

Devotions with Matt

March 26, 2020

MIRACLE WORKER

The second Title for God in Michael W Smith's song "Way Maker" (originally written by Osinachi Joseph, a Nigerian born Gospel singer) is Miracle Worker. When we look in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) we see Jesus healing many, feeding 5000 from just five loaves and two fish and walking on water, to name a few. We see His many miracles, but what does it mean for God to be a Miracle Worker?

I've read about a number of Christian leaders who believe that the type of miracles that the Apostles saw and experienced stopped happening at the close of the canon. God proved who He was through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and now we have it all written down for us so we don't need miracles anymore. But I also hear people often attributing their healing or an unexpected blessing that saved their lives or their bank account. John Tesh just had an interview where he feels God healed him from prostate cancer. Which one is it, does God continue to perform miracles or did He stop when the Bible was completed? Is God still a Miracle Worker?

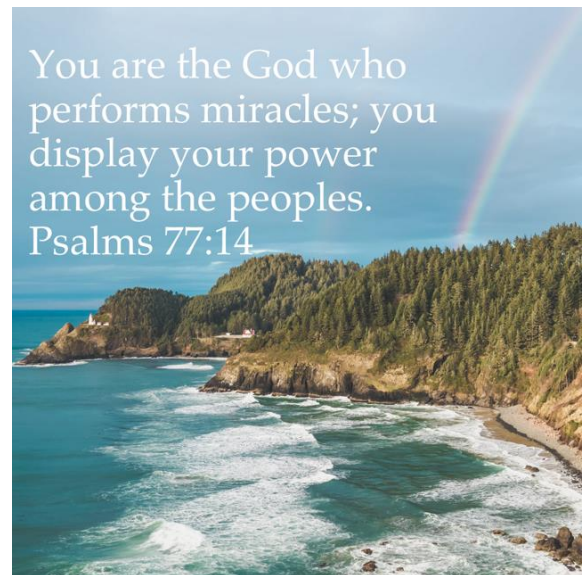
In Matthew chapter 19 Jesus is in Galilee and large crowds are following Him and He is healing many. The Pharisees, the religious leaders of the time, didn't like it. Miracles were a sign of Jesus's authority to do God's Will here on earth. Jesus says later to His Disciples (and to us) in Matthew 28:18, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given me." The Pharisees liked to think they had authority over the people and felt Jesus was taking that away from them through the miracles He was performing. But what's weird about the story in Matthew 19 where Jesus is healing the many is that the Pharisees go to Jesus and they didn't ask Him about the miracles, why He is doing them or in whose authority is He doing them. No, they didn't like Him doing them so they try to trap Him and make Him lose the trust of the people by asking Him a religious question. They don't like Him performing miracles so they ask Him about divorce.

I think that is so many of our stances toward miracles. We're really not sure if something happens that we can't explain is a miracle or coincidence? Is it luck or is it divine intervention? Did God cease performing miracles a long time ago or is He in the miracle business today? Those who believe He still performs miracles know in their heart God did it, but can't "prove" it. Those who say God stopped performing miracles can't answer why there seem to be miracles in people's lives. In writing this devotion I can't say to you God performs miracles like the Apostles saw and I can't say to you that He doesn't.

I have to be honest, I don't know why it appears that God heals some, but does not heal others. I don't know why it seems God did a miracle in someone's life, but someone else who prayed for a miracle didn't get one. I don't know why it looks like God brought a great financial blessing into one person's life, but another loses their home. I cannot answer for God in this, but I do know that sometimes the answers don't come to us because we have such a limited and finite view of God and His blessings.

For those who want to know if God still does miracles or not often look to the physical realm. We want to see evidence that God heals a person's body or fills their bank account. We want to see someone's loved one pulled back from certain death. We want to see the Power of God in full display in our physical lives. We know He can- He's proved it before. Even though those types of miracles are so important to us, God performs much greater miracles than these- and we often miss it.

Jesus didn't come to just heal our broken bodies, prolong our lives or make us comfortable or rich. Jesus came to heal our broken spirits, forgive our sins and restore our relationship with our Creator. He gave us through His sacrifice hope, peace and joy- no matter what is happening in our bodies or in our lives. He purchased our salvation and we now can live in a security knowing that no matter what happens on this earth we will be with God forever. It is a deep-seated knowledge



that even now, in the midst of turmoil, sickness and suffering, God is working and redeeming this world. It is knowing that things aren't perfect now, but one day He will return and make all things new again. It is confidence that although we may not experience a physical healing or miracle, we know that God is still in the miracle business.

Eleanor Webb, a member of our congregation, is often sick and has bad arthritis, lives on a limited income and has other issues she faces daily. But almost every conversation I have with her she tells me that she has so much to be thankful for. That view of life is a miracle in itself. It's a view of who God is and a trust in His promises to us. That kind of view is what I pray for in all of us and it is a view that shows God is a Miracle Worker.

"You are the God who works wonders; you have made known your might among the peoples." Psalm 77:14

In the Redeeming Love of Christ,

Matt