

MESSAGE: Miracles

Text Scriptures

- John 6:1-4
- Mark 5
- Mark 16
- Acts 10:38
- Mark 6:31-32
- John 2:11

Illustrations

- Renner family's early days of living in Moscow
- Early healing crusades
- Rick's word from the Holy Spirit to move to Moscow
- Two young cousins who drowned
- Building the Moscow Good News Church facility

Greek Word Studies

- *Ochlos* — multitude
- *Polus* — great
- *Epoiei* — performed; carries with it the idea of creativity
- *Asthenios* — disease; every kind of sickness and disease
- *Iomenos* — healed
- *Nosos* — sickness or disease; a disease that is terminal or incurable
- *Malakian* — diseased or crippled; describes someone who has become a cripple
- *Kakos* — grievously vexed by demon spirits; to be in a bad way; someone who is emotionally or mentally affected
- *Mastogos* — the word for *plague*. Described a specific act of torture: repeatedly striking, bringing to the point of death but not allowing victim to die
- *Arroustos* — someone who is so physically weak, he or she has lost consciousness and become comatose; “take unto you” (to take up)

MESSAGE: Miracles

I. INTRODUCTION (Main Text: John 6:1-4)

- A. Throughout the book of Mark, I counted all the places where it says Jesus healed. There are at least 10 notable miracles before you get to John 6. Most vividly recorded in the book of Mark.
1. The Synoptic Gospels — Matthew, Mark and Luke — all three basically tell the same stories, but John gives a different slant. He tells the same overall story but from a different perspective.
 2. The story recorded in John 6 is one story that is told in all four gospels. If it is told each time, it must be important.

II. A GREAT MULTITUDE HABITUALLY FOLLOWING

- A. John 6:2 – Phrase: “*A great multitude*” – In the Greek, there is something here that is not required unless you are trying to make a very strong point. The word “multitude” is the word *ochlus*, which describes *an innumerable multitude*. But if you add the word “great,” which is the Greek word *polus*, it would translate as *a great and innumerable multitude*. This was far greater than any multitude Jesus had ever yet attracted to His ministry.
- B. *The English Bible* says the people followed Him. The Greek says they were *following and following* wherever Jesus went. If Jesus turned north, they turned north. If Jesus turned south, they turned south. They were *addicted* to the ministry of Jesus.
- C. Why were they addicted to Jesus’ ministry? Because the people were seeing the miracles Jesus performed on those who were diseased. The word “seeing” in the Greek agrees with the word *following*, which means you would translate the verse: “*A great, massive multitude kept on habitually following and following Him, because they kept on habitually seeing and seeing and seeing His miracles that He performed.*”
1. The word “performed” is the Greek word *epoiei*, which carries with it the idea of *creativity*. They were not merely attracted by the idea of the healing of a headache or a skin disease. Jesus was doing something of a *creative* nature.
 2. The people were regularly seeing Jesus’ miracles that He was creatively performing. Jesus was exercising His power on the diseased — and for this reason, they were following and following and *following* Him.
- D. First Century Physicians: There were good physicians. In fact, some of their physicians wrote rules that are still in use today. But there were no medications — and where there are no medications, people perceive healing power as Good News. They don’t have another option — it is Good News for them.

III. EARLY DAYS OF LIVING IN RUSSIA

- A. There was a deficit of everything in the early days. The Soviets had tried to produce a system that did not work. There was a deficit of milk, and people wondered what happened to the cows. Then there was a deficit of eggs, and people wonder what happened to the chickens. There was a deficit of meat, and people wondered what happened to the meat. And then when there was a deficit of gasoline, that is when people knew they were really in trouble. It was a completely collapsed system.
- And because the Soviet Union had collapsed, there was nothing medically available. Doctors were very well trained. The Soviet Union produced very smart and very knowledge people. But when a doctor diagnoses a disease, even tells the

person the type of medication he or she needs, but then must tell the patient that the needed medication is not available in their part of the world – it creates a hopeless situation. At the time Denise and I moved our family to the former Soviet Union, this was the situation.

- B. Healing Crusade: We invited our television audience to a healing crusade. We announced it once every day for two weeks. When that day finally came, we didn't know what to anticipate.
 - 1. On the first day as we got closer to the venue, there were thousands of people walking in the direction of the venue we had rented.
 - 2. 32,000 attended those meetings in the space of 5 days, and 7,000 got saved. I baptized 926.
- C. Man Healed: During the last night of the meeting, I was standing in the pulpit, and I was telling the audience that this was the last night of the meeting. There was a scream — it was from a man who had come in late every night. He was paralyzed from his waist down and would swing his body on crutches. He came in late on purpose so no one would knock him down.
 - 1. This man screamed, and it was as if the lower half of his body came alive!
 - 2. He got healed, saved, filled with Holy Spirit, and water-baptized, and he joined our church.
 - 3. When there are no other options, people believe.

IV. REASONS FOR HABITUALLY FOLLOWING

They were following and following Jesus because they were seeing and seeing and *seeing* His miracles He performed to heal people with diseases. We saw it in our ministry, but how much more true was this of Jesus's ministry?

