

"A Man Attested"

Have you ever wondered how the eyewitnesses of Jesus thought of His miracles? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're going to explore whether the miracles of Jesus were real.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. Romans 10:17 says, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." Jesus trained and convinced twelve ordinary men that He was truly Lord and Christ by fulfilling the many prophecies in the Old Testament Scriptures and by His undeniable miracles. He also gave them miraculous powers by the Holy Spirit. Within a century, these twelve men committed to the truth led the church in a hostile environment to have more than a million members. They achieved this by persuading people of the truth, even in the midst of great persecution. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

The apostle John wrote in 1 John 1:1 to 4, "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete."

The apostles preached the truth about Jesus passionately, persuasively, and joyfully, because they knew their message was the Word of Life that would bring eternal life. They wanted everyone to come into fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. They faced overwhelming opposition from a pagan society but gave their lives to preaching what they knew was the truth—what they saw and heard and even handled.

We offer this study free on Jesus attested by God by signs and miracles. And if you'd like a printed copy of our study and you live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website, for anyone anywhere in the world, and it's www.searchtv.org. That's the website.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Acts 2:22 to 28, and we'll explore another reason to believe in Jesus Christ.

Today's reading comes from Acts chapter 2 verses 22 to 28. And we'll be reading a portion of Peter's message on the day of Pentecost.

"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. For David says of Him,

'I SAW THE LORD ALWAYS IN MY PRESENCE;
FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, SO THAT I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN.
'THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED;

MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN HOPE;
BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES,
NOR ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.
'YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE;
YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.'

That's a reading from God's Holy Word. Let's pray together. Oh, Father we are grateful that through Your son there were miracles, and wonders and signs preformed that many people saw. And that He was raised from the dead. Bless us now today as we study. In Jesus name, Amen.

Peter described Jesus as a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs. He wanted to the people at Pentecost to recall what they themselves knew about Jesus. Jesus had performed many miracles in the presence of multitudes of people. He showed what He was and proved himself by His works. Miracles are works of power that go beyond what is natural, they're supernatural works that only God could do. Wonders emphasize how people marvel at what they saw or experienced. It was a matter of wonder and awe that Jesus could walk on water, still a storm, or heal a man born blind. Signs are acts of God for a divine purpose. Jesus worked miracles to show the Jews that He was indeed the Son of God. Now, He wouldn't turn stones into bread for selfish reasons. He worked signs to point to God and His purposes.

Jesus remarked to the apostles in John 14 verse 11, "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves." When Thomas doubted the resurrection of Jesus and wouldn't believe until he saw the imprint of the nails in His hands and the wound in His side, you remember, Jesus gave him proof. The Lord Jesus said to Thomas in John 20:27 to 29, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing." Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

Although the apostles and disciples were unbelieving and despondent after the crucifixion of Jesus, Acts 1 and verse 3 says, "To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God." Jesus gave them convincing proofs that God had raised Him from the dead. He appeared to those who knew Him best, people He could not fool. They saw Him, heard Him, spoke with Him, touched Him, and ate with Him. Because of this, they could stand together and proclaim, "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses" (Acts 2 and verse 32).

The New Testament lists fifteen appearances of Jesus after His resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 6 says, "He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep." Now, if we were to ask any of these five hundred whether Jesus arose from the dead, they would surely tell us that they saw Him and they knew that He did. Paul didn't hesitate to acknowledge that they were eyewitnesses who could verify the resurrection.

We shouldn't imagine that the resurrection was the only miracle that people saw. The Lord Jesus performed many miracles in the presence of multitudes. Matthew 4 verses 23 to 25 says that, "Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people. The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with

various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. Large crowds followed Him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.”

In Matthew 9, Jesus healed a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing the faith of those who carried him to the house, Jesus said to the paralytic, “Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven.” Well, this made the scribes and Pharisees to think evil of Jesus. But knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Which is easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Get up, pick up your bed and go home.” And he got up and he went home. Matthew 9 and verse 8 says, “But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.” I tell you, if you had seen this miracle, you too would be awestruck and would be glorifying God.

On another occasion Jesus went along by the Sea of Galilee and went up into a mountain. Matthew 15 verses 30 to 31 says, “And large crowds came to Him, bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others, and they laid them down at His feet; and He healed them. So the crowd marveled as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled (or maimed) restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.” The miracles of Jesus were undeniable. The word “crippled” here speaks of people who were maimed, missing some part of their bodies; and arm or a leg. They were visibly impaired. Matthew 18 and verse 8 speaks of the crippled as people missing a hand or a foot. Well, large crowds witnessed these healings.

Matthew 17:24 tells of “those who collected the two-drachma tax came to Peter and said, ‘Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma tax?’” Peter, of course, said yes. In verse 27 Jesus said to Peter, “However, so that we do not offend them, (you)go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and Me.” Now, not many people find a coin in a fish’s mouth, but Peter did! Now, the coin was just enough to pay the tax for them both. Now, imagine: what would Peter think of Jesus if he pulled in his first fish and didn’t find a coin? Wouldn’t he consider Jesus a fraud? Finding that coin gave one more proof in Peter’s heart that Jesus really was God’s Son. Matthew was the one tells the story, not Peter. Clearly, the others knew about this wondrous miracle.

