

January 19 Worship
Greeters- Linda Mikkola, Gary Fleming
Reader- Gary Fleming

Announcements/Joys-

Time Of Quiet Meditation- *“Remember the wonderful works that he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered.”* Psalm 105:5

Opening Scripture- Psalm 36:5-10(page 483)

Opening Chorus- 425- Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Responsive Call To Worship-

Leader: No matter how far we wander from you, O God.

People: Your steadfast love finds us.

Leader: No matter how unjust the world seems to us, O God.

People: Your steadfast righteousness sustains us.

Leader: No matter how vulnerable our lives seem to us, O God.

People: Your steadfast presence gives us hope.

Leader: No matter how unloved and uncared for we feel, O God.

People: You hear our cries and answer our prayers.

All: Thanks be to God!

Hymn- 349- I Love Your Kingdom Lord

Unison Prayer- O God of steadfast love, at the wedding in Cana your Son Jesus turned water into wine, delighting all who were there. Transform our hearts by your Spirit, that we may use our varied gifts to show forth the light of your love as one body in Christ who taught us to pray, saying....*Lord's Prayer*...

Gloria Patri- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen, Amen.

Old Testament Scripture- Isaiah 62:1-5(page 641)

Special Music-

Gospel Scripture- John 2:1-11(page 923)

Children's Time/Echo Prayer/Passing of the Peace

Hymn- 519- Great Is Thy Faithfulness

New Testament Scripture- 1 Corinthians 12:1-11(page 999)

Message

“It's A Miracle”

There is a calendar that is used by many churches to assist in keeping track of what special events are to be commemorated or observed during the year. This calendar gives specific scripture readings for each day of the year and tells us what special events took place on certain dates in history. Today, January 19th, represents the day when Jesus performed His 1st miracle at the wedding in Cana. This was the very 1st miracle performed by Jesus out of 37 miracles that are listed in the scriptures. While there are probably many more miracles that Jesus did, 37 is the number that are recorded.

What is it that defines a miracle? The Merriam/ Webster dictionary defines “miracle” this way;

- 1 An extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs.
- 2 An extremely outstanding or unusual event, thing, or accomplishment.
- 3 A divinely natural phenomenon experienced humanly as the fulfillment of spiritual law.

The biblical definition of a miracle would be something like this: “an event that involves the direct and powerful action of God, transcending the ordinary laws of nature and defying common expectations of behavior.” Miracles are extraordinary occurrences that can only be attributed to the supernatural work of God and demonstrate His involvement in human history. God employs miracles in the Bible to reveal Himself, His character, and His purposes to humans through phenomena that are not otherwise explainable.

What is the 1st recorded miracle in the Bible? In my opinion it would have to be the very 1st words of Genesis; “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” This event most definitely fills the criteria of the biblical definition. Since there can be no logical explanation of creation, it must be considered a miracle. Miracles provide evidence of God's presence and power in the world and demonstrate His authority on behalf of His servants, us. Miracles are not just performed by God. They can be and are performed through people with God's say so. There are other words used to describe miracles, such as signs and wonders, powers, and mighty works.

There are numerous instances recorded in scripture of different forms of miracles. There are celestial events, control over nature, animals and inanimate objects acting in astonishing ways. There are miracles of healing all through scripture, not only done by Jesus, but done by disciples and apostles. While the miracles spoken of in the New Testament are of good results, the Old Testament miracles sometimes were not to the benefit of those on the receiving end. The miracles surrounding the Exodus did not do much good for those in power in Egypt. What happened to Sodom and Gomorrah wasn't much fun for the people who lived there. I'm sure that the miracle of the flood caused a bit of grief for those not in Noah's family. God's miracles of judgment brought punishment and correction to a world gone astray but determined by God to be necessary.

It is said in Psalm 77:14; “Thou art the God who workest wonders, who has manifested thy might among the peoples.” Can any of us look around ourselves and deny God's ability and power to do whatever He desires? I don't care what we look at or what we experience, the power and love of God is everywhere. From our perspective, God's miracles are unnatural or extraordinary events that reveal God's presence in all things. From God's perspective, I am sure that these things are just every day happenings; What's the big deal? The use of miracles just

gets our attention so that we can see for ourselves who God is. There are times, I'm sure, that God uses miracles to get our attention and force us to admit that He does exist. What do you think went through Moses' mind when he saw the burning bush that was not consumed by the fire? Do you think that Moses would have paid attention if God didn't do something to make him stop and listen? How many people would have paid any attention at all to Jesus if He didn't show them some pretty powerful miracles?

When Jesus performed His 1st miracle at the wedding in Cana, He did so in protest; "When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever He tells you.'" If we pay attention to the story, we know that Jesus turned the water into wine and everyone was amazed. I think that the miracle was not so much the water into wine part but that Jesus talked back to His mother and she didn't dress Him down, or worse, for disrespecting her. She just ignored His protest and moved on. Mary knew that Jesus had the power and forced Him to use it. Jesus may have been the Son of God but when mother speaks, you better listen.

How many miracles can we think of that have occurred in our lives? Do we recognize them as miracles or do we simply write them off as fortunate events? If I were to sit down and attempt to list every event in my life that was a miracle, I would be busy for quite a long time. There have been everyday things that have happened in my life that when I look back at them, I cannot explain them. Some spectacular and some quite mundane or inconsequential, it doesn't matter. I cannot logically explain what happened. The fact is that not all miracles are earth shaking. Most of them were everyday events that held a meaning that took a while for me to understand or comprehend. There are times in our lives when what we consider to be common happenings are, in reality, God attempting to send us a message or show us His truth.

There are many people in this world who want God to perform miracles to prove Himself to them. If only God would perform a miracle, sign, or wonder, then I would believe." Depending on miracles to reinforce your belief will not work. Faith in God and following Jesus should not require that God put on a performance for our benefit. Miracles are done because God finds a reason to do something for us, not to prove himself to us. To my mind, the simple fact that God loves me is miracle enough. Think about it for a moment; God loves me! I want for you to raise your hands toward heaven and say, with me, God loves me! Once again, and say it like you mean it; God loves me! Now I want for you to contemplate this question; Why? Why does God love me? What have I done to deserve God's love? Kris Kristofferson wrote a song called "Why Me Lord" that was a smash hit for him. The words to the 1st verse are; "Why me Lord? What have I ever done to deserve even one of the pleasure I've known? Tell me, Lord What did I ever do That was worth lovin' you for the kindness you've shown?"

The miracles of God did not stop when Jesus ascended into heaven. His disciples are recorded as having performed miracles everywhere they traveled in their ministries. Miracles happen everyday, right now, in this world, but perhaps, we are not paying attention. When you go home, today, just look around and try to count the miracles in your life. Perhaps you'll discover one or two. Praise Be to God. Amen.

Prayers of People/Prayer- God of love and power, we listen to the stories of miracles and doubt that these things can happen today. We look at the waves of misfortune, distress, misery, distrust, and anger and wonder how we can still those waves. We feel the pressures of power and fear flooding into our lives, threatening to drown us and wonder where you are. Forgive us for the littleness of our faith. Forgive us for our doubts. Fear not! God is with us, stilling the storms and raging fears in our lives. Place your trust in God always and help us to place our trust in you, Lord Jesus. Help us to fix our eyes on you and on the ministries to which you have called us. For we ask these things in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Closing Hymn- 30- Come, Thou Fount Of Every Blessing

Benediction- May the holy wisdom of God guard your ways and guide your paths. May the living truth of God enlighten your hearts and open your minds. And may the living Spirit of God give you life, and life to the full! Go in peace. Amen!