

Christ's Miraculous Compassion (Matt 8:1-4)

Introduction: *Following Jesus*

- “He appointed twelve, that they might be *with Him* and that He might send them out to preach” (Mark 3:14).
- “When they saw the boldness of Peter and John ... they realized that they had been *with Jesus*” (Acts 4:13).
- “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is trained will be *like his teacher*” (Luke 6:40).

1. Our Problem with the Miracles: *Unbelief that God actually became man*

We read time and again, that multitudes of sick and crippled continually came to Jesus, and he healed them *all* (e.g. Matt 8:16, 12:15, Luke 6:19).

“Do not attempt to water Christianity down. There must be no pretense that you can have it with the supernatural left out. So far as I can see Christianity is precisely the one religion from which the miraculous cannot be separated. You must frankly argue for supernaturalism from the very outset” (C. S. Lewis, *God in the Dock*, p. 99).

2. Our Need For The Miracles: *far easier to believe, but not worth it*

Gresham Machen: “The New Testament without the miracles would be **far easier to believe**. But the trouble is, **it would not be worth believing**. Without the miracles the New Testament would contain an account of a holy man... But of what benefit would such a man, and the death which marked his failure, be to us?” (*Christianity & Liberalism*, p. 103-104, emphasis added).

But these miracles are precisely what we would expect to happen if the Creator of the world came into world. The reason some don't believe in the miracles is because they simply do not believe in God our Savior. They have not known Him, and He has not known them. Jesus hangs his authority to forgive our sins on his demonstrated authority to command a paralytic to walk in front of skeptical men (Matt 9:5-8).

3. Our Learning From The Miracles: *There's no separating Christ the Teacher from Christ the Healer*

Some have called these miracles “enacted parables” (John Stott, *Basic Christianity*, p. 32). Or, as C. S. Lewis said, “The miracles in fact are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see” (*God in the Dock*, p. 29). These miracles are “enacted parables.” They are “show and tell” Christianity. Jesus came to fulfill Isaiah 53: “He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases.”

This is the great lesson of our Lord's miracles. They're a picture of what is now, and what can be now, when men and women boys and girls believe in the Lord. Come to Jesus—the same Jesus with the same compassion and the same almighty power—and say to him, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean!”

The “Auburn Affirmation” (1924)

- (1) Inerrancy of the Scriptures,
- (2) The virgin birth (and the deity of Jesus),
- (3) The doctrine of substitutionary atonement,
- (4) The bodily resurrection of Jesus, and
- (5) The authenticity of Christ's miracles.

“These are not the only theories allowed by the Scriptures and our standards as explanations of these facts and doctrines of our religion, and that all who hold to these facts and doctrines, whatever theories they may employ to explain them, are worthy of all confidence and fellowship.”