

Seeing Jesus in His Miracles

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Miracle at Cana

Seeing Jesus in His Miracles—Part 1 of 7

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January 8, 1989

John 2:1-11

Introduction:

From now until just before Easter, with a number of interesting special services and guest speakers and a revival series interspersed along the way, I propose to preach a series of sermons about Jesus; specifically, "Seeing Jesus in His Miracles." I propose to take the miracles of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of St. John, and look at them one by one as we ask ourselves the question: "What does this miracle reveal to me of the person and character and purpose of Jesus Christ my Lord?"

When Philip "discovered" Jesus, he wanted to tell his friend, Nathaniel. When Nathaniel found out Jesus had been living in Nazareth, he asked, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" And Philip's answer remains valid: "Come and see!" See for yourself! And that is what we want to do again: to see Jesus!

And to begin this morning: THE MIRACLE AT CANA.

I. JESUS DEFIES COMPARISON OR 'NEAT' CATEGORIZING

We have to meet and know Jesus for ourselves!

Miracle at Cana

Probably every devout Jew had an idea what Messiah should be, and do. A Messiah should be a strong man to bring political deliverance; or else an ascetic like John the Baptist. He should be "this," or He should be "that!" But who would ever think that the Messiah would perform His first miracle at a common wedding in a little out-of-the-way hill village far away from the center of things?

We had better be careful in 'assuming' we know 'all about Jesus!'

We love to categorize people and institutions. It helps us to pigeonhole them in their "proper" place in our scheme of things; and to some extent it gives us power over them, at least in our own minds. This is an inner arrogance, this being so sure that we understand other very complex people.

And if it is sad that we do this quickly with each other, it is even more sad when we think we know all about the Lord Jesus even before we give Him a chance to be Himself, and say for Himself what He has to say.

JESUS IS NOT TO BE NEATLY BOXED, AND 'EXPLAINED' AND TAMED!

When we meet the living Jesus, we are meeting Almighty God Himself! We are dealing here with MYSTERY! - Jesus cannot be "owned" and "packaged;" He must own me!

Jesus is NOT capricious. He can be depended on to keep His word. But at the same time Jesus is never limited to our predictions. (Why would He do the thing with wine?)

SO, THIS IS HOW JESUS INAUGURATED HIS MIRACLES, HIS MASTERY OVER THIS UNIVERSE!

It is a "dawning." It gives a hint at what shall follow. It is not out of character with Christ, even though it is surprising to many that Jesus would begin here, in this way.

It was an unveiling. It brought a glimpse of His glory to His disciples; and they believed on Him.

II. JESUS SET THE EXAMPLE OF JOY - OURS IS AN AUDACIOUSLY JOYFUL WAY !

- A. The very nature of salvation is that it must deal with sin, and guilt, and the darker side of existence that robs us of real life. But our God does NOT delight in GUILT! Jesus came to destroy the works of sin! There is a time and a place to face up to sin. But a religion that is habitually long-faced, and always engrossed in ascetics is NOT the faith Jesus manifested here.
- B. The ascetic way seems harder. Somehow it seems more pious to keep on wearing the hair shirt. It denies pleasures; it boasts of what it gives up; it revels in sacrifice. Actually it is self-centered! It refuses to let go control! It has set, rigid rules; it determines who can or cannot "enter into the kingdom."
- C. Jesus' way is not asceticism, but holiness. Christ's way does not deny pleasures, it denies self! And that is different from denying pleasures! Yes, there is a cross. But there is also JOY at the goal; and there is wonderful FELLOWSHIP ALONG THE WAY— and there is laughter and there is love!

III. THE MIRACLE AT CANA REVEALED A PATTERN OF ABUNDANCE

[... But why did He have to make His first miracle about 'wine'? !!!]

Abundance? Why it was even OVER-ABUNDANCE!: 6 times 20 or 30 gallons ...120 or 180 gallons times 4 (quarts per gallon) = 480 or 720 quarts of wine. At \$10.00 a quart there was \$5,000- 8,000 worth of wine ... WHY?? Was it ...a gift to the couple? ..a message about the Holy Spirit ? ... was it a pre-cursor of the message that "faith is wealth?"

- A. We "spiritualize" these truths— and say they have NO application in material things . . . life is to be "hard here" but we persevere. To those who would be "Essenes" and retire from life and living and fast all the time Jesus spoke by His example: I do not deny the finer things of life. I can enjoy social times; I endorse marriage; there are times when the thing to do is simply have a good time!
- B. Or, we go to the other extreme, and "materialize" all the promises: we say, "God intends us to live in luxury!" "Health and wealth indicate great and pure faith!" To those who would

Miracle at Cana

go to the other extreme and use faith to serve self and procure material things, Jesus spoke clearly: Seek ye first the kingdom of God ... The Son of Man was a homeless person much of His life!!

