



Worship Resource Week 3

Sermon Title: Miraculous Signs

Scripture: John 6:26-34 (The Voice)

25 When they found Jesus across the sea, they questioned Him.

Crowd: Teacher, when did You arrive at Capernaum?

Jesus: 26 I tell you the truth—you are tracking Me down because I fed you, not because you saw signs from God. 27 Don't spend your life chasing food that spoils and rots. Instead, seek the food that lasts into all the ages and comes from the Son of Man, the One on whom God the Father has placed His seal.

Crowd: 28 What do we have to do to accomplish the Father's works?

Jesus: 29 If you want to do God's work, then believe in the One He sent.

Crowd: 30 Can You show us a miraculous sign? Something spectacular? If we see something like that, it will help us to believe. 31 Our fathers ate manna when they wandered in the desert. The Hebrew Scriptures say, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat."

Jesus: 32 I tell you the truth: Moses did not give you bread from heaven; it is My Father who offers you true bread from heaven. 33 The bread of God comes down out of heaven and breathes life into the cosmos.

Crowd: 34 Master, we want a boundless supply of this bread.

Jesus: 35 I am the bread that gives life. If you come to My table and eat, you will never go hungry. Believe in Me, and you will never go thirsty. 36 Here I am standing in front of you, and still you don't believe.

Worship Promo:

It's easy to think of miracles as magic, as inexplicable occurrences that could never be replicated. It's part of why this "greater things" expectation is so hard to believe. We could never do miracles. Throughout the Gospel of John, the miraculous signs Jesus performs draw crowds and create buzz. But are the miracles really the heart of his ministry? This week in worship, we'll explore Jesus' teaching about miracles as we consider the miraculous signs in our own lives.

Desired Outcome:

Community members will hear that the miracles of relationship, trust, and care help people to believe in Jesus' message more than any flashy trick can.

(Week 3 continued on next page)



greater things

SPIRIT-LED INNOVATION

(Week 3 continued from previous page)

Reflection Question:

How have trustworthy relationships of care been a miracle in your life?

Sermon-Building Key Points (including any references for exegesis)

- Throughout John's Gospel, Jesus performs "miraculous signs." He turns water to wine, feeds five thousand, and walks on water, to name a few.
- Sometimes, we come to faith because we've experienced a miracle in our own lives. Sometimes, we come to faith because we're hoping for a miracle.
- But Jesus warns that the heart of his ministry is not about performing "miraculous signs." Instead, it is about relationship, trust, and care that can lead to belief.
- In today's passage, Jesus dialogues with a crowd who has experienced one of these miraculous signs: the feeding of five thousand people.
- The crowd seeks out Jesus, hoping to experience "something spectacular," asking Jesus to teach them how to "accomplish" (or "perform," in some translations) the works Jesus does, and even demanding an "endless supply" of the bread of God.
- In short, they treat Jesus as if he is God's magician, hoping he will do more tricks for their benefit.
- Jesus struggles to teach them that miracles become party tricks when there is no trust, no relationship, no belief.
- For the crowd to truly comprehend the miraculous signs, they would have to enter relationship with Jesus and to believe that God dwells in Jesus.
- Jesus offers the spiritual metaphor of himself as the bread of life: a nourishing, relational offering that would enable the crowd to participate in Jesus' relationship to God.
- The crowd wants the miracle but does not want to do the work of relationship, trust, or care that would enable them to truly believe in the miraculous sign or in Jesus.
- And without belief—without relationship, trust, or care—the crowd misses out on the real miracle.
- Relationships are hard work. Building trust takes a long time. It makes sense that we, like the crowd, sometimes long for a flashy miracle.
- But the deeper invitation to relationship with each other, with Jesus, with God provides real sustenance. Not just temporary satisfaction.
- To believe in Jesus requires trust, relationship, and care—not only in Jesus, but in the people who invite us into faith.
- And so, the "greater thing" Jesus desires for his disciples—both then and now—is not that they would perform flashy, spectacular miraculous signs. But rather that they would engage in nourishing relationships of trust and care that guide people toward belief that God's grace can be made incarnate in their own lives.

Week 3 Daily Prayer

God of Greater Things, help me to believe in your ability to show up in my life. Through Jesus, I believe that you meet us where we are: as humans seeking to live lives of wholeness. Guide me as I seek to meet you today, and as I seek to allow others to meet you through me, too. Amen.

(Week 3 continued on next page)



greater things

SPIRIT-LED INNOVATION

(Week 3 continued from previous page)

Small Group Discussion Starters

- As you consider miracles in your own life, what stands out to you about them?
- What helps you to believe in Jesus' message? What is difficult about believing in Jesus' message?
- How might you build relationships of trust and care with others? How might this help them to believe in Jesus' message?

Bibliography / References / Further Reading

- O'Day, Gail R., "John," commentary in *The New Interpreter's Bible, Volume IX: Luke & John*; Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1995.
- Peder Borgen's *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo* continues to be a definitive work in exegeting Jesus' use of bread imagery in John 6.

Contemporary Music Recommendations

- Open the Eyes of My Heart
- Set a Fire
- God of Wonders
- Scars
- All I Can Say
- Broken Vessels

Traditional Music Recommendations

- UMH #408 - The Gift of Love
- UMH #467 - "Trust and Obey"
- UMH #373 - "Nothing Between"
- UMH #407 - "Close to Thee"

Kids Connection Thought Starter

- Explore the idea of "trust" with the children, letting them share some of their ideas about what trust is or looks like.
- Trust is like a road built by two people toward each other, where they can meet in the middle. Each must do some of the work.
- Who do you build a road of trust with in your life?

Liturgy Resources

- Opening Prayer: [Expecting Miracles](#) by Leonard Sweet, via re: Worship
- Benediction / Sending Forth: [Benediction](#) by Nathan Nettleton, via re: Worship