

Signs of the Times 3

John 5:1-15 The healing of a man at the Pool of Bethesda.

The book of John = ***'Nothing compares to the Glory of the Lord'***. The whole of John's gospel is about declaring the glory of the Lord Jesus. Within the gospel there are seven signs all pointing to some aspect of the glory of God.

"I believe that the church has somehow wandered away from the glory of the Lord. I do not want to condemn any particular church or any particular ministry but the enemy of our faith has attempted, at times, to rob us of our relationship with God through worship. No relationship, no miracles. I believe that we will again see miracles and the supernatural coming more prominent in our walk and witness. I am not just talking about healings but financial, social, political miracles. We have already begun to see miracles in other ways and we will see more. The Family First political party getting a seat in the senate at its first go at federal politics. It's almost unheard of today. Christians winning major music awards and competitions. God wants to give us miracles. And even more recently the tsunami and the hundreds of miracles that continue to be reported.

In Advertiser 26.01.05 a lead story titled 'Miracles do happen' appeared. In it we see reference to the man saying 'by the grace of God I knew you were alive.'

1. People are hungry for the miraculous.

Verse 3 "in these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralysed, waiting for the moving of the water".

People are always waiting for the miraculous. They become so fed up with life as it is portrayed in the media and propagated by the community. People want change they want the supernatural. They want to see the evidence of the miraculous happening.

The miraculous builds faith. Why were there so many people around the pool? Simple - because there had been healings before. Miracles build faith.

The church needs miracles. The world desires the revelation of the sons of God. Romans 8:19. This is all about the church being supernatural in a natural world. Its time the church stopped looking for demons or spiritual forces and started doing the works of Jesus. Signs, wonders and miracles. 2005 is the year of the miracle.

2. Miracles are for everyone.

What do we know about this 'certain man'? We know he wasn't young, that he had the sickness for 38 years and that sickness disabled his mobility.

But what we don't know is enormous. We don't know the man's name. We don't know where he comes from. We don't know what caused the sickness. We don't know

anything about his family. We don't know anything about his past. We don't know for sure what his beliefs are or his commitment to them. We don't know what he looks like. We don't know what his thoughts are like. We don't know what he fills his days with. We don't know squat about him.

The reason we don't know squat is because we don't need to know. All we really know is that he met Jesus. All we really need to make sure is that people meet and hear about Jesus. They have to know about Him.

The second reason we don't know squat about him is that miracles happen to ordinary people.

3. God knows your needs... its whether you know Him.

Verse 6 "when Jesus saw him lying there, and he knew that he had been in that condition for a long time".

God knows your every need. There is no reason; there is total certainty that he is fully aware of your needs. The question then is why doesn't he do something about them. He cannot and will not override your free will. For if he does that then he becomes a dictator not a Father. The question then must be different. Do we know Him?

Miracles come in the presence of Him.

4. Miracles happen because of 'who' not 'how'.

Verse 6-8 Jesus asked what looked like a silly question. Why would he ask a man if he wanted to be healed if Jesus knew he was sick for a long time and the man had attempted to position himself in a place that gave healing, the pool of Bethesda? The reason Jesus asked that question was to display something.

Miracles don't necessarily happen because you are in the right place but because of who is in that place. God is not interested in just perpetuating a way of producing miracles, a method for miracles but in continually displaying to the world that it's in Jesus.

Our miracles happen not because we are in churches that for decades had miracles happen, not because we continue to pray for people a certain way. Not because we use a building that was named after this pool of Bethesda. Miracles happen because Jesus is here.

Its not the how but the who that miracles come from. Jesus was the pool off Bethesda. It's in a person not a place.

Today, be encouraged because the person of Jesus is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Hebrews 13:8. He, the who, is here and is with you always if you are a Christian. Miracles will happen. 2005 - the year of the miracle.