

Miracles of Jesus 12-09-02b

We resume our study now, looking at the miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have seen, and I'll give you a quick rundown of the ones that we have looked at since we began our study. Number one was in John chapter 2, Jesus turning the water into wine.

The second one, also from John, healing the nobleman's son. That was John chapter 4. Then the synagogue demoniac that we saw in Mark 1 and in Luke chapter 4. Number four was Peter's mother-in-law. That was in the three gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Then we saw the first miraculous draft of fish that's recorded in Luke chapter 5. Cleansing of the leper in Galilee, recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The healing of the paralyzed man in Capernaum, that was in three of our four gospels. Then the infirm man at Bethesda, you remember the pool and the columns and porches and so on, recorded in John.

That was John's third signed miracle in John chapter 5, not recorded in the other three gospels. Number nine was the man with the withered hand in the three synoptic gospels. Number ten, the centurion's servant, which both Matthew and Luke record, Matthew 8 and Luke 7. Number eleven was the widow of Nain, recorded only in the gospel of Luke, also Luke chapter 11.

Twelve was the blind and dumb spirit, that was Matthew and Luke. Twelve of Matthew, eleven of Luke, the blind and dumb spirit, another one of the demon exorcisms. Thirteen was stilling the storm, peace be still.

We have hymns about that. That was in the three synoptic gospels, Matthew 8, Mark 4, and Luke 8. Fourteen, the demon possessed man of Gerasa, Gadara, Gergesa, depending on whether you're talking about the town, the region, or the county there. That was, as I said, in all three synoptic gospels.

Then the woman with the issue of blood and the raising of Gerasa's daughter, sort of a combo miracle. Fifteen and sixteen respectively, that's in the three synoptics. Then the two blind men were healed in Matthew chapter 9. And the dumb spirit, which immediately follows that.

Those were both Matthew chapter 9. First one in 27-31, and the second in 32-34. Then we came to the ones we've looked at most recently. The feeding of the 5,000, which in my list is number 19.

Jesus walking on the water. And then the Syrophoenician woman's daughter. And now, of course, we took the feeding of the 4,000, which technically is listed down as about number 23, but we put it up with the feeding of the 5,000.

But we're now looking at, depending on how you number them, but in the total that

we've looked at, these are the 23rd and 24th miracles out of roughly three dozen that Jesus is recorded specifically as performing. And this is going to be the healing of the deaf and dumb man in chapter 7 of Mark. And it's only there, by the way.

And the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida that is in Mark chapter 8, and only there, by the way. So this is why I gave you those parallel chronologies in the first session this morning, to kind of see the context and the lead up to these two miracles, and we're going to sort of look at them together. So let's begin by reading the account in Mark chapter 7. After Jesus departed from the region of Tyre, now we were told in 724 that Jesus arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

And I just want to review a little bit about that region and specifically about Tyre. These are Phoenician cities. They're on the coastal plain.

They're currently in Lebanon. Right on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. They're first mentioned way back in Genesis chapter 10 when the son of Canaan was Sidon.

And the town seems to take its name from him. Very ancient cities. I mentioned last time I talked about them that they were founded just before the time of Abraham, about 2000 BC.

And what's interesting about these, we know, and I've mentioned a little bit of this before, that in the days of David, a thousand years later, Hiram, king of Tyre, is an important figure in the building of the temple. And providing cedars of Lebanon and stonemasons and workmen, carpenters, to build not only the temple but also the palace. The royal palace for David and Solomon.

You find this in 2 Samuel chapter 5 and many other places in that general time frame. But what's interesting is that in the Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28 Old Testament allusions to the fall of Satan, you have Ezekiel 28 using the king of Tyre as a metaphorical symbol for Satan himself. The word of the Lord came to me.

Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, thus saith the Lord God, because your heart is lifted up and you say, I am a God. I sit in the seat of the gods in the midst of the seas. You are a man and not a God, though you set your heart as the heart of a God.

Behold, you think you're wiser than Daniel. There's no secret hidden from you, but you corrupted your wisdom and so on. But Tyre continues to be important later on.

Jesus is going to make a point of these towns in Matthew chapter 11 verses 20 through 22. He began to rebuke the cities of Israel where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

What's he saying? The Gentiles are more ready than you are for the day of deliverance, for the revelation of God. What does the bread represent again, this common theme that's woven through these stories? It's not just teaching. It is the revelation of God, the entire revelation.