- A. "Diseased": Sometimes people say, "I believe that the Lord could do this, and He could do that — *but not that*." "Disease" is the Greek word *asthenios*. In this word is included *every kind of sickness and disease*.
 - 1. In the four gospels, there are 5 Greek words that can be translated for sickness and disease. Jesus healed all 5 categories. The word "healed" in the gospels is the word *iomenos*. It is the Greek word for *a doctor*.
 - 2. In Acts 10:38 – A literal translation would read, "*...went about doing good and doctoring everyone that was oppressed of the devil.*"
 - o Act 10 – paints the picture of Jesus laying His hands on the people with all receiving what they needed. Then they went on their way and received a progressive healing touch from Jesus.
 - o In addition to the instant healings recorded in the Bible — of which there are many — there is also progressive healing, where people went away from Jesus and were healed as they went.
- B. 5 Words for Disease: These five primary words used in the four gospels to describe the sickness Jesus healed. We find that Matthew 4 uses three of them.
 - 1. **Nosos** – sickness or disease that is terminal or incurable.
 - 2. **Malakian** – Diseased or crippled; describes someone who has become a cripple.
 - 3. **Kakos** – someone who is grievously vexed by demon spirits; to be in a bad way; someone who is emotionally or mentally affected.
 - 4. **Mastogos** – Mark 5 where we see the woman with the issue of the blood. The bible tells us when she touched the hem of his garment she was healed of her plague – the

word plague is the word *mastogos*. This was a word that described a specific act of torture. Repeatedly striking, bringing to the point of death but not allowing to die.

- Plague – is a sickness that repeatedly strikes. *Examples: Athletics foot, Allergies, High Blood Pressure – strikes you again and again.* She had the issue of blood for 12 years. It struck her and struck her and *struck* her, but Jesus healed her.
5. **Arroustos** – someone who is so physically weak, they have lost consciousness; they are comatose. This is the word used in Mark 5 where it says, *He could do no mighty works* — meaning Jesus couldn't get those who were conscious to cooperate with Him; therefore, He worked with the comatose and did it on His own.
- In Mark 16, it's the same word. A word used pointedly so we understand how great our authority is in Jesus. Literal translation: *You can lay hands on the comatose, and the comatose shall recover.*
 - Story of a girl who drowned. Daughter of our driver and his brother's daughter were swimming together. They were rescued, but not before they were brain dead. The two cousins were taken to the hospital and placed in the same room. Our driver's daughter on one side, and his brother's daughter on the other side of the room. His brother believed in witchcraft; he did not believe in God. In the Soviet Union, witchcraft was prevalent because if you tell people God does not exist, they will find something else to believe in.
 - The brother called a witch, and they would speak incantations to the young girl every day. Meanwhile, on the other side of the room with our staff, we would speak the name of Jesus every day. The brother's daughter, although on a breathing machine, began to turn dark and curl up in her bed and die. In contrast, our driver's daughter lay beautifully just as if she were sleeping.
 - On the 30th day, the girl whom we spoke the name of Jesus over — the girl that was brain dead — sat up in her bed and asked why she was there and ask for food. She is married today, finished the top of her class she has children.
- C. All of these five categories of words fit right up inside this word *disease* in John 6:2. This word for “disease” is the word that embraces all of these concepts. There is not one category of sickness in the gospels that Jesus did not heal. **Jesus healed every category of disease, and He is still healing them today.**

V. RESULTS OF HABITUALLY FOLLOWING

- A. John 6:2 – “a great multitude followed and followed him because they were seeing and seeing his miracles which he was creatively performing on them that were diseased.” This word “disease” was used very broadly. It referred to *all* kinds of diseases.
- B. In John 6:3, Jesus went up into a mountain and sat privately with His disciples. In Mark 6, we find out the reason Jesus did this.
1. Mark 6:31-32 — Jesus attempted to get away from the multitude so that He and His disciples could get some rest. Verse 31 tells us they had no leisure time, even time to eat. Many who knew of Him went out to where He and His disciples were.
 2. In John 6, Jesus went to a mountain to sit with His disciples, but the people found out where He was and began coming and *coming* by the *thousands*.
 3. It was almost Passover, so there were many traveling this road. Luke's gospel tells us this was private property near Bethsaida. It was very near to the main road that connected the north of Israel to the city of Jerusalem.
 4. Jesus was on the mountain on that property. The people began to scale the mountain to

come directly to see Jesus. Jesus lifted up His eyes and *saw*. This word means *to look at the situation like it is a great drama*. People were coming to Jesus, and He was deeply moved with compassion because they were like sheep without a Shepard. And thousands were coming to Him.

5. John 6:10 tells us there were 5,000 men in number. “Men” is a Greek word meaning *only men* — excluding women or children. Most scholars believe the number to be closer to 40,000.

