

Sunday Celebration (June 28, 2009)  
**"Overcoming Unbelief"**

## The Gospel of John

**John 11:45-57**

## OVERCOMING UNBELIEF

v. 45 ... "therefore many... who had seen what he did, believed in him"

### *What Place does "Signs & Wonders" have in the Gospel Mission?*

– In other places the Scripture highlights that some signs were done that influenced belief

John 2:11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

John 2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.

John 6:14 When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"

John 7:31 Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, "When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?"

### **Signs Witnessed and Signs Written** — God has made BOTH Sufficient Witnesses

**John 20:30-31** "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

“ Let us beware of supposing that miracles alone have any power to convert men’s souls, and to make them Christians. The idea is a complete delusion. To fancy, as some do, that if they saw something wonderful done before their eyes in confirmation of the Gospel, they would at once cast off all indecision and serve Christ, is a mere idle dream. It is the grace of the Spirit in our hearts, and not miracles, that our souls require.” J.C. Ryle, “John”, vol 2, p. 330

1 Cor 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction,

Ps 78:5 “He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a Law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them ... 7 so that they might set their hope in God”

Rom 10:17 “So faith come by hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ”

***DON'T Underestimate the Power of the Word of God*** (Heb 4:12)

Conclusion: What should be our position on “signs and wonders”

1. They are ordained by God as a means through which SOME will come to faith and believe
2. They are NOT GUARANTEES that people will respond to them.... Therefore we should assign them an APPROPRIATE PLACE in our Ministry Pursuits

v. 46 ... “but some...”

***Why is it that the SAME EVENT results in 2 Different Responses?***

“ We must never wonder if we see abounding unbelief in our own times, and around our own homes. It may seem at first inexplicable to us, how men cannot see the truth which seems so clear to ourselves, and do not receive the Gospel which appears so worthy of acceptance. But the plain truth is, that man’s unbelief is a far more deeply-seated disease than it is generally reckoned. It is proof against the logic of facts, against reasoning, against argument, against moral suasion. Nothing can melt it down but the grace of God. If we ourselves believe, we can never be too thankful.” J.C. Ryle, “John”, vol 2, p. 331

***You don't just "trip & fall" out of unbelief— You Must Be Dynamited Out!!***

1 Cor 2:14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

Rom 8:7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

Eph 2:1-3 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience — <sup>3</sup> among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Eph 4:17-19 you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. <sup>19</sup> They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

John 8:34 "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.

***How Does One Ever Come to Faith? ....*** God is Working Behind the Scenes in a Providential Way!

**Jn 6:35-44**

“Musculus observes what a wonderful example we have here of the sovereign grace of God, choosing some, and leading them to repentance and faith, and not choosing others. Here is the same miracle, seen under the same circumstances, and with the same evidence, by a large crowd of persons: yet while some believe, others believe not!” J.C. Ryle, “John”, vol 2, p. 328

***... If you are among those who DO BELIEVE— Thank God, that He has DYNAMITED You Out of Your Unbelief***

## **YET... MAN IS FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS CONDITION**

*They Are Unable to Believe the Witness - AND/BECAUSE They Don't  
WANT to Believe it...*

### **John 5:36-44**

**v. 39** ... "You Search the Scriptures" – Unbelief doesn't have a problem being religious, it just WON'T Surrender to Christ

– Jn 11:55 ... the many who went to "purify themselves" would be the same ones who would crucify Christ within the week!!

**v. 40,43, 44** ... "you refuse to come to me" ... "you do not receive me" ... "How can you?"

*- Their Refusal and Inability is linked to some other competing interest*

– Jn 11:47-48 ... *Why Would They Not Believe?*

“There is enough evidence to convince anyone who is not set against it; but there is not enough evidence to bring anyone into the Kingdom of heaven who will not come.” (Pascal)

*They Do Not Believe Because of Another Competing Interest  
– They Don't Want to Lose "Their Place"*