

## “DO NOT TELL ANYONE”

Jesus of Nazareth is often referred to as a miracle worker; and indeed he did perform miracles. Yet unlike modern day self-proclaimed miracle workers, Jesus did not want his miracles publicized. He often told those whom he healed to keep the matter private:

“**See that you tell no one**, but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses appointed, for the purpose of a witness to them.” – *Matthew 8:4*

“Jesus sternly charged them, saying: “**See that nobody gets to know it.**”– *Matthew 9:30*

“But he ordered them again and again to **let no one learn of this**, and he said that something should be given her to eat.” – *Mark 5:43*

Had they all abided by his wishes and direct requests, we might not even know about those matters today. But they could not keep quiet. In fact,

“ . . . the more he would charge them, that much more they would proclaim it.” – *Mark 7:36*

So, we ask, why would Jesus not want his miraculous works made public, especially since the publicizing of them served to draw people to Jesus? We see today those who claim to be able to perform miracles garner huge crowds by publicizing their activities. People throng to miracle workers today just as fervently as they did in the first century. So what benefit is accomplished by keeping such matters private?

As the Creator of our world (*Colossians 1:15-16*), Jesus naturally has affection for us. His natural affection moved him to heal and perform other miracles. However, he knew that miracles would not make true disciples. Jesus wanted them to seek the ‘food of life everlasting’ – the word of truth. That is the reason he came – ‘to bear witness to the truth’ – and that is the work that has the Father’s approval. (*John 18:37*)

When men are attracted to Jesus because of extraordinary manifestations, many times they are not seeking truth and salvation, but they are seeking physical satisfactions and deliverance from their material difficulties. They become occupied with the ministry of things physical to the exclusion of the spiritual. They become what is commonly known as “Rice Christians” – those who declared themselves Christians for material benefits rather than for religious reasons.

Miraculous works can have the effect of shortchanging the development of our faith as it did the 5,000 who were miraculously fed. They came to Jesus to hear his message and after they were fed, they were so impressed that they wanted to make Jesus a king:

“Hence when the men saw the signs he performed, they began to say: ‘This is for a certainty the prophet that was to come into the world.’ Therefore Jesus, knowing they were about to come and seize him to make him king, withdrew again into the mountain all alone.” – *John 6:14-15*

The next day, the people went looking for Jesus. When they found him, he said:

“Most truly I say to you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate from the loaves and were satisfied. **Work, not for the food that perishes, but for the food that remains for life everlasting, which the Son of man will give you;** for upon this one the Father, even God, has put his seal [of approval].” – *John 6:25-27*

And thereafter ensued a discussion about the true bread of life that the people stumbled over greatly, causing many of them to no longer walk with him. (*John 6:28-66*) (See also **Does This Stumble You?**) But those who were following Jesus because of his teachings, rather than his miracles, were not stumbled.

“Therefore Jesus said to the twelve: ‘You do not want to go also, do you?’ Simon Peter answered him: ‘Lord, whom shall we go away to? **You have sayings of everlasting life;** and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God.’” – *John 6:68-69*

Today, sons of the kingdom are like Simon Peter and the twelve apostles who follow Jesus because of his sayings of everlasting life. We are not seeking material advantage; we are seeking spiritual advantage – everlasting life in the heavens. We know that whatever trials we must undergo, whatever handicaps we must suffer will develop faithful endurance. (*James 1:2-4*)

As we grow spiritually, we may become the recipients of extraordinary events that one would call a miracle. Such events are not done to draw us into the kingdom; they are done because we are already in the kingdom. Let us never make the mistake of approaching Jesus through the miracle. Rather, let us approach the miracle through our already existing faith in Jesus.

And like Jesus requested in the first century, when blessings of a miraculous nature occur in your life, do not become fanatical or use it as a means of boasting or proving spiritual superiority. Rejoice in your blessing, praise the Father and ‘do not tell anyone.’

We welcome your comments.

*“Elaia Luchnia”*