



Messiah's Miracles, Part Three

"Messiah's Miracles" – September 2, 2018

Lesson – "Raising Lazarus"

Scriptures – John 11:1-44; Matthew 19:26

Introduction to lesson

Jesus was a close personal friend of this family; he loved them very much, and they loved him. At this point, Lazarus became very sick and was dying. Mary, Lazarus' sister, called for Jesus to come and heal him. Jesus waited two days before leaving and making his way to Lazarus. The journey from Galilee unto Bethany was approximately four days. So by the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had already been buried for four days. By the way things appeared, Jesus was too late. Mary and Martha told Jesus, "If thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (Jn. 11:21). They did not understand God's greater purpose in Lazarus' death. As they walked toward the grave weeping several said, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died" (v. 37)? When situations turn out wrong and leave us disappointed, this does not mean God has stopped working in our lives. God is getting ready to do something great. He may be working beyond our expectations.

Key Verse: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Why did Jesus wait to leave (v. 21)?
- + Was Martha's faith shaken (v. 22)?
- + Could they deny that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God (v. 45)?
- + What is impossible for God (see Matthew 19:26)?

Think about it: In John 11:43-44, Jesus "cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go." Jesus proved his authority over the power of death. He raised people from death to life. Again, Jesus said, "LOOSE HIM, and let him go." The power of death had control until Jesus spoke the words, "let him go." God wants you to be free today. Have you ever experienced that freedom? God wants to give you a new life. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). In Christ, we become a new creature with a new course of life and a new direction. In Christ, our eyes are opened to a new and living way. We have a life full of love, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost. We are free from the chains and bonds of this world. The opportunity for this new life is open to everyone. Jesus loves you and wants you to be free. God is powerful and more than able to do anything we need. But we must come to Jesus by faith and believe in his promises in order to receive.

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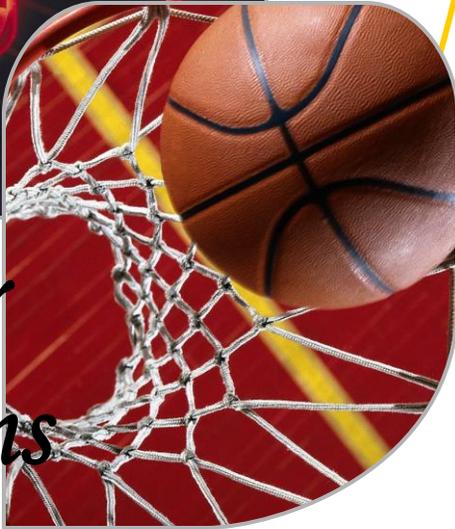


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Messiah's Miracles, Part Three

“Messiah's Miracles” – September 9, 2018

Lesson – “Withered Fig Tree”

Scriptures – Mark 11:12-14, 20-21

Introduction to lesson

In the week before his crucifixion, Jesus made his way into Jerusalem. After he came into Jerusalem, he cleansed the temple casting out those who were buying and selling, making the house of God into a den of thieves. Within this context, Jesus did something remarkable; he cursed a fig tree, and it withered and died. When Jesus saw the fig tree in the distance, he came close hoping to find figs, but it was empty. Jesus then cursed the tree and immediately the tree dried up. The disciples were amazed at how quickly it died, saying, “How soon is the fig tree withered away!” (Mt. 21:20). The fig tree was symbolic of the nation of Israel, and its withering signified the nation's spiritual death. The nation as a whole no longer produced fruit that was pleasing to the Lord. Therefore, they were rejected by the Lord and judged to be spiritually dead. The fig tree signified judgment upon those who rejected Christ and his gospel.

Key Verse: “Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, if he have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast unto the sea; it shall be done” (Mt. 21:21).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Why did Jesus curse the fig tree (Mt. 21:19; Mk. 11:13-14)?
- ✚ What was the significance of this miracle (Mk. 11:20-22)?
- ✚ What is faith (He. 11:1)?
- ✚ How strong is our faith in God (Mk. 11:23-24)?

Think about it: The disciples were amazed at what they had seen Jesus do. Jesus said, “Have faith in God” (Mark 11:22). The disciples had faith in God, but he wanted them to know that faith in God is the key to receive from him. Jesus explained that faith in God produces miracles. But even more, Jesus assured them that faith in God will move mountains (v.23). Faith is to believe in something when there is no proof. Faith is the essential requirement to please God and to receive from him. How strong is our faith in God? When we ask something from God, do we believe it will happen? James 1:6 says, “let us ask in faith not wavering.” All things are possible according to his will. Not only are we to have faith in God, but we should also have faith in the promises he made and in his power to perform it. Faith that is wavering is inconsistent and tossed back and forth. This kind of faith does not please God. If God can raise the dead and make a fig tree wither at his words, what is too big for him? Believing and trusting in God are not the same as believing we have received the answer to a specific need at a given moment. Miracles are obtained when we exercise a faith that believes we receive, even as we are asking for it. We must pray and believe as though it is already accomplished.

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Messiah's Miracles, Part Three

"Messiah's Miracles" – September 16, 2018

Lesson – "Christ's Resurrection"

Scriptures – Mark 16:1-14; 1 Cor. 15:52-54

Introduction to lesson

Jesus did many wonderful miracles during his earthly ministry. Many celebrated his supernatural works while many others made fun of and refused to believe him. No doubt, the greatest of Christ's miracles was his resurrection. Jesus' resurrection was the ultimate confirmation that he was the Son of God, for who else could lay down his life and then take it up again. The miracle of Christ's resurrection assures us that the dead in Christ will also be raised at his coming. Paul stated, "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed...So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:52-54). Paul taught that the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies on that day. Truly we serve a risen Savior. Because Jesus lives, we have assurance of life eternal. Praise the Lord! We serve a risen Savior, and one day we will rise with him. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25).