Jesus fed the 5,000 men besides the women and children from five loaves of barley bread and two fish (Matthew 14:17 to 21). The people watched Him bless the food and break the loaves to give to the crowds. They were outside of the villages with no source of food but the lad’s loaves and fishes were able to feed them; Jesus fed this multitude miraculously. The thousands of people ate as much as they wanted. And afterward they picked up the broken pieces, twelve full baskets. John 6 and verse 14 says, “Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, ‘This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.’” They were convinced of His power. They knew Jesus was fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah. Verse 15 reveals that they were intending to come by force and make Him king, but He withdrew into the mountain alone.

Matthew 15 verses 32 to 39 tells how Jesus, feeling compassion for the people, fed the four thousand men besides the women and children. The disciples wondered how they would get so many loaves in this desolate place to satisfy such a “large crowd.” They had only seven loaves and a few small fish, but the Lord Jesus fed them all until they were satisfied. And they took up the leftovers and filled seven large baskets. The people saw and knew His power and that it was from God.

Jesus later raised Lazarus from the dead. You know he had been in the tomb four days. John 11:45 to 46 says, “Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.” Many

saw it (that is this resurrection) and believed! They began telling the story, and even the enemies of Jesus heard it! John 11:47 to 48 says, "Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, 'What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.'"

You see the enemies of Jesus knew and admitted His miracles and signs were real. They knew the evidence was so convincing that everyone would "believe in Him." They feared what the Romans would do if they let Jesus continue preaching and working miracles. The enemies of Jesus never denied His miracles; instead, they conspired to kill Him because His miracles were real. If Jesus were a fraud, he wouldn't have posed a threat to them.

After Lazarus' resurrection, six days before the Passover, you remember, Jesus came to Bethany. In John 12:9 to 11 the bible says, "The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He (Jesus) was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead. But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also; because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus." You see not only did the priests want to kill Jesus, they even wanted to kill Lazarus in order to stop people from believing in Jesus.

In Acts chapter 3 Peter and John healed the lame beggar. This fourth year old man. This man "had been lame from his mother's womb." He "was being carried along" and "set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful. Peter by the power of God healed the man. In Acts 3:8 to 10 says, "With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God; and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to beg alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him." You see they knew God, through Peter and John, healed this man. Well, after Peter preached to the people, the temple guards put them in jail.

And the next day the chief priest and the other temple officials wanted to know how this man was made well. Peter answered in Acts 4 and verse 10, "let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health." The Council then convened in private saying, "What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it" (Acts 4 and verse 16).

When the Romans were trying Paul before Governor Festus and King Agrippa, he defended himself by speaking of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In Acts 26 verses 23 to 26, Paul argued "that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles." But, while Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad." But Paul said, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth. For the king knows about these matters, and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner."

Well why does all this matter. Jesus was indeed a man attested to the people by God with many miracles and wonders and signs. They knew, in that age, what power He had shown for years. To preach God had raised Him from the dead then was not strange.

Let's pray together. Oh, Father we're thankful that You gave proof, many convincing proofs, to the people of that day about the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Father help us, though we have not seen, to still believe. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

You might be saying, "well I know the Bible says Jesus worked miracles, but I've never seen anyone walk on water or raise the dead. I don't know anyone else who has seen miracles. How can you be so sure the miracles of Jesus happened?" Well, my faith rests in the testimony of the apostles, who could speak of His miracles and say, "just as you yourselves know." For years, Jesus Christ had been performing miracles before crowds. There was no doubt among the people that He could work these miracles. They were awestruck! If you could talk to them face to face, they would tell you what they saw and heard. If we had lived in those days and witnessed these things ourselves, we'd think it strange for anyone to deny His miracles.

Now, multitudes were witnesses of Jesus' miracles, and hundreds could verify His resurrection. The twelve apostles boldly risked their lives to testify that God had raised Him from the dead. They believed. And the writings found in the New Testament are the most studied, copied, and attested books of all time. If the resurrection of Jesus Christ were a fantasy, the first century church would never have existed. The fact that His disciples died proclaiming the Lord's miracles proves they were more than myths and legends.

Will you not also believe the evidence found in these 27 books of the New Testament, evidence prophesied in the Old Testament. When the Jews on Pentecost realized God raised up the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they crucified, they asked what they should do about their guilt. Peter answered, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Three thousand were baptized that day; they wanted forgiveness. The Lord forgave them, washed away their sins in baptism (Acts 22:16) and gave them newness of life in baptism (Romans 6 and verse 4). Won't you too believe, repent and be baptized?

We hope our study about the miracles of Jesus has deepened your faith. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now, you can download these lessons, no matter where you are in the world, or a newsletter online at: www.searchtv.org. There's a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area, also on line. We hope that you'll subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry," on YouTube. Where you can also see this program.

As always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.