

The Incarnation of God #3 The Witnesses of His Works

Intro: In our past couple of lessons we have seen that Jesus claimed to be the incarnation of God.

*First He claimed that He had an existence prior to his birth on earth.
Second He claimed that He had been sent by the Father for a unique mission on earth.*

When we are confronted by such amazing claims, it is reasonable to ask, “Should I believe this just because Jesus claimed it? What proof did Jesus offer to back up His claims? And it is clear that Jesus did not expect people to believe in Him simply based on His claims. In fact He said, “If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true.” (Jn. 5:31)

As result Jesus pointed to other witnesses to testify on His behalf and to support His claims. In our lesson last week we saw that He pointed to the testimony of John the Baptist.

There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears of Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. But the witness which I receive is not from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. (John 5:31-35)

John the Baptist gave four powerful testimonies about Jesus. He affirmed that Jesus was the Lord of the OT, that He was the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, and that He was the divinely-powerful provider for His future witnesses through His ability to baptize in the Holy Spirit, and that He was both the Christ of OT prophecy and the very Son of God. That is powerful testimony indeed!

But if God should come into the world would we not expect Him to do things human beings could not do to prove that He was really God? In John five Jesus made His appeal to these very things as a witness to His claim to be God in the flesh.

But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. (John 5:36)

Notice that Jesus claimed that His works would be an even greater witness that He was both the Son of God and the Christ. But what are those “works” that support Jesus’ claim to be God in the flesh?

No doubt those works include if not exclusively the miracles or signs that Jesus performed. In fact John goal in writing this gospel is to recount seven of the signs that Jesus performed that prove who He is:

Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:30-31)

The word “sign” suggests the idea of a miracle that points to a truth God is revealing through the miracle.

Out of all the miracles that Jesus did, John selected and recorded by the guidance of the Holy Spirit seven signs that proved Jesus’ claims.

Turning water to wine (Jn. 2:1-11)

Jesus first sign was performed at a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. The host had exhausted the supply of wine for the guests; and it was made know to Jesus. He had the servants fill six water pots with a capacity of 20-30 gallons each with water to the brim. The water was instantly turned into wine of such high quality that the head waiter who knew nothing of the means of its making acknowledged that it was the best wine served at the feast. It was a remarkable demonstration of divine creative power.

Healing a nobleman's son (Jn. 4:46-54)

In this case a nobleman from Capernaum appealed to Jesus to cure his son who was sick with a deadly fever indicating a serious infection. Remarkably the fever left the boy the very moment that Jesus said “Your son lives.” Yet Jesus was in Cana; the child was in Capernaum sixteen miles away! It was a remarkable demonstration of divine healing power.

Healing a lame man (Jn. 5:1-9)

A desperate man, who had been lame for 38 years, had placed his faith in a superstition about the stirring of the waters of the pool of Bethesda. He waited in vain for a healing there; but Jesus in a single moment and a single statement healed him completely from his lameness. It was a remarkable demonstration of divine regenerative power!

Feeding the multitudes (Jn. 6:1-14)

Thousands had followed Jesus to a remote area to hear Him teach; but at the end of the day He was concerned that they did not have food to sustain them on the journey back home. Jesus took a lad’s lunch (five loaves and a couple of fish) and made from them a supply of food sufficient to meet the needs of a company that included 5000 men along with women and children. It was a remarkable demonstration of the divine provisional power.

Walking on the water (Jn. 6:16-21)

From the eastern shore of Galilee Jesus saw his disciples struggling in a storm on the sea. He made his way across the sea to them walking on the water. The sea is 8 miles across at its widest point. Jesus walked half way across through the storm before the disciples received him into their boat. It was a remarkable demonstration of divine physical power.

Healing the blind man (Jn. 9:1-12)

Jesus found a man in Jerusalem who had been blind from birth. He made clay poultice, which he put on his eyes, and then commanded him to go to the pool of Siloam and wash it off. When he did as Jesus instructed, he returned seeing. It too was a remarkable demonstration of restorative power.

Raising Lazarus from the dead (Jn. 11:39-44)

Jesus arrived in Bethany at the home of his friend Lazarus four days after his death. Jesus at the tomb recalled Lazarus' spirit from the Hadean realm back into his body and restored him to his sisters.

It was a remarkable demonstration over the power of death itself!

Each of these alone would be a mighty display of divine power unlike anything any ordinary person could do. But why did Jesus perform the signs that He performed? These signs were witnesses that confirmed who Jesus was!

These seven signs point to seven distinct truths about Jesus.

If someone could give you a magic wand by which you could do any work of power, what would you do?

Levitate some heavy object.

Make someone or something disappear and reappear

Go out in the night skies and move stars around the heavens to spell a word or your name. And all these would be impressive works that would prove that supernatural power was working in you. But Jesus did not do such works.

It is interesting that, in at least five of the signs, John also records an explicit discourse by Jesus explaining the significance of the miracle He had just performed. In other words, Jesus did not perform miracles for miracles sake, but miracles in order to teach something about Himself. Each of Jesus' miracles attests to not only his physical power over the creation, but also His spiritual power to accomplish the work of redemption! Each of the could be seen as a metaphor for salvation! The water to wine pointed to Jesus' power to inaugurate a "new creation"!

John does not present a discourse of Jesus in connection with this miracle; but Jesus' creative power clearly points to His role as creator and serves as a sign of his power to effect a new creation in the lives of men.

Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The healing of the nobleman's son pointed to Jesus' power to make atonement for sin!

John does not present a discourse or claim of Jesus in connection with the miracle of healing the nobleman's son. But it is clear that, biblically speaking, disease is a common metaphor for sin.

Matthew would note Jesus' healings as fulfillment of Isaiah's words:

He Himself took our infirmities, and carried away our diseases. (Matthew 8:17)

and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

The healing of the lame man pointed to Jesus' power to regenerate.

Just as Jesus had made the dead limbs of the lame man alive, so He has the power to regenerate the dead bodies of the living and put them to work for God. Thus, He follows this miracle with the claim that He was only doing that which the Father had shown Him and which He also had the power to do.

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (John 5:24)

The walking of Jesus on the water pointed to Jesus' power to deliver us from spiritual danger.

Though the disciples were competent sailors, they were in real danger. Jesus' coming across the sea made clear that nothing than threatens men, threatens Him. Instead he can rescue or deliver us from whatever peril we face.

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. (Romans 5:9)

The feeding of the 5000 pointed to Jesus' power to satisfy our needs.

The next day after feeding the multitudes Jesus gave them the truth to which his sign had pointed:

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. (John 6:35)

The healing of the blind man pointed to Jesus' power to illumine those in darkness.

Jesus enabled a man who had known only darkness to see the light for the first time. He explained the truth to which the sign pointed:

While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. (John 9:5)

And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see; and that those who see may become blind." (John 9:39)

The raising of Lazarus pointed to Jesus' power to "give eternal life."

Jesus by the power of his word recalled Lazarus from the spirit world back into his decaying body. Jesus explained the truth to which this miracle pointed:

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)

Conclusion: By these remarkable claims Jesus proved without doubt that He was "the eternal God who made all things" and was "the Christ, the Son of God." But He did so much more! The miracles themselves are a "sign" pointing to all that He can do as God and Christ in saving our souls!

**He is the incarnation of God! Believe in Him based on the testimony of John!
Believer in Him based on the works that He did! Come to Him in faith and
receive the spiritual life that He came to bring.**