

A Coin from a Fish!?!

Scripture: Matthew 17:24-27

September 21, 2014

Midweek Provocative Questions

- What do you think about miracles? What is the difference, for you, between miracles and magic?
- When has something miraculous happened in your life – in which you were an active participant?

SERMON POINTS/OUTLINE

- Peter has been approached by the authorities, asking for payment of taxes.
- Jesus tells Peter to “go fish” and when he does, he will find a silver coin for payment of the taxes.
- This miracle demands that the receiver work with Jesus in order to receive the blessing.
- Jesus points out that Peter has what he needs to make this miracle happen.

A Guide for Daily Reading and Meditation

A Prayer for Every Day: God of wonder and joy, I lift my heart and my life to you today, praising and thanking you for your countless blessings, grace and mercy that you pour into my life. Fix my eyes and heart on your Word for us today and renew my covenant to follow you and be more like Jesus every day. Amen.

SUNDAY – Review the midweek questions in light of today’s worship

In light of today’s sermon, ask yourself:

- What do you think about miracles? What is the difference, for you, between miracles and magic?
- When has something miraculous happened in your life – in which you were an active participant?



MONDAY

Read Matthew 17:24-27¹ (*The Message*)

²⁴ When they arrived at Capernaum, the tax men came to Peter and asked, "Does your teacher pay taxes?" ²⁵ Peter said, "Of course." But as soon as they were in the house, Jesus confronted him. "Simon, what do you think? When a king levies taxes, who pays - his children or his subjects?" ²⁶ He answered, "His subjects." Jesus said, "Then the children get off free, right?" ²⁷ But so we don't upset them needlessly, go down to the lake, cast a hook, and pull in the first fish that bites. Open its mouth and you'll find a coin. Take it and give it to the tax men. It will be enough for both of us."

¹ Scriptures found in this document marked *The Message*: originally published by NavPress in English as *THE MESSAGE: The Bible in Contemporary Language* copyright 2002 by Eugene Peterson. All rights reserved. ([The Message Bible Online](http://www.themessagebible.com))

Read the scripture 3 times out loud. Each time, ask yourself a new question:

1. What words jump out at me today?
2. What phrase seems to be the most important as I read this passage right now? Why?
3. What does this passage say to me about my life right now?



TUESDAY

Read John 9:1-7 (*NRSV*)²

¹ As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷ saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

Where in this story do you see the kind of narrow judgment that we talked about on Sept. 14 – the kind that makes it difficult, if not impossible, to enjoy life? How does Jesus accomplish this miracle? Who is invited into the process of healing?

Where is God working to heal blindness in you?



WEDNESDAY

Read Mark 2:1-5 (*NRSV*)

¹ When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. ³ Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴ And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

² Scriptures marked (*NRSV*) are from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved

How does Jesus accomplish this miracle? Who is invited into the process of healing?
Where is God working to heal paralysis in you?



THURSDAY

We have read 3 miracle stories this week. Today, go back and re-read all 3 passages. Compare the stories, looking for similarities and differences. Trace Jesus' words and actions and how the different people in the stories react: disciples, the one healed/helped, the audience, the "rulers." Where do you find yourself in each story?

Now spend a few minutes searching yourself. What in you needs healing that you have not allowed yourself to think about this week. What is holding you back? Imagine what your life would be like if this obstacle were removed. How much do you want that life?

When you're ready and you know what you want to bring to God, pray this simple prayer:

Gracious God, fill me with the resolve to move forward, working with you for the miracle of healing in my life. Amen.



FRIDAY

Tracy Radosevic is a biblical storyteller who teaches at Wesley Seminary. She has a gift for bringing biblical stories to life, and I found several YouTube videos of Tracy telling stories, See her telling of the healing of the paralytic at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlzgEpUkdUc>

What does Tracy's telling of the story bring to life for you? Any new insights? Did her telling show you something new about the story?

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