C. And when Jesus *saw* them, He said to Philip, “Whence shall we buy bread, that they may eat?” (v. 5).

1. Jesus taught them till the evening. In fact, He taught them so long that He became concerned that they needed something to eat.
2. Jesus said this statement to Philip to *prove* Him. “Prove” is a Greek word that means *to test something to find out its quality*.
3. Jesus Himself already knew what He would do. He didn’t need to ask the question. The question was for Philip’s sake entirely to prove Him.

D. Example: The Call to Russia

In the late ’80s and early ’90s, Denise and I were traveling across the United States. We were preaching; we thought we knew what our future looked like; and we were excited about life. Then someone coaxed me into a mission trip to the Soviet Union. When I stood up to preach for the first time and before I opened my mouth, I heard the Holy Spirit say, *WELCOME to your new home*.

1. People tell these stories of great and fiery divine calls. I was just standing there, having been there a few days and already having seen the condition of Moscow at the time. It was not particularly the place I thought I would raise my family. And the Holy Spirit kept saying, *Welcome to your new home!* The entire time I was teaching — and I was teaching on the subject of doing the will of God!
2. This one statement from the Lord tested me. Was I going to obey the Lord or go on my own? I kept trying to imagine my family living there in that place. And the Lord kept saying, *Are you going to obey Me?* I said, “I am not sure, Lord.” And it took me a long time — several months — before I said, “I will obey You.”
3. Once I made the decision, I publicly announced it. I stood up and said, “God has told me to move my family to the Soviet Union.”
4. I was so challenged by this word. How would we pay our bills if we moved our family there and something happened in that part of the world? That question challenged me. *God was asking me to expose my level of faith.*

E. Moscow Building: When God told me to build a church building in the city of Moscow, I didn’t know the building was going to cost 18 million dollars.

1. I’ve learned that when the Lord asks you to do things, He doesn’t tell you the full story until you are in the process. In the process, my faith level was dealt with by God, because in order to build that building, I had to pay cash. I had to come up to a new level of faith. I had to change.

2. The call of God and the request of Jesus was asking me to come up a level. You don’t know what your faith level is until Jesus asks you to do something. Then you find out where you are.

- F. The level of Philip and the disciples: Philip and these disciples were seeing and seeing miracles. They had seen miracles that Jesus did.
1. John said, “If it were possible to write down all the miracles of Jesus, the world could not contain them.”
 2. How many days do we have record of? 27-33 days over four gospels — and we don’t have a picture of *one* full day! Just fragments of events and days here and there. And it took four gospels to contain that. Imagine what the disciples were seeing, how many miracles they were seeing!
 3. But this one question: “Whence should we buy bread, that they may eat?” exposed that even the disciples needed to come up higher in their faith.
 4. Philip answered and said, “If we had 200 days of wages, it would not be sufficient to buy enough bread for each to take a little.”
 5. Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said, “Wait — there is a lad here, a little boy, who has 5 barley loaves and two small fish.”
 - There was no reason the boy would have 5 *big* loaves. The Greek word translated “loaves” is a word that describes barley *crackers*. “Fish” in the Greek describes fish so small they could fit on top of the crackers. This little boy had sandwich material.
 - There’s a boy that has 5 crackers and 2 minnows, but what are they among so many?
- G. Miracle and Order: Jesus said in John 6:10, “Make the men sit down.” And then men sat down in number about 5,000.
1. In Mark’s gospel, you find that Jesus was very organized. He had them sit in ranks and groups of 100 where they would be easier to serve.
 2. Jesus took the crackers and gave thanks; then He distributed to the disciples; the disciples distributed to the people; and then they ate until they were filled.
 3. John 6:13 — The Greek says they were doubly filled. They filled 12 baskets with the leftovers. Coincidentally, there were 12 baskets and 12 disciples. And this word “basket” describes the bag they used to carry their luggage when traveling.
 4. The disciples began to empty their luggage and fill it with the fragments because Jesus didn’t want that anything to be lost.
- H. The Little Boy: John is the only one who tells us there was a little boy. Matthew, Mark, and Luke just give the number of loaves and fish. When I read this, I thought about the role the little boy played in this story. The little boy was taken to Jesus, and he gave his crackers and fish to Jesus. Then Jesus performed a miracle, and 5,000 people ate until full.
1. Who was amazed by this miracle? The little boy! He understood where this came from. What if he said no? God would have used someone else, but he would have missed the miracle.
 2. Denise and I had the opportunity to say yes or no. And when we said yes, the grace of God fell upon us. And we were able to start a television program in the former Soviet Union. God gave Denise and I the grace to say YES.
 3. An association of churches — lives have been changed and thousands have been saved. A church in the city of Moscow of 3,700 and a debt-free building!
 4. What if I had said to the Lord, NO? He would have used someone else, and I would have missed the miracle He wanted to perform in my life.

VI. APPLICATION: What is the miracle Jesus is wanting to perform in your life? What is the question He is asking of you?

A. John 2:11

B. What is the move of God that's supposed to happen deep inside your own personal life? What is He asking of you that has revealed your own level of faith and is going to require you to come up to a new level?

C. It's going to require you to press in and come up to a new level. Once you've obtained a new level, you don't ever have to go back to the old.