

August 2 Worship
Readers- Dan Hopkins & Family

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 17:1-7 (page 471)

Opening Chorus- 595- I Will Serve Thee

Responsive Call To Worship-

Leader: To those who are hungry, Jesus says:

People: “Come and eat! There’s more than enough for all!”

Leader: To those who are thirsty, he says:

People: “Come and drink! It’s free for the taking!”

Leader: Stop wasting your money on food that doesn’t satisfy.

People: Come to Me, and you will find everything you need!”

Hymn of Praise- 107- Eternal Father Strong To Save

Unison Prayer/Lord's Prayer- We gather today, O Lord of Life, seeking fullness. Not the fullness our world offers, but fullness that comes from You. We spend so much of our lives on things that do not count, things that promise much and give little. Help us now, today, to find fulfillment in Your love. May we discover all You have to give, and seek You while we yet have the gift of days. Lift us O God, to a higher plane of living, as we lift our hearts and minds and souls into Your Holy presence. We pray as Jesus taught, saying...*Lord's Prayer...*

“Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

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 55:1-5 (page 635)

Special Music-

Gospel Scripture- Matthew 14:13-21(page 848-849)

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

Hymn- 331- The Church's One Foundation

New Testament Scripture- Romans 9:1-5(page 984)

Message

“How Did He Do That”

Before we go any further, I want to define what “Miracle” means. According to Merriam/Webster it means; 1: An extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs. For example; the healing miracles described in the Gospels. 2: An extremely outstanding or unusual event, thing, or accomplishment. For example; The bridge is a miracle of engineering, or; It is a miracle that God allowed me to be a pastor. According to my favorite website, Got Questions, 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. Miracles provide evidence of God’s presence and power in the world and demonstrate His authority on behalf of His servants. A miracle may be performed directly by God or through a human agent. Other words used to describe miracles in the Bible are signs and wonders (typically used together), powers, and mighty works.

The Bible reveals several different forms of miracles. The Old Testament records unusual celestial events, as in the time the Lord caused the sun and moon to stand still to aid Joshua’s army at Gibeon in their victory over the Amorite kings in the book of Joshua. Several instances of God’s divine control over nature, as in the parting of the Red Sea and the crossing of the Jordan River, are displayed in the Old Testament. God can miraculously cause animals and inanimate objects to act in astonishing ways. Miracles of instantaneous healing, such as when Naaman is cured of leprosy or when Jesus heals two blind men, appear in both the Old and New Testament. Miracles in the New Testament are performed through human intermediaries such as the apostles, but most significantly through Jesus Christ. In all four Gospels, miracles play a critical role in Jesus’ ministry. Jesus performs miracles of healing, provision of food, and control over nature. New Testament

miracles consistently display God's power and either confirm or demonstrate the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. The Gospels record about 37 miracles of Jesus, although the apostle John stresses that these only scratch the surface of all that our Savior did.

The miracles recorded in the Bible served several functions. Some miracles validated God's superiority over false gods, while others validated God's message; others brought punishment, in addition to fulfilling some of the other functions, as in the wonders performed before Pharaoh. God's miracles of provision met human needs, supplying manna to eat in the wilderness and feeding the hungry crowds. Miracles of communication conveyed important messages from God. Miracles of judgment brought punishment and correction. Miracles of exorcism set people free from demonic control and spread the good news of Jesus. Miracles of resurrection demonstrated God's sovereignty and almighty power.

While we can read of wonderful miracles all through the scriptures, I would challenge each of us to look around and discover those miracles that surround us and we take for granted. The truth is that our very existence is a miracle. As hard as we try, there is no way that we can logically explain why we are here, and what we are doing. Yes, we can attempt to explain through science and technology the "hows" and "whys" of the workings of the world but, no matter how many papers are written and how many books are published on the subject, we still have unanswered questions. We are left with only one explanation and that requires something that takes work, **FAITH**.

