

Good morning,

I would like to ask you all a question, do you believe in miracles?

For the last several weeks during the forum hour we have been taking a journey through the book of acts. As we all have been thinking about how we will rebuild our lives, and our church in a post pandemic world, we have been looking closely at acts which tells the story of the original formation of the church.

What were the different components, how did the apostles organize, what were the activities and ministries those first disciples helped to form...

One person's reflection during one of our sessions was, that even though the book of acts is normally called Acts of the Apostles, it should be called the acts of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the main character in the book of acts. The Holy Spirit's presence in the apostles lives changed everything for them, it matured them, gave them the ability to speak out in the name of Christ, it gather people together.

The Holy Spirit was on fire in the book of acts. One of the things the Holy Spirit empowered those apostles to be able to do was to heal the sick, give sight to the blind... in other words the Holy Spirit empowered the apostles to perform miracles!

Do you believe in miracles?

In our conversation about these miracles that the apostles performed, we talked about if we had ever experienced miracles in our own lives?

Some people gave really specific examples of how they had experienced one, but more generally, folks expressed this sense of yes but perhaps not these major kinds of miracles, but rather what we called tiny miracles.

So that got me thinking about the nature of miracles... Did you say that you believe in them?

In our gospel reading today we get one of the most famous miracles in all of history, the feeding of the 5000. Jesus and his disciples find themselves on top of a mountain, they were being followed by people who were looking for them because of the signs, the wonders, that Jesus had been performing, curing the sick.

They wanted to see more, to experience more miracles. They were eager, soo eager, eager like a puppy, when you ask if they want to go out for a walk. They wanted more miracles!

Jesus looked at all these people swarming this mountain, and it was close to the Passover festival time and so Jesus turns to Phillip and shocks him, and says we should feed all these people. -Where are we to buy enough bread for them? Philip and the other disciples panic, but Jesus knew it was time for a miracle!

I think there is a lesson for all of us, in what happens next, in the midst of the disciples panic, the crowd's overwhelming eagerness, Jesus tells his disciples, make everyone sit down...

maybe the real miracle of the day was that Jesus got five thousand people to sit down.

But this raises something for me about the posture that we are to have when it comes to miracles. We have to sit down, we have to rest in, we have to wait on God to perform a miracle.

In the face of the miracles in our own lives, which we might pray to God for, huge miracles or tiny ones; maybe we might find ourselves acting like the gathered crowd, so very eager, swarming around, demanding one right now. Maybe we might be like those disciples who were in a panic, questioning how it might ever be done. How is it possible!? Let Jesus' voice cut through it all, sit down.

What are miracles even about? When they do happen yes they are something extraordinary, spectacular in our lives, by definition yes. But what they reveal to us, is about God's extraordinary love for each of us.

As our reading from Ephesians reminds us, God cares about your inner being. And wants you to be filled with God's Holy Spirit.

As Paul says, I pray that, according to the riches of His glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.

I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Miracles are about the fullness of God's love! And it surpasses all knowledge. Because God cares about your inner being, each and every one of you, and wants you to be full of God. So whether it's a tiny miracle or a huge one like feeding 5000 people. The message is the same... God wants you to be full of his love.

Do you believe in Miracles?

You know, I have a last thought about these eager crowds, yeah Jesus had some instruction for them about their posture, about their need to sit down and wait and rest in God to fill their lives, and not to be like panting puppies waiting to go outside. But I do think there is also something to be said about searching these miracles out in our own lives.

I think, the more we search our lives for miracles, the more we will find them. How many times in your life has God filled you up in ways that surpass all knowledge? I bet you may find a good many times. So I want to encourage you, as you sit down and wait on God to perform these miracles in your life, that you still search them out.

Do you believe in miracles?

Amen