

“Filled With Wonder & Amazement”

Sermon Notes

➤ **Signs and wonders are Christ’s extraordinary means to arrest people’s attention and command their awe**

**The miracle inside this miracle occurs every time you...*

1. Look toward the need (vv.1-5)

2. Give what you have (vv.6-7)

3. Transfer the glory to God (vv.8-10; Acts 3:12-13, 16)

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of July 30th - August 5th

Getting Started

1. Wayne Grudem defines a miracle as “a less common kind of God’s activity in which he arouses people’s awe and wonder and bears witness to himself.”¹ The Scriptures describe many such occurrences in both the Old and New Testament, from the parting of the Red Sea² to the floating axehead³, from the turning of water into wine⁴ to the resurrection of Christ⁵, from the healing of the disabled man in our text this week⁶ to the power of the two witnesses in the book of Revelation⁷. Do you believe in the miracles found in the pages of the Bible? If so, why? If not, why not?

Digging Deeper

2. Based on Grudem’s definition as well as the examples listed above, do you believe that you have ever personally borne witness to the miraculous? If you, please share your experience with the group.

¹ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI. 1994.

² Exodus 14

³ 2 Kings 6:1-7

⁴ John 2:1-12

⁵ Matthew 28:1-15

⁶ Acts 3:1-10

⁷ Revelation 11:1-13

Article 6 of the Statement of Faith of the Evangelical Free Church of America reads...

3. “We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.”
You may notice that our creed does not directly address the question of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit in the life of the contemporary church. In the history of the EFCA, this is what we’ve referred to as a “significance of silence”. What are the benefits of such an approach? What are the liabilities?

4. Read through James 5:13-20. Do you pray for physical healing in your life or in the lives of others? Have you ever called on the elders of the church to pray for healing as James directs? Does this text teach that we ought to expect physical healing when we pray in faith for it? Why or why not?

5. Now turn to 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. What do you imagine Paul’s thorn in the flesh might have been? Why was it given to him? How many times did he ask that it be taken away? What was Christ’s answer to him? How ought we to hold this text in tension with James 5 above?

6. In 1 Corinthians 12:9, Paul names “gifts of healing” as well as “the working of miracles” in 12:10 as he lists various spiritual gifts in the 1st century church. Do you believe either of these gifts are given to individuals in the life of the 21st century church today (as much as teaching, mercy, or leadership)? Do your best to make a scriptural case as you seek to answer this question (as opposed to turning to tradition, reason, or experience as your final court of appeal).

7. At Mound Free Church, we are committed to discuss these matters, even to debate them, but are careful not to divide over them. To use the language from our preaching series in the letter of Jude, we regard this to be third order doctrine.⁸ Do you believe that is sound wisdom? Why or why not?

8. As you close your time together, take a moment to walk back through the points from this week’s sermon. Pray especially for one another that we would: Look toward the need, give what we have, and transfer the glory to God. How do these three exhortations serve to draw us together in unity regardless of the diversity of our convictions concerning the miraculous gifts of the Spirit?

⁸ First order doctrine are truths essential to gospel proclamation across the global church, while second order doctrine are truths essential to gospel partnership within the local church. The effect of this conviction is that we believe that we can be in full fellowship with one another in our local church and yet come to differing conclusions regarding the issue of the continuation of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit for the church today.