

PRAYERS

Chanice Shanks – Diagnosed with strep throat

Carmen Meyer – She had skin cancer removed from her leg

Butch and Chris (Anita's son and daughter in law) – Chris was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and they are waiting to talk with doctors later this week

Connie LaRocque – She fell and bruised her ribs and has quite a bit of pain

Congregation News

Potluck is next Sunday. Please bring a dish, share a meal and stay for singing for our afternoon service.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: Suspicion is like a pair of dark glasses--it makes all the world look dark

Class and Assembly Duties:

Sunday Morning Service:

12/10/17

12/17/17

Bible Class	Colby Crawford	Tom Bright
Announcements	Paul Darling	Tom Bright
Song Leader	Colby Crawford	Tom Bright
Opening Prayer	Colby Crawford	Colby Crawford
Lord's Supper	Paul Darling	Colby Crawford
Scripture Reading	Tom Bright	Paul Darling
Sermon	Tom Bright	Paul Darling

Bible Classes

Sunday Morning

Wednesday Evening

Adult	Tom Bright	Tom Bright
Children	Colby Crawford	Linda McBrayer
Toddlers	Cindy Bright	
Babies	Anissa Crawford	

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Building Cleanup

Darling

Aberdeen church of Christ

December 10, 2017

Seven Purposes of Jesus' Miracles

" Young man, I say to you, arise. So he who was dead sat up and began to speak." (Luke 7:14-15).

There were several people who became instruments of God's miraculous power in biblical history: Moses, Elijah, the apostles – including Judas – were all instruments of God's miraculous power. Did this prove they were divine? Of course not.

What about Jesus' miracles? Did they prove he was divine? Jesus' miracles – taken alone – no more point to his deity than miracles performed by these other individuals of the Bible prove their deity. However, the miracles of Jesus do collaborate with other evidences *to build the case* for his deity. Interestingly, Jesus' miracles also served several other purposes:

1. Jesus' miracles opened doors. The common people *heard* Jesus gladly (Mark 12:37). But the *miracles* really bolstered his popularity (John 6:2). That's also not to say that all miracles were effective in producing belief. Much to the contrary, there were plenty of people who weren't convinced (Matthew 11:21). There were some who didn't want to be convinced (John 7:45-48). But the miracles often gave him a captive audience nonetheless, and opened doors with his own nation and people from other nations as well.

2. Jesus' miracles served God's judicial purposes. There were those who didn't accept anything Jesus had to say or do (John 10:20). To them, he could do no right. It wasn't because he was a sinner, it was because of envy. Even Pilate knew this (Mark 15:10). This emotion can easily blind us. God gives men the freedom to accept or reject his will. The miracles were one form of proof of the presence and work of God. Some reviewed this evidence honestly (John 3:1-2), others chose not to do so. In so doing, God shows justice and mercy.

3. Jesus' miracles pointed to and substantiated his teachings. Just as he told his disciples about the temporary miracles that would accompany their mission to bring the gospel to the world (Mark 16:19-20), Jesus' own miracles served as a basis for his words (John 10:38). Someone once said that extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence. While that logic

Aberdeen church of Christ
1801 S. Lincoln St.
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605-225-3621
www.aberdeenchurchofchrist.net

Bulletin Submissions

If you would like anything added to the bulletin such as prayer requests, news, or events, please make submissions by Friday night to: tlbj@sbcglobal.net

can actually be faulted, there is certainly nothing wrong with extraordinary evidence. Jesus' miracles served as extraordinary evidences to substantiate his claims and other teachings (some of which are very extraordinary in their own right).

4. Jesus' miracles demonstrated his unique association with God. Casting out demons, healing disease, raising people from the dead, predicting the future with extreme precision, knowing the otherwise unknowable and commanding nature at will are all acts that only someone could do in association with the Divine. They do not prove in an absolute way that he was divine, but they do prove he was associated with God, as Nicodemus recognized (John 3:1-2).

5. Jesus' miracles demonstrated his humility. That sounds counterintuitive because miracles by nature draw attention to themselves. However, while Jesus worked miracles, we must remember that Jesus was not at liberty to perform miracles "just because." The temptation of Jesus is an excellent reminder of this. Jesus was not allowed to use miracles for personal benefit (Matthew 4:3-4). He did not perform miracles on every occasion (Mark 6:5). Even the staunch (and now late) Christopher Hitchens asked a reasonable question, "Why bother healing a blind man? Why not eradicate blindness?" This does not demonstrate the evil of God, as Hitchens was wont to claim, but rather the perfection and humility of Christ. He humbled himself and became man (Philippians' 2:5-8), and as such subjugated himself only to that which God deemed fit for any given occasion.

6. Jesus' miracles demonstrated his humanity/compassion. Although it is certain that there were always secondary and ultimate, redemptive reasons for all of his miracles, this does not mean Jesus was "all business." He was stirred by people's pain and grief (Isaiah 53:3). For example, a woman who had already lost her husband, afterward lost her only son to death as well. The Bible says, "And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not" (Luke 7:13), after which he raised that man up from the dead and presented him to his mother. Surely, the people rejoiced and gave God glory, and that is the primary intent of such an act. But does that mean Jesus was any less moved by the sorrow of a grieving widow and mother? Certainly not. Jesus' miracles were often as much acts of kindness as they were demonstrations of Divine power.

7. Jesus' miracles, in conjunction with other evidence, ultimately demonstrate his deity. What makes Jesus' miracles different than those

propagated by Moses, or Elijah, or anyone else, is that none of these individuals' miracles were *accompanied by any claim to deity*. Jesus, however, repeatedly asserted his right to certain prerogatives that are designated for God alone. But ultimately, although the miracles did not actually need further proof (just as Jesus' claim to being deity was true in itself), in the realm of men, one witness – even for God – is not enough (Deuteronomy 19:15). The fact is, there are other possible explanations with respect to things that appear to be miraculous. God gave the miracles a more concrete attestation: the historical death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

After the bodily resurrection and appearances of Jesus, it became unquestionable to anyone with an honest heart, that Jesus' miraculous ministry had been no traveling magic act, that he was a prophet, but much more than a mere prophet (Deuteronomy 18:15-18), and that his claims were completely founded (John 2:22; 12:16).

One Sponge

In the operating room of a large, well-known hospital, it was the nurse's first day on the medical team.

She was responsible to be sure that all instruments and materials were accounted for before completing the final steps of the operation. She said to the surgeon, "You've only removed 11 sponges. We used 12 sponges, and we need to find the last one."

"I removed them all," the doctor declared emphatically. "We'll close the incision now."

"No," the rookie nurse objected, "we used 12 sponges."

"I'll take the responsibility," the surgeon said grimly. "Suture."

"You can't do that, sir," blazed the nurse. "Think of the patient."

The surgeon smiled and lifted his foot, showing the nurse the twelfth sponge. "You'll do just fine in this or any other hospital."

Always stand up for what you know to be right.

"He that walketh uprightly walketh surely." – Proverbs 10:9