

Signs of the Times 7

Recently we have been looking at the seven signs that appear in John's gospel. We have uncovered some principles for Signs, Wonders and Miracles in our lives. Today we conclude this series by looking at the final sign written in John's Gospel.

The Raising of the dead: Lazarus John 11:1-44

This is the ultimate miracle. The ultimate sign to the lost generation. The ability of one man to change and alter the destiny of another man. To give man life

In today's society, doctors give people hope through various forms of medicine. Many people are able to live longer, live better and fuller lives because of the work of a marvellous group of people in the medical profession. They are even able to re-start a person's heart and now are attempting to restart various organs and or limbs through stem cell research and development.

But one thing eludes them. **The giving of Life.** Once a person has been dead for anything longer than a few minutes they almost find it impossible to give life. They can better life but the domain of giving life belongs to God and God alone.

You see, nothing compares to the glory of God. Absolutely Nothing!

John has culminated with the peak of miracles. Up until this point a lot of the miracles could be somehow explained away by man or at very least there will be an attempt to wipe away the miracle as a chance event. Isn't man funny? When something good happens to someone, it's chance. It happened by luck. But when something bad happens, it's fate - they determined their own destiny.

But nothing compares to the glory of God.

So what can we learn from this lesson on the Glory of God.

1. Miracles happen to people who know God.

Lazarus was Jesus' friend. He knew him. Look at verse 35-36. Jesus loved Lazarus.

Miracles happen to us because we know Jesus. He lives inside of us. Miracles become part of our lives because through us God displays His glory to the world. That's why we share with others about what God is doing in our lives.

2. Miracles begin with revelation.

Verse 9-10 Light is always symbolic of revelation. Without light we can't see. Miracles happen because we see. John very cleverly and under the hand of God puts something in here, which at first reading might not be noticed. Look again at verse 10. It reads "*But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.*" He did not say with him or in front of him but in him. What John was talking about was having Jesus on the inside of you. You need the light in you, not just with you. If the light is in you then you have revelation and thus you have miracles and you walk correctly through life.

That leads us to an important revelation

3. Miracles start from within.

What's on the outside of us does not determine miracles. It's what's on the inside of us that is the real miracle. Christ in us the hope of Glory. How awesome is that!

Your situation does not determine a miracle. That's one of the reasons why God doesn't intervene in situations. He will not over ride your free will and He continues to uphold the principle of **'what's in you is more important than what comes at you'**.

Now let's look at something else, I dare say many of us read over.

Verse 2 "It was Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick."

Now many of you are saying so? I mean any person who has been around church long enough would say. Yeah so what's so important about this. Maybe just John was helping us make a link to something we already know and thus showing how close the link between Jesus and Lazarus really was.

But let's have a closer look. Firstly, this gospel would have been presented to people to read separate to the others so although some may have been aware of Jesus' life and some of the miracles, most would not have. Ok you say where are you heading. Just hang with me. Let's turn to John chapter twelve and read the first three verses. Now wait a minute this story of the anointing appears after the raising of Lazarus from the dead. If that's the case then why is John mentioning it before? Chronologically he should never have said anything. Any unknown reader would say pardon. I did not know that. So I ask, why did John slip in something about an event that was yet to take place?

Good question and one I believe warrants an answer.

Firstly but not ultimately, John wanted to show how close Jesus was to Lazarus and his family. That's a given.

But let me share with you something. The very thing that Mary was going to prepare Him for is the very thing He was going to conquer. For you anoint someone for burial. John mentioned it here to make a very powerful point.

This story shows the miracle of giving life must always follow the death of something.

In other words 'FROM DEATH COMES LIFE'.

Miracles start with death. Something must die for the ultimate miracle to be revealed.

Jesus died so that we might have life and life abundantly. His death gives us the ultimate miracle of new creation. His death gives you the opportunity to walk in life. Without His death we have no life. Without His death we have no miracle.

Today, I ask do you know the miracle of the life of God flowing through you? If not then let me share it with you. When you receive Jesus as Lord, you die to yourself, the lordship of your life, and accept the lordship of Jesus. It's all about Him. It's about His death and His life flowing through yours.

Miracles are for today. This year is the year of the miracle. Your miracle. Let's walk in it.