- C. But Jesus "actualizes" His abundant life! "All things are YOURS!" And no one savors life [more], even here and now, like people who are in love with Jesus Christ!

John Wesley said: "Christ does not take away human society, but sanctifies it. Water might have quenched thirst; yet our Lord allows wine; especially at a festival solemnity."

His people LIVE even here, in the NOW! And His people have the assurance about the THEN, too!

IV. THE MIRACLE AT CANA BEGAN TO REVEAL THE AUTHOR OF LIFE

"Whatever He says to you, do it!" Advice from Mary that we may well heed: and as the disciples OBEYED they saw Christ's GLORY, and they BELIEVED!

- A. To obey Christ, and to reveal Him, is the ESSENCE of Christian faith: and we will not get to know what Jesus is like until we begin to trust and obey Him.
 - 1. Go, carry water, fill the pots there!
 - 2. Now, carry some to the governor of the feast! ... as the miracle unfolded, the disciples believed!
- B. To obey Christ, and to reveal Him, is the EVIDENCE of the Christian faith: and OTHERS will never know who Jesus is until we begin to obey Him in the little and big things of life!
 - 1. Christ will bless others through our obedience!
 - 2. But there is risk involved! We cannot "carry miracles" if we compromise in the obedience! ... the GLORY of Christ and His POWER and AUTHORITY was evident as the disciples obeyed!
- C. To obey Christ, and to reveal HIM, is the EVANGEL of the Christian faith: when we come to KNOW WHO JESUS IS, others will want to know Him, too!

[Jesus lived in a real world. The life of JOY and ABUNDANCE begins the moment HE, JESUS, comes into our lives. God's world— we don't deny the good things— we DENY

SELF! That is a lot more radical than denying self OF THINGS! But Jesus says: DENY SELF...AND ALL THINGS ARE YOURS, AND YE ARE CHRIST'S AND CHRIST IS GOD'S.]

Conclusion: WHAT DO WE SEE OF JESUS IN THIS MIRACLE AT CANA?

And how can what we see make an impact on our lives?

1. I SEE A TENDER, LOVING, JOYFUL SAVIOR.

Don't mistake: we need the discipline of fasting; we need the times of extra prayer, and waiting before the Lord. BUT, do we tend to have the self-centered ethic of asceticism?; if only we pray harder, or if we dig in, we can do anything we want! Do we begrudge a day in the mountains— or try to make an evangelistic message out of every sunset, rather than simply enjoy being with God and with His people? GOD WANTS WHOLE PEOPLE! The JOY of the Lord is our strength!

2. I SEE A SELF-GIVING SAVIOR, LIVING EVEN IN HIS "OFF MOMENTS," HIS TIMES OF JOY FOR OTHERS!

[Rather than being fanatical about fasting and abstaining from the pleasures of life, we are more likely to have the self-centered ethic of easy- believism. Many Christians would never say it, but they ACT AS IF God exists to make all our water into wine, so why should we work hard? Why bother about the cross? THIS isn't the Jesus you are seeing at Cana!]

Can we come to the place where we will simply OBEY Him? I want to obey Him every time I know that it is Jesus Who is speaking. I want to be attuned. "Go fill the pots with water!" Why? How can that help? What do You want me to do that for? Seemingly futile actions in obedience to direct command; as well as risking personal embarrassment if something miraculous doesn't happen.

3. I THINK MAYBE JESUS CHOSE TO BEGIN HIS MIRACLE-WORKING AUTHORITY AT A WEDDING BECAUSE HE WANTS US TO REMEMBER THAT IF WE FOLLOW HIM WE WILL ONE DAY END UP AT ANOTHER WEDDING FEAST!

Miracle at Cana

Do we dare to follow this Jesus away from the "expected" into the fullness of abundant life?

"Whatever HE says to you— DO IT!" The LAST will be better than the first! He will be our 'security!'

#46 *He Hideth My Soul* (At least verses 1 & 2)

The Healing at Bethesda

Seeing Jesus in His Miracles—Part 2 of 7

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January 15, 1989

John 5:8 "Arise, take up your bed, and walk."

This is the third miracle that John records.

[Perhaps we ought not go past the second miracle without at least taking a brief glance: Jesus tells a man to go home, and he will find his son healed. It is a miracle of authority; and of faith that would believe even when it couldn't see.]

But here in John, Chapter 5, is the story of how Jesus healed a helpless man among throngs of lame, blind, and infirm at Bethesda, the House of Mercy, the Pool of Siloam.

