

# And God Said What?

Miracle Stories

Session 6

# The Direction of Intention

My God, give me the grace to perform this  
action with you  
and through love for you.

In advance, I offer to you all the good that I  
will do and accept  
all the difficulty I may meet therein.

Our Lady of Good Counsel, Pray for us.  
St. Francis de Sales, Pray for us.

# The Miracle Stories

- **What is a Miracle?**
  - What is a miracle as recorded in the Gospels?
  - A Literary Form
    - The Miracle Stories are recorded to tell a story to a particular Post-Resurrection Community
    - Miracle Stories, like Legends, are based on a historical event which then speak to a particular community about the Good News of Jesus Christ
  - The Gospels are recorded during a time when people did not distinguish between the natural and supernatural.

# The Miracle Stories

- Understanding the word Miracle
  - Modern: Magical, Marvelous – **one sided**
  - Biblical: Dyanameis – Act of Power - **relational**
  - The Difference?
    - Modern Understanding focuses on the Act itself.
    - Biblical Understanding focuses on the Power behind the Act and what it says to a particular community
  - Why Acts of Power and NOT miracles?
    - Acts of Power are more clearly understood as a sign of the Messiah.
    - Acts of Power are more clearly understood as Divine Attributes and not merely magical acts.

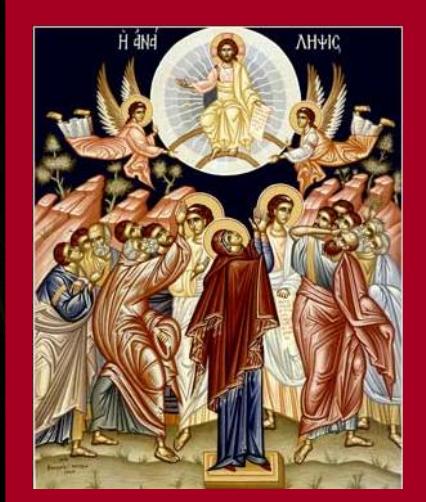
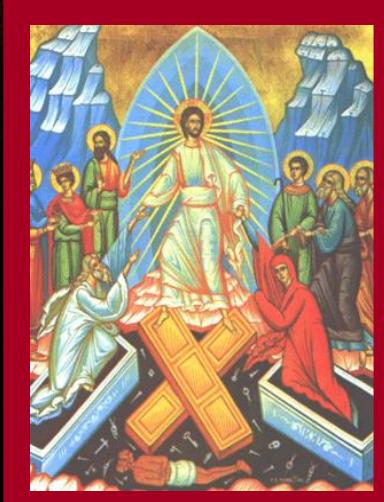
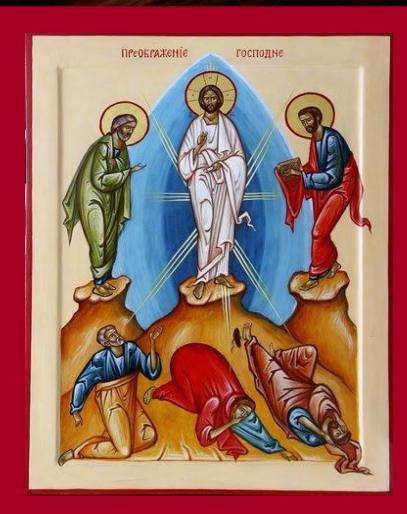
# The Miracle Stories

- Miracles of Nature
  - Wedding Feast
  - Calming the seas
  - Feeding 5000
- Miracles of Healing
  - Ten Lepers
  - Centurions Servant
  - woman with Hemorrhage
- Miracles of Exorcism
  - Swine Herd
  - Mary Magdalena
- Miracles of resurrection
  - Widow's son
  - Lazarus
  - Centurions Servant

# The Miracle Stories

- Fifth Type of Miracle

- The Incarnation
- The Transfiguration
- The Resurrection of Jesus
- The Ascension



# The Miracle Stories

- Why did Jesus Perform Acts of Power?
- Why did the early church record the miracle stories?
- How do we understand the miracle stories today?



# The Event

Mark 4:35-41

The Calming of the Sea



## The Original Meaning

Messianic Sign

Restore Balance to natural world



## First Stage – Oral Tradition – Post Resurrection

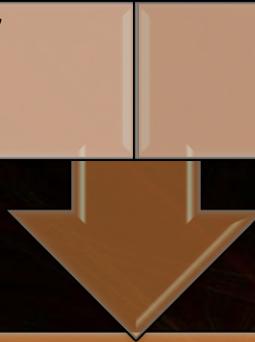
Who was this Jesus ?

Divine attributes – Power over nature

## Second Stage of Oral Tradition

Mark's Community  
under attack

Guidance and  
reassurance



### How is the story re-presented?

Stormy seas  
(Persecutions)

Belief in Jesus will restore order  
and bring salvation



### Written Tradition

Records Original Event

Understood by community at  
different levels

# The Miracle Stories

- The Form of Miracle Stories
  - A Problem is clearly stated
  - The problem is brought to Jesus' attention
  - Jesus is described as acting to solve the problem
  - Jesus action resolves the problem
  - The crowd reacts to Jesus' act of power

BUT

Not all miracle stories are about the MIRACLE

The Gerasene demoniac - The Feeding of the 5000

# The Miracle Stories

- In the Synoptic Gospels
  - **teras** = a **wonder**. the *effect produced* on those who witnessed the mighty work.
  - **dunamis** = power. Manifestation of power of Jesus as the Son of God – The Christ – The Messiah
- In the Gospel of John
  - **semeion** = a **sign**.
  - The *significance* of the work
    - In itself, or in the reason, object, design, and teaching intended to be conveyed by it.
    - It occurs in the Gospels 48 times (41 x's in John)

# The Miracle Stories

- In the Synoptic Gospels
  - ***teras* = a wonder.**
    - Mostly Mark
    - Who is this who speaks with Authority?
    - Who is this that forgives sins?
  - ***dunamis* = power.**
    - Mostly Matthew and Luke
    - Reality of the Messianic Age
- In the Gospel of John
  - ***semeion* = a sign.**
    - The Divinity of Jesus



# The Miracle Stories

- **The 7 SIGNS in St. John Gospel**

- Ch. 2 - Cana: water into wine
- Ch. 4 - Raising the son of the royal official
- Ch. 5 - Paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda
- **Ch. 6 - Multiplication of the loaves**
- Ch. 6 - Walking on the water
- Ch. 9 - Healing of the man born blind
- Ch. 11 - Raising of Lazarus

**The Paschal Mystery**

# Summary

- Miracle Stories based on events in Jesus' Life
- Different kinds of Miracles
- Development in understanding miracles
- Not all miracles are about the Miracle
  - Affirmation of faith of the individual
- The Feeding of the 5000
- How do we interpret miracle stories today?
  - Affirmation of the Kingdom of God
  - Affirmation of Jesus as Messiah
  - Speak to us about our faith