



John 10:30-42

If You Don't Believe In His Miracles You Don't Believe in Him

30 "I and My Father are one."

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

32 Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?"

33 The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."

34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods" '?"

35 "If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken),

36 "do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"

37 "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;

38 "but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."

39 Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

40 And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed.

41 Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true."

42 And many believed in Him there.

We hear the term *miracle* a lot, sometimes it is used rather loosely to refer to events like the Boston Red Sox winning the World Series for the first time in 86 years and then winning it again four years later. That sort of thing is unlikely, but only a Yankees fan would call it *miraculous*.

Sometimes we hear the word *miracle* applied to something quite common but which clearly has a divine stamp on it like the miracle of birth.

But here in the Gospels when miracles or signs and wonders are being spoken of it is usually an event that goes against the ordinary laws of nature and for which we have no material explanation. Turning water into wine, raising the dead, walking on water, healing a man blind since birth. Now these are things that ordinary men cannot do, because they are governed by the laws of nature and cannot overrule them. A miracle is by definition supernatural. Now of course, unlike men God can do them, because He is the creator and governor of the universe and not constrained by the "natural laws" of that universe. So, for instance, if it were His desire that water become a surface upon which he can walk, then He can do it.

Unbelievers pay a lot of lip service to the importance of miracles. For instance, I cannot tell you how many times I have heard some sort of variation on the following theme, "*I'm sorry but I don't believe the Christian faith. If only I could see miracles, then I would believe in Jesus and Christianity.*"

But of course that's not true is it? We have plenty of examples of people in the bible who saw many miracles and yet did not believe. Men like King Ahab in the Old Testament, on Mt. Carmel he saw with his own eyes that all of the prophets of Baal and their false god had no miracle working power at all. They couldn't so much as create the tiniest flame. And he also saw with his own eyes that that Yahweh, the Lord God of Israel, had the power not only to send fire to consume a sacrifice that had been soaked multiple times, but to consume even the stone altar it lay upon. And yet he would not repent, and believe. I'm often struck as well by the New Testament example of Judas. He saw every miracle that Jesus did in His three year public ministry, and yet he never believed. If the scriptures teach us anything it is that signs and wonders are never sufficient without faith. And as we shall see in a little while, those who are granted the gift of faith do not need spectacular miracles to lead them to Christ.

The Jews understand what Jesus is saying when He said "I and My Father are one" just as they understand what He meant when earlier He had said in John 8:58 ***"Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."*** Using there the divine I AM – the name God used of Himself when He spoke to Moses in Exodus 3:14. He is claiming an essential oneness and equality with God the Father. Unfortunately we know that the understand what He is saying, because once again they pick up stones.

Christ's calm is striking, I sense most of us surrounded by an angry mob selecting stones, wouldn't be quite so calm. But of course the difference is, the unlike us far too often, Christ has utter confidence in the Father, and He knows it is not yet the appointed time, and that until that day, they can do nothing.

But how is Jesus going to defuse this situation?

First, He asks a question, ***"I did many miracles by the will of the father in your presence. Which one of them are you going to stone me for?"*** He is calling them once again to examine the miracles He had done, and come to the conclusion that the man born blind whom he had healed had come to, you can read it in John 9:32 ***"Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."***

How can He be a blasphemer when His miracles testify to the fact that He was sent by God and has His approval? But they disregard this, and please note they don't say ***"no you didn't do any miracles in front of us, we don't know what you are talking about."*** They actually have the gall to say, "Oh we aren't stoning you because of the miracles you did." So much for ***"if I could see miracles I'd believe"*** They dismiss them as irrelevant, and say they are going to stone Him for blasphemy.

The ironic thing is that here we have the Jews saying that they are going to stone Jesus because ***"because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."*** When in fact the truth is exactly the reverse of their charge, He being God, made Himself Man in order to redeem men, or as John put it in John 1:14 ***"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us"***

Jesus once again attempts to reason with them, this time he appeals to something not even they could dismiss as irrelevant, he appeals to the testimony of the word of God which as Jesus puts it, cannot be broken that is it cannot ever be shown to be false or non-authoritative and quotes Psalm 82 which says ***"I said, "You are gods, And all of you are children of the Most High. But you shall die like men, And fall like one of the princes."*** Now here Jesus is arguing from the lesser to the greater. If scripture refers to Israel's judges and magistrates as "gods" because although they were mortal were invested with the authority of God and sent by Him to speak for Him, then how much more so is God's Son who was sanctified or set apart, given power, and sent into the world qualified to be called GOD?

Then Jesus says something that should blow modern liberal Christianity out of the water. He acknowledges that their unbelief *would* be justified if He could not back up His claims to divinity. ***If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me.*** We'll talk about this further in a little while, but notice here that Jesus Himself says that if He hadn't done miracles, then men would be RIGHT not to believe. But He says I DID do miracles, and on that basis you *should* believe.

But He challenges them, for the last time, if you do not believe my words, then believe my works. Here the principle he's applying is a good one. He is saying once again, judge the tree by its fruits, and the prophet by his works. But unfortunately what the Jews are doing, in essence, is acknowledging that yes this particular tree has apples on it, but it cannot possibly be an apple tree.