Jesus says he himself is the bread of life. He says, you've got to eat my flesh. And of course, his disciples leave at that point.

Many turn back. And the ones who stay have a conviction. Remember when Jesus says, you've got to eat my flesh and drink my blood, and these people get disgusted and they say, Many turn back.

And Jesus asks his disciples. He says, are you going to turn back also? You remember Peter's famous reply? To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Not just the words.

You have the words of life. We are sticking with you because you have the words of eternal life. It's Jesus and the words.

It's the embodiment, the fullness of deity in bodily form. It is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is part and parcel of the bread.

The truth that he communicates from heaven is the bread. The work that he performs is the bread. What he says and what he does, everything he reveals about the Father is the bread.

And if that bread is ignored and knocked off the table by careless children who aren't really hungry for it, the Gentiles are there waiting to receive it. So, Jesus says, if these mighty works that Jesus first did and brought to authenticate his message, he didn't just do the works. He didn't say, if I had done these mighty works, they would have really been amazed and impressed.

They would have paid big money to come see them. What does he say? They would have repented. They would have changed their mind.

What's the purpose of the works? What's the purpose of the miracles? Good thing for us to know in this study. What's the purpose of these miracles? It is to spark a change of mind. Now, if you're going to change your mind, what's going on? If my mind is empty and I'm contemplating a blank blue sky or the emptiness of a painted wall, can I change my mind? I have to have a conviction.

I have to have an attitude. I have to have an opinion. I have to have a series of thoughts.

There has to be some proposition in view about which I hold convictions. I say, this is the way to be happy. This is the meaning of life.

This is my priority. This is my goal. This is my value.

This is what I think is right. Isn't that the case? If you're going to change your mind, you say, you know what? I was wrong about that. This isn't the meaning of life.

This isn't what's most important. This isn't what I should do. This is not an appropriate goal.

This is not right. This is wrong. I need to change.

That's what repentance is. Metanoeo is to change your mind like metamorphosis. I change my form.

I'm a caterpillar. I'm a little worm of some kind. I go into a pupa or a chrysalis or a cocoon or whatever, depending on if I'm a butterfly or a moth, and I undergo metamorphosis.

My morphos, my form, changes, and I emerge completely new and different. Metanoeo, I have a change, a transformation in my thoughts. But there has to be a thought, right? And these people aren't seeing the miracles and saying, wow, I didn't think the supernatural was possible, and now I do.

I didn't think leprosy could be cured, and now I do. That's not what they're changing. What are they changing their mind about? The God of heaven.

He who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11.6. Gentiles have a pantheon, have a panoply, have a bunch of false gods, false ideas, Baal, Ashtar, whatever it may be, in the Canaanite world, Zeus, Aphrodite, Athena, and all the rest of it in the Roman, Greco-Roman world. And they change their mind.

They say, these are false. Here is the true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of David, the God of Israel is the true God. This is what Rahab concluded as she sat inside her house in the wall of Jericho and watched Moses and the Israelites, and then Joshua and the Israelites.

And she said, there is a God in Israel, and I am convinced. I have changed my mind. I and my family, and I'm hanging the scarlet thread out my window.

I am going to protect these men who have come to reconnoiter the land, because these people are right, and my people are wrong. My people deserve judgment. My people are depraved and immoral and ripe for judgment.

The iniquity of the Amorites is full, and I reject that. I change my mind about my people and my ethnicity and my culture and my background and my family, and I choose the God of Israel. She left Jericho.

She left Canaanite culture and religion and joined herself to the people of God and ends up as the great-grandmother, great-great several generations, for David. She's in the line of David. So is Ruth, the Moabitess, who left her people, left her ethnicity, left her culture, left her nation and her family behind and joined herself to the people of God.

It's a change of mind. Jesus says, if the mighty works which had been done in Chorazin and Bethsaida had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have changed their minds in dust and ashes. And what's interesting is, they did.

You say, well, why didn't Jesus do the mighty works there so that they could change their minds? It seems like by not doing the mighty works, he's consigned them all to hell. This is what some people might think. Not the case.