We are surrounded by miracles that we cannot explain. We have tried to understand things and have made some wondrous discoveries in the process. The truth is, however, that humankind has not created anything. Every scientific advance, every great idea that has come up was only done through discovery not creation. It is God who did all the creating, He left it up to us to discover what could be done with what He gave us. With all the magnificent discoveries that humanity has come up with, there are some mysteries that remain God's alone. We can try to explain them through studies and theories but we cannot prove them. One of the main creations that mankind cannot claim is how to create life. We can do wonderful things to make life better and care for horrendous diseases but we cannot create life.

I remember from my High School science classes what was called the "Law of conservation of matter and energy" which stated the neither energy or matter can be created or destroyed. If that is so then where did they come from? This natural law tells us that we can convert matter into energy or energy into matter but we cannot create either. The only explanation that makes sense to me is that there is a higher power that is able to create or destroy. Therein lies the miracle that we are not yet

able to understand. The idea that **ALL** things are given by God, that everything we think we have accomplished, is because God gave us the power and the materials needed to discover and build the wondrous things that we have built, is the greatest miracle ever.

Just take a good look at our lives. Nothing that exists is here because we did it. All we have, all we have done throughout history, is given by God. We read in the book of Genesis about God giving Adam dominion over all things on earth. Mankind was also given the free will to do what they wished with what God had given. We have discovered great things and built great things with what God has given us. We have also done some things that were not so great, perhaps even evil things with what God gave us. We have the ability to either do good or bad in this world and all too often we choose the bad.

Jesus was sent to us so that we might learn. It required Him to perform certain miracles to prove that He was of God simply because no one would have taken Him at His word that He was who He said He was. If Jesus arrived today, would we believe that He was who He claimed to be? It would take some kind of proof for us to believe and even then how many would deny Him? What we fail to realize is that the miracles of Jesus are not as unusual as we might think. Yes, His miracles were quite dramatic as were the miracles of the Old Testament. If we accept the definition of a miracle as “an extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs,” we find that there are 83 miracles reported in the Old Testament and 81 in the New Testament. Many, if not most, of them we take for granted since they were not loudly proclaimed in history. The miracles of Jesus seem to be mentioned the loudest.

Take a good long look around and we will discover that our world, that is to say, the personal, individual world, we live in is so full of miracles that we fail to notice them. Spend some time thinking about your own personal existence and count the many miracles that have made you what you are today. Each and every blessing that we enjoy is a miracle when we realize that the majority of people in this world will never know the blessing we enjoy. I am not speaking of the material blessings alone, I am speaking of the freedoms we have, the opportunities, and the gifts we enjoy. Open your eyes and look around you, family, friends, where you live, how much you have or don't have. It doesn't matter, life itself is a miracle. Praise God and give thanks for the miracles that are yours and yours alone. Praise Be to God. Amen.

Prayers of the People- Merciful God we praise you for your unfailing love. We praise you for feeding our hunger for bread and for “the bread of life.” We praise you for taking our little basket of fish and barley loaves and using it to feed others.

Lord we ask you for your care and healing touch for those who are sick. We ask for your compassion on those who are suffering in our world. We ask for you comfort for those who are grieving. We thank you for your daily tender mercies. We thank you for your daily love. We thank you for your daily grace. We call upon you Lord to empower us as we declare who you are to a world who needs you. We call upon you Lord to inspire us as we seek to inspire others. We call upon you Lord to strengthen us in our own weakness. We ask all this in Jesus' Holy Name name, Amen.

Communion Hymn- 376- A Hymn Of Joy We Sing

Thanksgiving Prayer- Dear Lord, We rejoice in the mystery of being united with Christ through the service of Holy Communion. Thank You for drawing us into the joy of divine unity. Our hearts sings with gladness for this spiritual union that surpasses understanding. Let this joy overflow into every area of our lives, and let others see Christ alive in us. May we walk daily in the joy of being one with our Savior. Amen.

Closing Hymn- 475- Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind

Benediction- Go now into the world, strengthened by the gifts with which Christ has fed you. Be generous to others, for Christ has given extravagantly. Live by God's word, avoiding lies and violence. Walk in God's paths and never stray. And may God's wonderful love be with you everywhere; May Christ Jesus feed you with his body and word; And may the Holy Spirit confirm the truth in you, and fill you with God's presence always. We go in peace to love and serve the Lord, in the name of Christ. Amen.