Because what those signs that Jesus did, by themselves, cannot do is overcome the impediment of these men's dark and stony hearts. No amount of evidence or eloquence ever can. What is needed is work of grace in them, changing their hearts, and that is something that only the Holy Spirit can do.

Well this exchange between Jesus and the Jews bears no fruit either, but at least the initial impulse to stone Him is defused. We read in verse 39 that after this they tried to *piasai* Him, that is to seize or arrest Him – they clearly want to bring Him to trial *now*. But it is not yet His time, and as God the Son, they can have no power over Him until the time that HE has appointed. I like here what Pink says ***“Soon He would deliver Himself into their hands, but until the appointed hour arrived they might as well attempt to harness the wind as lay hands on the Almighty.”***

With this rejection, Christ's public ministry in Judea comes to a close, and because He has also concluded his ministry in the north in Galilee, Jesus does not go back there either, instead He moves beyond the jurisdiction of the leaders of the Jews, he goes beyond Jordan into the area controlled by the Tetrarch Phillip to the place where His public ministry started where John the Baptist was baptizing. Many there believe in Him, and not on the basis of external signs and wonders, because as they have seen, by themselves they are powerless to convert men even though they should be enough. They believe on the basis of another miracle, but not one that occurs out here in the world. They believe because they heard the truth of the gospel preached by John and by Jesus, and that truth came with the Holy Spirit's regenerating power. They believed because they were effectual called. They were His Sheep, and when their Master Called to them, ***“Come, Follow Me.”*** They did.

Three Applications:

First Regarding Scripture: There are many who view the Word of God as essentially a collection of fables, many who have called themselves Christians have viewed it as deeply flawed book containing the word of God and the words of men, for instance, in prior centuries “moderate” Presbyterian ministers (because liberals always call themselves “moderate”) used to say they agreed with Westminster Shorter Catechism that the Word of God is *contained* in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, but what they didn't note was that when they said “contained” they meant “oh, its in there somewhere - along with a lot of other stuff we need pay no attention to.” But what a contrast to the view of scripture that Christ has. As Ryle said ***“He lays down the great principle, “the Scripture cannot be broken.” It is as though He said, “Wherever the Scripture speaks plainly on any subject, there can be no more question about it. The cause is settled and decided. Every jot and tittle of Scripture is true, and must be received as conclusive.”***

Every Book, Every Chapter, Every Verse, and Every Word in this Book, is unbreakable. All Scripture is God breathed. The longer I live, the more I am amazed by the perfection of scripture. I feel I am only just

beginning to grasp what Paul was saying when he wrote: *2 Tim. 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*

17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Second Regarding Miracles: Many who would call themselves Christians and say they believe in Jesus, deny that Christ ever did any miracles. That is foolishness and only to be believed by the primitive people of long ago. I would note two things in answer to that: First, that Jesus Himself appealed directly appeals directly to His miracles again and again as evidence of His Divinity. He says that what would be REALLY foolish, just stupid in fact, would be to believe in Him if HE HADN'T DONE any miracles. The Apostles recognized that as well. They were willing to affirm that if Christ's miracles hadn't happened, and in particular His most important miracle, His Rising from the Dead on the third day, then the Christian faith would be a pointless, hopeless lie:

1 Cor. 15:14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up -- if in fact the dead do not rise.

16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.

17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!

18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Second, there were an awful lot of primitive people of long ago, who didn't believe His miracles either. It's not the fact that men have microwave ovens that stops them from believing his miracles, it's the fact that they have unconverted hearts. Friends, don't take it from me, take it from Christ take it from His Apostles, a man who doesn't believe in the Miracles of Jesus, doesn't believe that He is the Christ.

Finally, a word to Christians, please take *note that unbelief is not neutral*. The unconverted man is spoken of as someone who is an enemy of God, who hates Him. That is why Jesus says in John 15:25 "they have hated me without cause" God came near to men and they sought to kill him.

"The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." It is in his heart he says this; this is the secret desire of every unconverted bosom. If the breast of God were within the reach of men, it would be stabbed a million of times in one moment. When God was manifest in the flesh, he was altogether lovely; he did no sin; he went about continually doing good: and yet they took him and hung him on a tree; they mocked him and spat upon him. And this is the way men would do with God again."- Robert Murray M'Cheyne, 1813-1843—Treasury of David, The

How do sinful men seek to Kill God today? Besides, I am persuaded also, that despair is the cause that there are so many that would fain be Atheists in the world. For, because, they have entertained a conceit that God will never be merciful to them, therefore they labour to persuade themselves that there is no God at all, as if their misbelief would kill God, or cause him to cease to be. – Bunyan

We see this in the works of Dawkins and Dennett the school policies, the bus campaigns, so be prepared and know that you can't remain neutral either. *"Let him not suppose that any degree of consistency will deliver him from this cross. It is not his faults, but his graces, which call forth the enmity of men."*