I. A MAN WHO SIMPLY COULDN'T HANDLE LIFE

- A. He was a man with severely damaged HOPE. He had been 38 years among the disabled. Vaguely he kept feeling: "I'm made for something better than this!" He was always looking for a tomorrow that he never really expected would come. When hope is faint or damaged, it becomes just wishful thinking. This is the mentality that takes what little subsistence it has and buys a "Megabucks" ticket.
- B. This man was asked: WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT? Jesus asked a key question: "Do you want to be made whole?"

The Healing at Bethesda

We all want to be free from certain aspects of our situation; we want to believe we will never have to face the consequences of our sins. But we do not want to simply let them go; we do not want to be free of the twisted pleasures, the gratifications of our sins: the forbidden thoughts of lust — the secret thoughts of revenge — the bitter thoughts of ill-will — the petty thoughts of jealousy.

But this man thought it over. he thought, 'I don't know what difference it will make— and I don't have anyone to help me- - but, yes, I DO want to be well! And so this powerless man received:

C. The challenge of FAITH! STAND UP! YOUR WEAKNESS IS OVER!

Cruel words? If you or I said such a thing to a disabled person it WOULD be cruel! But Jesus is NEVER cruel!

The words of Jesus are always compassionate, at least to the lowly in heart. But the words of Jesus are also always challenging. When JESUS speaks then we know, somehow that this is not human persuasion. This is not a technique. We grasp the authority in the Speaker! This is God Himself!

But He is asking us to do what we alone cannot do! "Rise and walk!" "Go and sin no more!"

But Jesus' words are not just compassionate and challenging. JESUS' WORDS ARE ALSO ALWAYS ENABLING! If we know it is Jesus, then we can do whatever He says! This man, catching the spark of faith in Christ's authority, was made whole as he obeyed.

It seems as though there ought to be more to it than that! There ought to be spiritual fireworks! [Isn't there supposed to be a great crowd-reaction— and an appeal for "funds to keep this faith-ministry on the air!" ?? It is wonderful when we simply hear the voice of Jesus say: YOU ARE FREE RIGHT NOW! IF YOU WILL GET UP AND WALK AS I SAY!

English pastor Spurgeon used an illustration of a wealthy American woman who brought her "servant" aboard a British ship anchored off the port in which she lived. (Servant = slave!) The rich lady made the observation that if she sailed to Britain, and the servant went ashore on British soil, she would be "free." But the captain said, "She was a free woman the moment she walked on this deck!" And the black woman refused to go ashore with the woman that had been her mistress. She sailed to England a free woman!
WHEN JESUS SPEAKS, WE ARE FREE!

- D. To be HELPLESS is not a liability when we are dealing with Jesus. It isn't just the OBVIOUSLY disabled who are helpless in the eternal things that matter!

We hate to relinquish the appearance of control, but the fact is we cannot save ourselves!

Certainly there are gifted, strong men and women. Certainly God can and does use great gifts to His glory. Thank God for the gifts He gives, of intelligence and personality, of creativity in arts and music, of keenness in perception and insight in science and business.

But the greatest of gifts are still helplessness before the Lord until they come under the love and power and authority of God Himself. And THEN they take on dimensions of eternity! They begin to really matter! And we helpless men and women begin to LIVE!

II. HERE IS A SAVIOR WHO SPECIALIZES IN MAKING PEOPLE WHOLE

And in keeping with the theme of this brief series: "What does this miracle reveal to us of Jesus?"

- A. Jesus always acts in union with God the Father. What we see in Jesus, we know about God; and what God does/will do in resurrection and judgment. He will do through Jesus Christ! ("Do not marvel at this (miracle of empowerment; verse 28) for an hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth ..." This making one powerless man whole is no problem for the One who holds ALL OF LIFE AND CREATION in His creative Fiat!

The Healing at Bethesda

- B. Jesus (and thus God Almighty) has great respect/regard for the human will.

God never comes into our lives over the resistance of our will. The greatest single hindrance to spiritual power in people's lives is the lack of genuine desire. People who profess to be Christian do not really want to be HOLY! If we desire to be like Jesus Christ then He will find a way to get to us, and speak a Word that will enable us! but if we just say the words we will remain helpless beside the Pool of Mercy.

DO YOU WANT TO BE MADE WHOLE? God has great regard for your will! You will never achieve spiritual greatness unless you desire it supremely, and unless you answer His question, "Will you be whole?"

- C. Jesus can and does use His authority to make people whole! Jesus is still speaking words of compassion. He is still speaking words that challenge. But His words are still enabling words, as well!

[But this miracle is set in a chapter that contrasts a powerless man who was made whole, and some supposedly very powerful men who refused the very Source of Life.]

III. A GIFTED, PRIVILEGED GROUP OF MEN WHO NEVER FOUND LIFE

At the beginning of the chapter is a man who COULDN'T— but at the close are men who WOULDN'T come to the Source of Life, even though HE was right before their very eyes!

