him?**

Now back, back to Peter's situation, he was invited to come to walk on the sea. ***Peter truly takes a leap of faith***, there's no doubt about it and stepped out on the water

Matthew 14:29: “And He said, ‘Come.’ And after climbing down from the ship, Peter walked

upon the waters to go to Jesus.” *Amazing!*

Be aware here, Peter was a fisherman who had knowledge and experience with the sea, kind of like I did; I spent a lot of time on the sea.

Verse 24: “But the ship was now in *the* middle of the sea, being tossed by the waves, because the wind was contrary.”

Peter knew the possibility of drowning and the other dangers of the sea. He knew what it was like. It’s funny, but men always seem to love adventure! Have you ever thought about that? They go mountain climbing. I’ve done some of that!

Skydiving—that one I don’t do. I just can’t understand why anybody would personally jump out of a perfectly good airplane. Car racing, space travel! We get involved in all kinds of dangerous situations.

Peter stepped out on faith, *and he put his trust in God!* I hope we all see the main lesson of these miracles—it’s called ***faith!***

Let’s recap a little bit of what we read:

➤ **the marriage ceremony**

Mary took her problem to Jesus *with unquestionable faith!* No doubt that Jesus could and would solve her problem.

When we have a problem, do we take it to Christ unwaveringly in faith?

➤ **the man with the withered hand**

He was not afraid to take his weakness or his affection to Christ, and *his faith that Christ could and would heal him and make him whole!* That takes a lot of faith.

- Do we take our afflictions to Christ with 100% faith that Christ will do what is best for us?

or

- Do we lose faith if we don’t always get the answer that we want?

➤ **the man who was possessed with demons**

He wanted to make his home with Christ. He must have had the faith to go to Christ in the first place because these demons obviously didn’t want anything to do with Christ. His faith made him whole and he carried that message of his miraculous healing to others.

Can you imagine, can you imagine the inspiration that this man must have been to others? *They knew this man! They saw his condition.*

- Do we make our home with Christ?
- Do we inspire others with the Truth of God’s Kingdom?
- Is our faith apparent to others?

➤ **the untouchable man with leprosy**

He was unclean and he came to Jesus with the faith that He would make him clean. This man had no life and was an outcast to society. *Yet, his faith, his faith made him whole.*

- Do we take our sins that make us unclean to Christ?

Maybe some of you don’t sin; ***I think all of us do!*** Not meaningfully after baptism, but we’re going to make mistakes.

- Do we believe and have the faith to believe that he will make us clean?
- Do we examine our life for the sins that need healing?
- Do we take them to Christ with the faith that he will actually get rid of it and make us clean?
- Do we ask Christ to cleanse us, as did this leper, and have the faith to know that it will happen?

➤ **the woman with the issue of blood and the incurable disease and nothing left to live for**

I’m telling you that this is, to me, one of the most inspiring of all of them. She was sick, she was pale, she was weak, she was tired, out of money! Yet, she fought her way through a multitude of people to get to Christ. It couldn’t have been easy.

Her faith gave her the determination and the drive to come to Christ. Her faith was strong! She believed that just touching Christ’s garment would heal her.

- Is our faith as strong as this woman’s?
- Is our faith strong enough to make us whole and part of God’s Family?
- Will we be called a son or a daughter?

➤ **Peter stepping out on faith and walking on water**

But then reality stepped in! Peter realized what he was doing was not humanly possible *and his faith was faltering!*

He was in a dangerous situation away from the ship in turbulent waters. All looked helpless, he gave a short and intense prayer to Christ.

Matthew 14:30: “But when he saw *how*

strong the wind *was*, he became afraid; and *as* he was beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, ‘Lord, save me!’ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, **why did you doubt?**’” (vs 30-31).

In our times of trouble, when all looks hopeless, do we put our trust in God and call out for help? *Remember, Christ is compassionate and He wants us to come to Him for help!*

But let’s not be mistaken about faith. We’ve just read the stories of people that have faith and we’re healed.

Does that mean every time that we go to God with our problems, we will get what we asked for? *The answer to that is a resounding NO!*

God has a purpose in all that He does and we won’t always know what that purpose is. We know that:

- ✓ Paul had an affliction that he prayed about; *he was not healed!*
- ✓ Abraham was promised a child, *but he had to wait for 25 years for it to be fulfilled!*
- ✓ Even Christ, when His hour was approaching, He fell on his face praying and saying, ‘My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass for Me.’ (Matt.26:39). Yet, He still had to go through His terrible pain and death

What is faith? Webster’s dictionary defines faith as:

An unquestioningly unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence; complete trust, confidence and reliance.

We need to trust God regardless of outcomes, as Christ stated to His Father in:

Matthew 26:39: “And after going forward a little, He fell on His face, praying, and saying, ‘My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; **nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.**”

We can’t lose faith because of outcomes!

Heb. 11—here we get the true definition of faith. I’ve used this many times in sermons, ***because this is faith!*** This is a real definition:

Hebrews 11:1: “Now, faith is *the substance of things hoped for...*”

- we are hoping for a resurrection
- we’re hoping to become part of God’s Kingdom

“...of things hoped for, and ***the conviction of things not seen...*** [we’ve not seen these things] ...For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report. By faith we understand that the worlds were created

by *the Word of God...*” (vs 1-3).

We truly believe that we don’t know! Were you there when He created it? *Job tried to question Him on that!*

“...so that the things that are seen were made from *things* that are invisible” (v 3). *We can’t see them!*

Then in verses 4-35 we read of those that received the promises based on faith. They went through all that.

Verse 36—we’re told, because I want you to get this; I want to make this very clear here.

Verse 36: “And others endured *the* trial of *cruel* mocking and scourging; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment.... [Paul went through a lot of that] ...They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were *brutally* interrogated, *and* slaughtered by *the* sword. They went about in sheepskins *and* in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, *and* ill-treated” (vs 36-37).

Verse 39: “But these all, *though* they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise”—***not yet!***

But our faith does not require proof or evidence, but complete trust in God that we will marry His Son and our Lord and Savior and be part of the Family of God in a soon coming Kingdom.

And may God bring that day soon, when I see some of the things taking place in the world today,

I’m deeply touched by some of these stories, by these miracles, we see the compassion that Christ had for those in need. ***We have an invitation and Christ asked us to come to Him with our problems so that He can heal us of our afflictions!***

Will our faith make us whole?

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Timothy 3:16
- 2) John 1:49-51
- 3) John 2:1-3, 5, 4, 6-7, 9-10
- 4) Mark 2:23-28
- 5) Mark 3:1-5
- 6) Mark 4:35-41
- 7) Mark 5:1-15, 18-20
- 8) Matthew 7:28-29
- 9) Romans 3:10-18, 23
- 10) Romans 6:23
- 11) Matthew 8:2
- 12) Mark 1:41
- 13) Matthew 8:3

- 14) Luke 8:43-44
- 15) Mark 5:28
- 16) Luke 8:45-48
- 17) Matthew 14:14, 22-29
- 18) Matthew 11:28
- 19) Matthew 19:14
- 20) John 7:37, 39
- 21) John 6:37
- 22) Matthew 14:29, 24, 30-31
- 23) Matthew 26:39
- 24) Hebrews 11:1-3, 36-37, 39

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 8:1
- Luke 23:42
- John 8:11
- Matthew 14:15-21
- Hebrews 11:4-35

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