Look at Acts chapter 21, just as an example. Keep your place in Mark 7. Turn over to Acts chapter 21. You know from just the geography of the book that we're going to be looking at the Apostle Paul.

Came to pass when we had departed, we, this is Luke and Paul, departed from them and set sail, running a straight course. We came to Kos, the following day to Rhodes and from there to Patara. Finding a ship, we sailed over to Phoenicia.

We went aboard and set sail. When we had sighted Cyprus, we passed it on the left. Some of us have been to Cyprus.

Interesting little island. A bunch of Turks and Greeks shooting at each other there. Sailed to Syria and landed where? At Tyre.

Paul the Apostle, Luke with him, and the rest of the party sailed to Tyre. There the ship was to unload her cargo, finding disciples. There are disciples in Tyre.

Believers in God who have changed their mind and they are no longer following the gods of Phoenicia. They are disciples. Not just believers in God, they are disciples of Jesus Christ.

Interesting, no? We stayed there seven days. Paul stays a full week teaching and encouraging and fellowshiping with these disciples in Tyre. So Jesus was right.

They would change their minds in Tyre when these mighty works become known. They told Paul through the Spirit not to go to Jerusalem. By the way, just as an aside, I've mentioned before that I think that whole trip to Jerusalem for Paul was not the will of God.

People said, oh, look how brave he was to go and be willing to risk arrest and God turned it to blessing and so on. Well, God did turn bad into good as He so often does. But notice, before Agabus ever wraps himself in things, these disciples in Tyre tell Paul in the Spirit,

capital S, do not go to Jerusalem.

God, the Holy Spirit, speaking through the Gentile disciples in Tyre tell Paul, don't go to Jerusalem. We'd come to the end of these days. We departed and went on our way.

By the way, where is their way going? To Jerusalem. Went on our way and they all accompanied us with wives and children until we were out of the city and we knelt down on the shore and prayed. These people loved Paul, gave him a warm welcome and also gave him a great parade on the way out.

When we had taken leave of one another, we boarded the ship, they returned home. When we finished our voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemaeus, greeted the brethren and so on. And notice, verse 8, the next day, we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, entered the house of Philip the evangelist who was one of the seven, stayed with him.

This man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. As we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bounded about his hands and feet, said, Thus says the Holy Spirit, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hand of the Gentiles.

When we heard these things, we and they from that place pleaded with him not to go to Jerusalem. Paul answered, What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. Unfortunately, the Lord Jesus has got 11 other disciples working that territory.

And Paul the apostle is not going to be able to do any good there. Was there a wonderful revival in Jerusalem once Paul got there? No. And people say, Well, it was an equivocal message because Agabus just says, This is what's going to happen.

Just warning you ahead of time so you can be mentally prepared. And Paul says, Well, that's fine. I'm ready to be persecuted for Christ.

And they say, See, it wasn't God telling him not to go. It was just telling him what's going to happen if he goes. And he says, Well, that's fine.

What do you do with verse 4? Verse 4 isn't warning. Persecution will be there. And Paul manfully says, That's okay.

I'm willing to be persecuted. They told Paul through the Spirit, capital S, not to go. So, point of application.

If God is speaking, we need to listen. This is the disciples' problem. When Jesus is speaking and explaining things to them about the bread and they're not listening.

And this pertains to our study. Back to Mark chapter 7. What happens if God speaks and you are deaf? What happens if God speaks and you are blind? Isn't this the case? If the mighty works that have been done in you Chorazin and Bethsaida had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented. There are people who will respond.

Who will change their minds. Who will change their priorities. Change their course.

Change their direction. Change their destination. But the Jews and Paul the Apostle is no exception can be very hard-headed.

God says, In the Old Testament, I held out my hands all day long to this disobedient and stiff-necked people. And we saw stiff neck means they're showing me their neck because they're going the other way. Jesus talked about casting pearls before swine.

And the swine are the Jews of his generation. He told his disciples, when they're leaving and going away, you throw the pearls, trying to get them back, they will turn and trample you to death. Trample you to pieces.

They will turn because they're showing you their necks. These stiff-necked people. Well, as you look now at Mark chapter 7, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, there were people of faith in Tyre.

And they will be there in the future. They're not being ignored. The woman, the Syrophenician woman, is sort of a preview of coming attractions.