Key Verse: "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him" (Mark 16:6).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ What did the angel ask the women to do (Mk. 16:7)?
- ✚ Why didn't the disciples believe Jesus was risen (vv. 9-13)?
- ✚ Why is the resurrection so important to us (1 Cor. 15:52-54)?
- ✚ How has the resurrection of Christ changed our lives?

Think about it: Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James witnessed the crucifixion of Christ. Now they were going to the tomb to show their devotion to Jesus and complete the anointing of his body for burial. On the way, they were wondering who was going to move the stone away from the tomb once they arrived. But when they got to the tomb, the rock was already rolled away from the entrance. When they entered, there was an angel dressed in a white robe sitting there. The women were taken back and alarmed at this unexpected sight. The angel spoke to them saying, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you" (Mk. 16:6-7). Even though Jesus spoke repeatedly about rising again on the third day, they were not expecting or even hoping for a resurrection. When Jesus finally did appear to them, it changed everything; and the world hasn't been the same.

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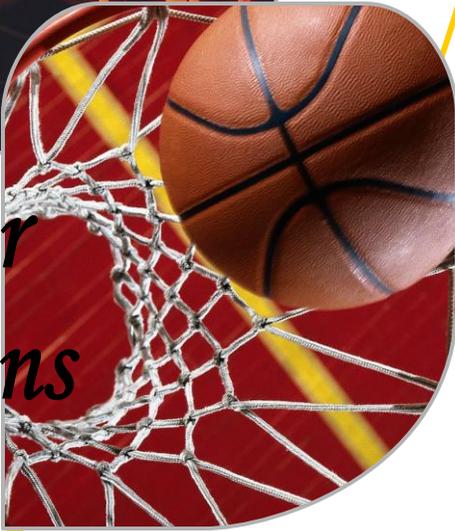


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Messiah's Miracles, Part Three

"Messiah's Miracles" – September 23, 2018

Lesson – "Vanished"

Scriptures – Luke 24:13-32

Introduction to lesson

In the New Testament, we read the eyewitness accounts of Christ's life, ministry, death, and resurrection. Of course, the biblical eyewitnesses are foundational to the faith and doctrine of Christ. For the apostle Thomas, seeing was believing. Nevertheless, the faith of these witnesses went beyond all they could see with the natural eye. They ultimately believed in Jesus because of their spiritual vision and revelation. Thus, they declared their eyewitness accounts because they were convinced from the Scriptures that he was indeed the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus wanted them to believe in him, not merely because they physically saw him and recognized him with their natural eyes, but because they believed God's Word and saw him with spiritual eyes of faith. When Jesus met two men on the road to Emmaus, they did not recognize him at first. He explained the prophecies written about Christ in the Old Testament. He wanted to open up their understanding from the Scriptures. When they finally reached Emmaus, they were eating, and the Lord blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to them. Instantly, their eyes were opened, and they knew Jesus through the breaking of bread. Suddenly, he vanished.

Key Verse: "And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight" (Luke 24:31).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ What helped the disciples to see Jesus (Lu. 24:30-31)?
- ✚ Why do you think Jesus vanished as he did (v. 31)?
- ✚ What was the reaction of the disciples (v. 32)?
- ✚ What ultimately established their understanding (v. 27)?

Think about it: One moment he was there and in the next he was gone. After this, any shred of doubt was removed. They knew this was the Lord. Jesus had risen from the dead. What was their reaction to this wonderful experience? They said to each other, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures" (v. 32)? As he declared the Word of God along the way to Emmaus, their spirit was greatly stirred within them. God was working deep in their hearts revealing Christ from the Scriptures. Then as he broke bread with them, they spiritually discerned that this man was actually the Son of the Living God. When they finally knew him, he vanished. His miraculous disappearance further confirmed he was Jesus. He departed supernaturally to prove he was in a resurrected and glorified state. He was no longer limited by the flesh. They saw him with their eyes and heard him with their ears, becoming eyewitnesses of his resurrection. But ultimately they were convinced because Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures.

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Messiah's Miracles, Part Three

"Messiah's Miracles" – September 30, 2018

Lesson – "Christ's Ascension"

Scriptures – Acts 1:1-11; Luke 24:50-51

Introduction to lesson

Following his death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples forty days, and demonstrated beyond any doubt that he had indeed risen from the dead. When the appointed time came for him to depart to the Father in heaven, how would he accomplish this? How would the risen Lord go back to the Father? His departing was clearly a supernatural event. Luke explained, "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:50-51). He could have simply vanished once again, but instead the disciples watched him as he went up into heaven "and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). When his feet left the ground, no earthly power could hold him down. He defied all the forces of gravity when he ascended back to heaven. Jesus' ascension demonstrated how the saints will be caught up in the clouds at the rapture when he comes again.

Key Verse: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9).

Questions to Discuss:

- + How did Jesus accomplish this miraculous feat?
- + What do you think the apostles were thinking?
- + What was the significance of his ascension?
- + What are we expecting to receive in a similar way?

Think about it: The ascension served to confirm that he actually returned to the Father in heaven just as he promised. Jesus declared, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:1-6). Jesus' ascension into heaven proved his promise to the disciples. It proved that he is the way to the Father and that he is preparing a place in heaven for us. In fact, as the apostles watched him go to heaven, two angels appeared to them saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Just as Christ ascended, we too will be caught up and "appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4). Our bodies will rise to meet Jesus in the air, and then we will be with him in glory forever. Therefore, our hope of salvation is not of this world, but of the world to come. One day very soon, Christ will step out on the clouds and call his children home.

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