

THE LIGHT OF MEN

“Jesus did many other miraculous signs... But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” —JOHN 20:30-31

The four Gospels record about 35 separate miracles Jesus performed during His three years of public ministry. John doesn't refer to them as 'miracles', but as 'miraculous signs' for a very important reason fundamental to the Christian life.

A sign is not an end in itself but a pointer to something. If we were driving to a remote town and weren't quite sure which exit to take off the highway, we'd eventually see a sign that would point us in the right direction. We don't pass the sign and keep on going, but follow it because it leads to the town. By the same token, all the miracles Jesus performed were signs that pointed to Him. He said, “I am the way and the truth and the life (John 14:6)”.

Many people in Jesus' day saw the sign, but failed to follow it through. John records Jesus having fed a multitude of over 5,000 people, and when the crowds sought Him out again, Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw the miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill” (John 6:26). The miracle had become an end in itself. It was a theatre for those who saw it; something to observe, to enjoy and applaud, but they completely missed the point.

When Jesus and His disciples came across the blind man by the Pool of Siloam, He said, “This happened that the work of God might be

displayed in his life.” He healed the blind man, but the objective wasn’t to make him see again. That was a wonderful benefit, but the objective was that he would believe in Jesus.

The great danger in the Christian life is that we stop at the sign. We may admire Jesus. We might believe He’s the greatest man who ever lived, and we’re greatly indebted to Him for having died for us, but we get on with life and that information is tucked away. We’ve stopped at the sign. We know about Jesus, but are not living any different than an unbeliever.

Jesus did not perform miracles merely to heal people or get them out of a fix, but so that they may find life in Him. It isn’t a life simply to be received, but is what switches us on to live every day in the boundless energy, empowerment and love of Jesus. John’s Gospel opens with, “In him was life and this life was the light of men.” When we live in the light of Jesus, our whole perspective changes, because it is in His strength we are sustained, and in His love, we are moved to help others.

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, You are the light of my life. Thank You for enabling me to live every day in your strength and your love.

TO REFLECT UPON: Have I stopped at the sign or am I living everyday with Jesus?