I don't doubt, but that the Apostle Paul may have met this woman when he stayed there for seven days. She and her family, she might have been a grandmother by then, comes down with her family and sees the Apostle Paul off. Wouldn't that be a great exchange of stories? Here's Paul meeting another person who actually met the Lord Jesus.

And she tells the story, tells that conversation. Because he's right there in her hometown. But, Jesus, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee.

He's in the Decapolis shore of the sea. That's over where the swineherd country is. That's the people who said, we don't want you here.

Remember that? Depart from us. Get the hints. They're scaring us.

Demon possessed guy, raving and ranting and slashing himself and scaring people on the road, that doesn't bother us. You, making him clothed and in his right mind, that scares us. Well, Jesus now, after a passage of time, is back in that region.

It brought to him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech. And, they begged him to put his hand on him. And, he took him aside from the multitude.

This is a new thing. Jesus has not done these, let's get away from everybody, miracles before. But, because of the rejection, this now is after the formal rejection.

You remember, we saw this back at the beginning. Chapter 6 of Mark. Your subtitle in the New King James.

Jesus rejected at Nazareth. Right? So now, Jesus says, I'm no longer working the large crowd. I'm no longer trying to convince the nation on either side of the Jordan.

Here's a man with a need. He's deaf and he can't speak. They begged him to put his hand on him.

So, he took him aside from the multitude. Now, review. What's the purpose of miracles? To spark repentance.

If the mighty works that have been done in you had been done, they would have repented. But you have not. Remember that? I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

Why? Because they did not change their minds. Jesus, in a sense, has given up on revival or repentance on a mass scale in these regions. So now, he is dealing with the minority, with an individual here and an individual there.

So, he takes this man aside from the multitude, puts his fingers in his ears, spat, and touched his tongue. Now, this is really quite odd. We know Jesus can heal at a distance.

Jesus could have just thought a thought. He could have issued a mental command. And this man would have been instantly and completely healed.

But there's a process. Is it significant? Did Jesus do this for a reason? Are these details here for a reason? No, of course they are. Was this just a really, really difficult deafness and the only way he could cure it is to use his fingers? He's already healed other mute people, right? So, he touches his ears.

He touches his tongue. Not just touches his tongue. What does he do? He spits on his fingers and touches his tongue.

What is this? There's a little bit of an idea here. You know how Spock does in Star Trek. My mind to your mind.

My thoughts to your thoughts. This is identification, isn't it? Now, Jesus can't very well stick his ear on the guy's ear. So, what does he do? He takes his fingers and puts them in his ears.

He touches the ears. He says, look, this is contact. This is communion.

This is close, personal engagement here. Right? He touches his ears. Then, to correct his muteness, he licks his fingers.

He spits on his fingers. And that saliva from the Lord Jesus' mouth touches the man's tongue. There's no way around it.

That's what he did. It is contact with the Lord Jesus that is used in healing the man's hearing. It is intimate contact with the Lord Jesus that touches the man's tongue.

What is this? Identification. It is in communion and identification with the Lord Jesus Christ individually. He takes him off by himself.

This is a one-on-one thing. This is a foreshadowing of things to come where you are no longer dealt with by God in terms of being part of the people of God. You are now a person of God.

This is the change. The nation has rejected Jesus as a nation reflected by Herod executing John the Baptist, reflected by the crowds who turn away. So, what does Jesus do? Now, it's one-on-one.

You come over here by yourself. I'll deal with you individually. This is the way He deals with us now.

Individually. You can't claim your family. You can't claim your church.

You can't claim your theological viewpoint. You can't claim your dispensationalism. You can't claim your conservatism.

You can't claim anything other than your one-on-one personal communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you hear when He performs? What do the fingers represent? Do you remember the blood on the priest? They put the blood on the earlobe. They put the blood on the hands.

They put the blood on the feet, on the toes. What did that represent? What you hear, what you do, and how you walk. It should be sanctified.

It should be cleansed by blood. The hands, the fingers, this is what you do. Do you hear what Jesus has done? Do you respond to His mighty works? If the people in Chorazin and Bethsaida had responded to His mighty works, they would have repented.

Here's my mighty works. These are the fingers of God performing the mighty works. Do you hear it? Do you hear and heed? He touches the ears.

