

When will your miracle come?

By Dave Batty

Have you ever seen a miracle?

Would it be a miracle if Tiger Woods hit a hole-in-one on a golf course? For most of us, it would be a great stroke of luck to hit a hole-in-one. But is that a miracle?

Is it a miracle to win the \$200 million lottery? No—it's just that the odds are about 1 in 200 million chances that you would guess the right number combination.

On a more serious note, are you facing big problems in your life? Do you need a miracle from God to see these problems go away?

We often use the word, "Miracle," in a broader way than when the Bible speaks of a miracle. The Bible has many stories of miracles, and not one of them is about

pure luck. Each story tells how God acted in a supernatural way to change a situation that was beyond the power of that person to change in his or her own strength.

Do you need a miracle in your life today? Do you need a miracle of

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healing for a physical need? Or do you need a miracle of provision for a financial need? Is there an addiction that is too powerful for you to break?

One mother contacted me requesting prayer, "My son who is 16 said he is gay, my daughter is in a mental ward, my other daughter might be pregnant by her boyfriend who abuses her. We need a miracle in our family."

Can you say like this mother, "My loved one needs a miracle." Are you a parent with a child that is out of control? You've done everything in your power to bring change into your child's life—but nothing has worked.

Others have a mother or father that is bound by sickness, addiction or sin. Jeff's father has stomach cancer. Ralene's step-father is addicted to pornography and sexually abused her when she was a child.

What is the key to getting a miracle in your life? When will your miracle come?

The miracles reported in the Bible provide powerful illustrations of God bringing supernatural change. One miracle is recorded in Matthew 14:22-33. It tells of how Jesus and Peter walked on water in the middle of a storm on the Sea of Galilee. This story gives excellent lessons that can help us as we deal with the challenges in our lives today.

1. Jesus sent His disciples into the storm

When the disciples started on this boat trip, they didn't know they were going to end up in a storm. At the end of a very busy day, they simply followed the directions of Jesus and got in the boat and started across the Sea of Galilee. Soon they were caught up in a major storm.

When we face storms in our lives, it is easy to blame the devil for these trials. Or we can blame our leaders, our family, our community, or

- ❖ **What miracles do you need in your life?**
- ❖ **Have you asked God for a miracle?**
- ❖ **Are you afraid to leave your comfort zone and take the risk for stepping out in faith?**

our political leaders for the storms in our lives.

Before we blame the devil or other people for every storm in our lives, perhaps we should ask ourselves, “Did God send this storm into my life because He has some special lessons He wants me to learn through this experience?” We will not learn these lessons in the peace and tranquility that exists when no storm is around.

In James 1:2 it states, “When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don’t resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realize they come to test your faith and to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed, and you will find you have become men of mature character with the right sort of independence.” (*The New Testament in Modern English, J.B. Phillips*)

Maybe you need to tell yourself, “I need to take a fresh look at this big problem in my life and realize that God has allowed this problem.”

God is bigger than every storm in your life. He will see you through each storm.

2. Jesus was not with the disciples in the storm

When the storm hit the disciples, Jesus was not in the boat with them. He had stayed behind to send the people home, and then He had gone up on a mountain to pray. (Matthew 14:22-23) All night long the disciples battled this storm, but they didn’t reach the other side.

The storms you are facing in your life may leave you with the feeling that you are all alone. You may feel overwhelmed, and out of

control. You don’t seem to be making any progress. And in the middle of your darkness, Jesus does not seem to be anywhere near you.

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How many times have you said, even with anger, in the middle of the storms of your life, “God, where are you?!”

3. The storm interrupted their normal routine

Under normal conditions, it only took a few hours to cross the Sea of

Galilee in a boat. But this night was different—they rowed all night and still were not even close to their destination.

It would have been easy for them to say, “We should be off duty by now. This is not right! Jesus should have closed down the day’s preaching and ministry a lot sooner. Then we wouldn’t be out here all night in the middle of this storm.”

But the truth is clear—if they had done everything according to the 9-5 schedule, they would have missed this miracle.

4. The storm was overwhelming them

These men were not able to overcome the storm. It was too strong for them. By 3AM they were exhausted as they struggled to get across the lake.

Are you concerned about the critics?

When Peter asked Jesus if he could come to Jesus, what were the other 11 disciples thinking? The Bible doesn’t tell us, but here’s one possibility.

“Peter, what are you thinking! Just stay in the boat!”

“We need you to help row this boat. Why are you abandoning us now?”

“And what will people think when word of this gets out? How many teenagers will try this and then drown? You are taking unnecessary risks. Peter, just stay in the boat!”

“Peter, you are always acting without thinking! What is to be gained by you walking on the water? No one is going to get saved. It’s clear that no one is going to get healed.”

“You are simply putting yourself in harm’s way by getting out of the boat. Now do you want us to rescue you?”

“How do you expect us to build credibility with other people when you pull a stunt like this? No one will believe this anyhow—they will call us a bunch of crackpots!”

What did Jesus say to Peter?
“Come!”

5. Jesus showed up in an unexpected way

The disciples were not expecting to see Jesus walking on water at 3 or 4AM. They thought they were seeing a ghost. Even though they personally knew Jesus, they didn't recognize Him in the middle of this storm. So Jesus immediately tells them, "It is I. Don't be afraid." (vs. 27)

Are you looking for Jesus in the middle of your storms? He may show up in an unexpected way. See also Matthew 25:31-46.

