

“Immeasurably More”

Ephesians 3:20–21

Introduction

I've always wondered
why people today
shy away from
the subject of miracles.

I can't imagine anything
more intriguing
and thought provoking.

When I hear about miracles in Jesus' life,
my own heart jumps for joy
as I celebrate
with those
who experienced God's power
in their lives.

The whole notion of a miracle
always makes me hopeful and joyful.

So what is a miracle?

A great definition is given
in Ephesians 3:20-21.

²⁰ *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more
than all we ask or imagine, according to his power
that is at work within us,*
²¹ *to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*
(Ephesians 3:20-21)

God does much more
than we think is possible.

It is said about Abraham,
our father in the faith,
that

¹⁸ *Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed
and so became the father of many nations,
just as it had been said to him (Rom 4:18).*

If anyone had reason to doubt,
it was Abraham,
but he refused.

²⁰ *he did not waver through unbelief regarding the
promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and
gave glory to God,*

²¹ *being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. (Rom 4:20-21)*

The LORD consistently
goes WAY past
the limits of our imagination.

Over and over again
He exceeds:
our strength,
our abilities,
our resources,
our hurts,
our failures,
our sin,
our highest hopes,
and our fondest dreams.

We serve a God of miracles.

- The Israelites survived a desert environment because the LORD sent manna from heaven and made water flow from a flat rock.

- He opened the Red Sea
and the Israelites
walked across the river bed
as on dry ground.
- They defeated 7 nations in Canaan
who were much more numerous,
had large well trained armies,
and had expansive bureaucracies.
- We serve a God of miracles!
- That’s why:
 - He made the sun stand still.
 - And He the ax head float.
- All of this was to show them

*²⁰ him who is able to do immeasurably more
than all we ask or imagine, (Ephesians 3:20)*
- Thus, *we are not to waiver through unbelief,
we are to be fully persuaded
that God has to power
to do what He has promised. (Romans 4:20-21)*

FOUR WORDS

There are four words
in the Bible
used as synonyms
for miracles:
Sign, Wonder, Work, Power.

Let’s look at those words
and learn more about
what miracles are.

1. SIGN

In Isaiah 7:14
the Bible says,

¹⁴ *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

Hundreds of years
before Jesus was born
the prophet Isaiah said that
the Messiah would be born to a virgin,
and that the Messiah’s name would mean
that God is with us.

The birth of Jesus was a miracle.

The prophet Isaiah
also called
his birth a sign.

What does a sign do?

It points to something else.

Without signs
we would always
be getting lost.

At 183 and 183A
at Lakeline Mall Drive,
where the two converge,
drivers get confused.

This happens all the time
when someone is coming
to the Leander Church
and isn't familiar
with the new Toll Road traveling north.

Instead of getting off the Toll Road,
they stay on 183A
thinking its 183.

So all the while
they're looking
for the Valero station
at Crystal Falls to turn left.

They never see it
because
they didn't see the **exit sign**
at 183 and Lakeline Mall Drive.

See, miracles are signs
that point us to God.

It isn't the miracle that is important.

It's God.

God wants this church
(that's you and me)
to pay attention
so we don't lose our way.

When the LORD speaks,
and He has in his Word,
we are to listen
or we get lost!

We fail to see the sign
like so many do
at 183 and Lakeline Mall Drive.

2. WONDER

Joel 2:30 says,

*³⁰ I will show wonders in the heavens
and on the earth (Joel 2:30)*

There is an aspect of miracles
I like to call the “WOW factor.”

Miracles are impressive.

- You don’t forget them.
- They move you.
- They grab you.

Miracles make you wonder.
“Did God do that?”

This is important
inasmuch as
miracles
cannot be understood
apart from faith.

It takes faith to believe in God.

It takes faith
to see a miracle
for what it is:
an act of God.

Miracles never force you to believe
because
God never forces you to believe.

Faith is a choice.

To fully appreciate miracles,
you have to have faith.

That’s part of the “**WONDER**”.

How do you think
the woman felt
who had bled for 12 years
when Jesus healed her (Mark 5:25-34)?

She experienced the “WOW factor,”
and according to Paul in Ephesians 3:20,
so can you.

3. WORK

Mark 6:5 says,

*⁵ He could not do any miracles there,
except lay his hands on a few sick people
and heal them. (Mark 6:5)*

When Jesus went back
to his home town of Nazareth,
there was a problem.

The people there
refused to believe in him.

They saw him grow up,
and they thought,
“We know who this guy is.
He isn’t who he claims to be.”

But they were wrong!

As a result of their lack of faith
Jesus was not able
to do his mighty “WORKS”
in his home town.

He healed a few people,
but that was nothing compared
to what he did
in every other town in Israel.

Brothers and sisters,
God wants
to do his work
in your life.

God wants
to do his work
in this church.

It is up to us
to let Him.

If we harden our hearts
and close our minds
we will not experience
the “*immeasurable more*”.

But,
if we open our hearts
and let God fairly and politely
enlighten our minds,

He will do his work
and what He does
is greater than
you can imagine.

*²⁰ Now to him who is able to do
immeasurably more
than all we ask or imagine,
according to his power
that is at work within us, (Eph. 3:20)*

4. POWER

Miracles display
the power and the authority
of God over his creation
over his people
over you
and over me.

God can suspend
what we call
the laws
of this physical universe
because He made
and maintains the universe.

He can make time stand still.

He can heal the sick.

He can restore broken relationships.

It seems then
that Paul is telling us
that the signs, wonders and works of God
are to shape our imaginations
so that we accept the fact
that God's *power is at work within us*,
and since nothing is impossible with God,
we can be like Abraham,
who

²⁰ *...did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,*

²¹ *being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. (Rom 4:20-21)*

Now back to Roman 4:18,

The only reason Abraham
became the father of many nations
is because he believed!

¹⁸ *Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed
and so became the father of many nations,
just as it had been said to him (Rom 4:18).*

Conclusion

Some day,
because God
is powerful and good,
we are going to cast our crowns
at the foot of his throne.

We are going to confess
with all the angels of heaven
these words from Revelation 4:11.

¹¹ *You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created. (Revelation 4:11)*

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PRAYER

Thank you Lord for telling us
that you are willing to do immeasurably
more than all we ask or imagine,
according to your power
that is at work within us (Eph. 3:20).

We look forward to seeing your
signs and wonders, and works of power.

Lord we confess
that our faith
isn't what it ought to be.

Sometimes we miss
seeing a miracle
because we are just too busy,
or too hard-hearted.

Slow us down!
Prepare our hearts!

When your hand moves,
we want to see that.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Invitation

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- The LORD consistently goes W_____ past the limits of our imagination.

There are four words in the Bible used as synonyms for miracles:

1. S_____ (Isaiah 7:14).

- What does a s_____ do?
 - It p_____ to something else.

2. W_____ (Joel 2:30).

- The “W_____ factor.”
- Miracles cannot be understood apart from f_____.
- Miracles never force you to b_____.

3. W_____ (Mark 6:5).

4. P_____ (Revelation 4:11).

- Miracles display the p_____ and the a_____ of God over his creation, over his people, over you, and over me.

Conclusion