Do you get the testimony of the works of God? The heavens declare the glory of God. The firmament shows forth His handiwork, His finger work. Do you hear it? Do you process it? Do you understand it? When Jesus speaks, when Jesus talks, when Jesus

teaches, does that become what comes out of your mouth? You wonder, well, why didn't He lick His fingers and touch His ears? He spits on His fingers and touches His tongue.

Why? Because if you hear, if you respond to the finger work of God, if you repent, if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, you will be delivered. For with the mind, you believe. And with the tongue, you confess.

What did Jesus tell the demon-possessed man of the legion? Go and tell your family what great things God has done for you. You cannot accompany Me now. You go and tell.

There's other people who are told, don't tell anybody. You're not qualified. You don't really even get it.

It's just a mercy that you've been healed. But there are those who go and tell. Paul on the Damascus Road gets struck blind and he's told, you are going to speak.

You are going to tell. But there is a process. Sometimes miracles just happen instantaneously.

Stretch out your hand. He stretches out his hand. It's fixed.

Here, Jesus performs an action. He goes through sort of a ritual. He puts His fingers in the man's ears.

He puts His fingers in the man's ears. He spits and touches his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, Jesus groans.

He sighs. And He says in Aramaic, Be opened. Ears be opened.

Mouth be opened. Immediately, now notice, it isn't when Jesus touched His ears. The touching of the ears did not give Him hearing.

The touching of His tongue with the saliva did not give Him speech. Jesus looks to heaven and says, Be opened. Immediately, the man's ears were opened and the impediment of His tongue was loosed and He spoke plainly.

After the appeal to heaven from the Lord Jesus. He commanded them, these are the disciples and the man who have been taken away from the multitude. This is a private miracle.

That they should tell no one. But the more He commanded them, the more widely they proclaimed it. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, He has done all things well.

He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak. This is a different reaction than

He got when He cast out the demon, right? They said, Please depart from us. You're scaring us.

Now, they can't keep quiet. They think He's okay now. Well, there are some puzzlements in this.

Are there not? We don't feel like we really quite digested the significance of these details. If He touched His tongue and He's supposed to speak what Jesus speaks, is that the meaning of it? Then why does Jesus say, Don't tell anyone? And they do anyway. And you get the idea that this is one of those disobedience instances where they're going against what Jesus commands.

What's going on here? Well, as we noted in the first session this morning, there is an invitation to compare the blind man of Bethsaida to this man. And it is in that comparison that we are going to be able to unlock these details, I think. But in the meantime, what do we see? If we say, Well, what should I bring away from our Bible class this morning? There are two or three obvious things.

First of all, the plan of God is well structured. It's thought out. These things did not happen by accident.

The disciples were just bumbling along as well. This is happening today. That thing happened yesterday.

This other thing happened the day before. But you look at the structure of these. Jesus fed the 5,000.

He went across the lake. There were these sign miracles or a lack of a sign miracle. He has a dispute with the Pharisees.

He makes a point in that dispute. He's talking about bread. He heals the Syrophenician woman's daughter and casts out her demon.

He addresses this deaf-mute man. He is going to heal the blind man. And this record is put into Scripture by God the Holy Spirit through human instrumentality.

But it's there for a reason. God orchestrated it. He planned it.

He does the same thing with your life and my life. There is no detail too small. There is no circumstance that escapes His notice.

Everything is firmly in the grip of God in Heaven. He's got a schedule. There is a chronology.

There is a careful balancing of factors and circumstances, situations and people. And God orchestrates it even though we're all running around with seemingly unpredictable

free will. God still does it.

So, first point of application. God knows what He's doing. And to the extent that we recognize that and that we know what He's doing, we have peace.

We can make bold claims. You notice what the Syrophoenician woman did. She was persistent.

She didn't take no for an answer. Jesus ignored her at first. The disciples had to prompt Jesus, can you do something about this woman? She's so persistent.

We can be bold. We can be persistent when we know we're on solid Biblical ground. We know what God is doing.

She knew that Jesus was the Messiah. She knew He was the Son of David. She knew that His grace could extend to the Gentiles.

And she wouldn't take no for an answer. We can do the same thing. We make sure we're on solid ground.

We pray. We meditate. We look at our Scriptures and we say, Lord God in Heaven, I know that this is within Your will and I am making appeal.