6. Peter asked for a miracle

When Peter realizes it is Jesus walking on the water, he asks permission to come to Jesus. "Lord, if it is you, tell me to come to you." (vs. 28) Peter did not demand that God do a miracle for him. He left that decision in the hands of Jesus. But he indicates what's in his heart—I'm ready to come if you tell me to come!

Jesus responds to Peter's request with one word—COME! (vs. 29)

Throughout Jesus' ministry there were times when He could not do many miracles because of their unbelief.

How many miracles do you prevent God from doing simply because you do not ask Him for a miracle?

7. Peter's miracle began with one step of obedience

When Peter stepped out of the boat, his miracle started. He began to walk on water with no evidence

that it was going to work for him. His obedience took him on an incredible experience. (vs. 29)

Where did Peter's miracle take him? Closer to Jesus!

Peter was not perfect. When he got close to Jesus, he took his focus off Jesus and began to sink. But even in that moment, Jesus reached out and took his hand and lifted him up.

Jesus could have said, "Peter, I'm really disappointed in you. Just turn around and swim back to the boat." But that's not the way Jesus responded to Peter's failure, and that's not the way He treats us either.

8. The miracle took place in the middle of the storm

Jesus did not calm the storm before He performed a miracle in Peter's life. When Jesus told Peter to come out of the boat, the storm was

still raging. With every miracle step Peter took, the storm still raged on. Even when he got right next to Jesus, the storm did not stop. Peter and Jesus walked all the way back to the boat, and still Jesus did nothing about the storm.

Only after they climbed into the boat did the storm stop. (vs. 32)

The same may be true in your life. Instead of praying for God to calm the storm, you need to be praying, "Jesus, help me to get close to You in this storm."

God may do a miracle in your life, and yet the storms and chaos may continue to rage all around you.

God's top priority is not to calm storms. He's much more concerned about what's happening in your life.

9. What about the other 11 disciples?

This story has a great big "What if?" that was never answered. What if James, or John, or all 11 of the rest of the disciples had asked Jesus, "Can I come, too?" How would Jesus have responded?

Would He have said, "No! Stay in the boat—only one can come. You asked too late!" This could easily have been the story of 12 disciples walking on water, not just Peter and Jesus.

So what did the other 11 disciples do while the miracle was going on? The Bible is silent about their actions. They sat and watched a miracle.

You too can sit silently as others experience a miracle. You can say, "I don't need a miracle—I'm going to stay in the boat where it's safe."

The problem with being in the boat—it wasn't getting anywhere!

What if there is no miracle?

Many have prayed for a miracle, but nothing happened. My father died of cancer when he was 56. When we discovered that he had cancer, we prayed daily for a miracle, but he still died a few weeks later.

The day he died, my mom said to me, "Today your dad is healed. He's in heaven in perfect health."

Miracles are not based on formulas—say the right words, or think only certain thoughts. No magic wand will bring a miracle.

Every miracle is an act of God's power and God's mercy. It is certainly appropriate to ask God for a miracle, but we must leave the decision in His hands. If we receive a miracle—to God be the glory! If we do not—God still loves you and He will be with you through every storm in your life.

They had been stuck on the lake all night in the middle of the storm.

You can say—it’s not my fault that I’m stuck here—this storm is the problem. Jesus sent me here, so I guess I am stuck here. Jesus should have known better than to send me into this storm.

What did the 11 disciples do in response to this miracle? The Bible says, they worshipped Jesus. (vs. 33). That sounds spiritual, but it didn’t take any faith to stay in the boat. The 11 who stayed behind didn’t take any risks.

You too can stay in the boat and not take any steps of faith. It’s easy to stay in church and worship God, but is that all God has for you to do? What are the steps of faith He wants you to take? What are the miracles He is wanting to do in your life?

What are you doing to experience what God has for you to do? What has He heard from you? “Jesus, calm this storm in my life!” Or are you ready to pray, “Jesus I want to get close to you in this storm. Tell me to come to you. I want to take a step of faith, and experience your mighty power at work in my life.”

We have no guarantee that a miracle will come every day. But we can focus our attention on getting closer to Jesus, instead of being fearful of the storms that rage around us.

On that stormy night, Peter experienced a miracle that he remembered for the rest of his life. In later years when he faced difficult trials, he could think back to the time when he experienced that special miracle.

God is ready to reach out His hand and help you in your time of need. He is ready to say, “Come.” Are you ready to ask?

When will your miracle come?

Discussion Guide

The following questions can be used for your personal reflection on this topic, or it can be used as a guide for a group discussion. If this is used in a group setting, please understand that you are not required to disclose the specific details of past sins, failures, or personal experiences.

1. Which miracle story in the Bible do you find most encouraging in your life?
2. Have you prayed for a miracle and not received one? How did you feel about that?
3. Read Matthew 14:22-33.
 - A. If you had been one of the 12 disciples, what would you have been thinking as you spent all night rowing the boat in the storm?
 - B. What would you have said to Peter when he asked Jesus if he could come out of the boat on the water?
4. What are the storms in your life that seem to overwhelm you?
5. Read Matthew 25:31-46. What are some of the unexpected ways Jesus has shown up in your life?
6. What are some of the lessons you can take from the Matthew 14 story of Peter walking on the water that can help you as you face the storms in your life?



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