And on the strength of Your Word and the promises and principles and doctrines that I have learned, I am claiming Your grace. Sometimes we need a lot of help to grasp these lessons. Sometimes Jesus can just speak and the disciples will get it.

Other times He's got to do a pantomime. He's got to act it out. He's got to put it into a metaphor or a parable or an actual demonstration as He's doing in these miracles.

And we're going to see by the time we finish with this blind man, it is awe-inspiring the way God teaches us. And sometimes we need that. We need repetition.

We need to be shown a thing from different ways. So don't give up. If something doesn't make sense the first time, God will find a way to get it across.

If we are asking and seeking and knocking, we don't understand why our circumstances are the way they are. We don't understand exactly what we're supposed to do. What we should decide.

How we should act. What we should prioritize. If we are hungry, if we are persistent, if we keep coming, God will make it clear.

God will make it clear. Patience and persistence are qualities God desires in us. Patience and persistence with our faith.

We should be thankful. We should be grateful. Not in hubris.

Not in arrogance. Not in a desire for self-satisfaction. When God does provide, when God does act on our behalf, we should be grateful.

Be thankful unto Him and bless His name for the Lord is good. His mercy is everlasting and His truth endures to all generations. Sometimes we get to feeling needy and we get to feeling confused or uncertain or mystified by what's going on and we forget to be thankful.

When you start reviewing everything we have to be thankful for, it is amazingly restorative in the sense of objectivity. It puts things in perspective. Let not your heart be troubled.

What is it you believe? Believe in God. Believe in me, Jesus says in John 14. Start reviewing the things for which we can be thankful.

There are lots of things we can be troubled about, lots of things we can feel needy about, lots of things we don't have answers for the questions, but what is it we do know? You always solve a problem by starting with a known, starting with your facts. This is how you solve a mathematical problem. This is how you troubleshoot a computer.

This is how you fix a broken machine. This is how you fix a problem in the human body. Start with what you know.

What do I know? And we work from our knowns to solve for the variables, to solve for the unknowns. We do the same in the spiritual life. And when there are unknowns, when there are gaps in our understanding, we're puzzled, we're confused, go with what you know.

And one of the best ways to review what you know is thank God. What do you have to be thankful for? And it is amazing what God the Holy Spirit will bring to our mind when we have that attitude of humility in reviewing what God has done. It is what God has done that sparks any necessary change of mind that we need to have.

You look at the mighty works, change of mind. Jesus says, you know your problem, Chorazin? You know what your problem is, Bethsaida? You see the mighty works and it doesn't change your mind. You're not thankful.

You're not grateful. You don't recognize the gracious source of these things. And Tyre and Sidon are going to be better off than you in the day of judgment.

And you're the people of Israel. These people are Gentiles and they're going to be better off because they repent in sackcloth and ashes when they see these mighty works. And you've got that strong contingent of disciples up there that is ready to meet and appreciate and spend an entire week.

Wouldn't you love to spend a week with the Apostle Paul if you could speak Greek or Hebrew or English he could speak some kind of way. It wouldn't be any fun if he couldn't talk. But a week with the Apostle Paul? You know how many questions? That guy would get no sleep.

I would keep him up every night for the entire week asking him questions. Let's go to Romans chapter 9. I've got a few remaining things I'd like to clear up over there. You know this thing in 2 Thessalonians where you're saying you know, punished away... I'd just like to make sure my understanding is correct on that.

Paul, you know when Agabus came in what were you thinking when you decided... I would give a week with the Apostle Paul. That's the blessing that the people in Tyre got. Because they changed their minds.

They recognized the Lord Jesus and they became disciples. They were way ahead of a lot of the people down in Jerusalem. We want to be those people.

Well, let's close here in a word of prayer. When we pick up next week we're going to resume with the healing of the deaf mute and the blind man of Bethsaida. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for how powerfully it convicts us and rebukes us and instructs us and corrects us so that we can walk in a way that is worthy of the Lord Jesus Christ and worthy of our calling to exploit the opportunities and the grace and the provision that you have made for us. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will continue to guide us and comfort us and encourage us and strengthen our faith so that we can be fruitful. So that abiding in the Lord Jesus we can grow in grace and in knowledge and be ready for service both now and in the ages to come.

We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.