- A. It would seem that such love and kindness ought to provoke an outpouring of joy and celebration. "Messiah is here!" Or, at least, "Someone is here who cares about people, and is helping the helpless!" But instead there was bitter opposition- - and it came along the line of CONTROL! The "power structure" of the religious society attacked Jesus at the point of His UNION WITH GOD THE FATHER!

To acknowledge His claims would mean for them a relinquishing of the CONTROL they THOUGHT they had over their own salvation BY WORKS, by keeping the "scriptures" THEY had interpreted.

B. SAVING FAITH IS IMPOSSIBLE WHEN OUR MEASURE OF FAITH IS ONLY HUMAN.

We compare ourselves with one another: "I am as good as..." Or, "What matters is that we are true to ourselves!"

What is more, we sit in judgment over the scripture: WE select which part or parts we shall obey!

C. It wasn't as though these people were shut away from the means of grace. They did have the true scriptures! (Jesus said [verse 39] "You (do) search the scriptures!" BUT IT WAS IN THE SCRIPTURES, IN THEIR SMUG CERTAINTY THAT THEY HAD A HANDLE ON TRUTH, THAT THEY THOUGHT THEY HAD ETERNAL LIFE.

But Jesus went on: "The scriptures point the way to ME!" Verses 39-40 "You search the scriptures, because you think that in them YOU have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life."

D. These people were damned because they were UNWILLING to come to Jesus! This is what HE said!

Conclusion:

We are catching the threads of continuity that run through this portrait of Jesus at work: threads of compassion, and of understanding.

But the thread I see is this constant of DIVINE AUTHORITY! It is the untameable and awesome power of God!

1. When Jesus speaks, it IS the voice of God! When GOD speaks, something within us responds! No one can presume to say, "When I preach you will hear God!" We trust and hope that by the Holy Spirit that often takes place. But no one can speak for Jesus, finally, except Jesus Himself, by the power of His Holy Spirit!
2. When we come seeking God (in prayer/worship/preaching worship/wherever) and that connection is made, THERE IS SOMETHING BEYOND INTELLECTUAL BELIEVE-ISM!

The Healing at Bethesda

A genuine encounter with Jesus Christ will be more than just a parade to an altar to say some words! It is an encounter with compassion, and with a challenge to a new way! And it will also be an enabling Word!

The powerless man stood up, carried his bed, walked— in obedience to the Word of Jesus Christ!

The nobleman from Capernaem turned around, and went back toward home in obedience to the Word of Jesus Christ!

WHAT IS JESUS THE CHRIST SAYING TO YOU?

#12(EH) *This is Thy Will, I Know* (Introduce these two couplets:)

*This is Thy will, I know,
That I should holy be;
Should let my sins this moment go,
This moment turn to Thee.*

*O might I now embrace
Thy all-sufficient pow'r;
And never more to sin give place,
And never grieve Thee more!*

Five Thousand Fed

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January 22, 1989

John 6:1-11 (verse 11) Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted.

INTRODUCTION:

In this miracle, which is so important that it is recorded in all four gospels, there are enough different lessons to keep a scholar busy for a lifetime, I suppose. There is a basic truth about "little is much, when God is in it" that almost applies itself. A lad's lunch: five small loaves and two small fishes, given to Jesus, feed 5,000. But, Look again with me at...

I. THE MIRACLE ITSELF

(text verse) Set the scene; and then:

- A. (verse 6) Jesus knew ahead of time what He was going to do. GOD IS ALWAYS AN ACT-ER, AND NOT A RE-ACT-ER. Circumstances do not "sneak up" on God. In this situation it looked as though Jesus and His disciples were the embarrassed victims of their own success. Thousands had come to hear the wonderful words of life. But now the very mass of people was more than could be handled.

God permits the 'rain to fall on the just and the unjust.' And God respects the free moral choices of human beings in ways we cannot always understand. But God is NEVER surprised by life's twists and turns; and He is never "out of control."

- B. (verse 5) Jesus asked Philip to consider the problem. GOD INTER-ACTS WITH PEOPLE AND WITH THINGS AT HAND. And Philip took an inventory. Other evangelists record the "treasury as low: five loaves, two fish;" But it was good old ANDREW that saw the LAD who owned the "treasury"— the one person who had something of his own to eat.
- C. (verse 11) Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted. JESUS TOOK WHAT THE DISCIPLES HAD— TOOK ALL OF IT, INADEQUACY AND ALL— AND WORKED A MIRACLE OF GRACE!
- D. (verse 26 "Truly, truly I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled. Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life...") The miracle had some unforeseen re-actions. SOMETIMES GOD'S GIFTS, AND THE BENEFITS OF GOD'S LOVE CAN BE THE FOCUS OF AMBITION AND DESIRE, RATHER THAN THE LIFE IN CHRIST ITSELF.

II. SEEING THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS IN THE MIRACLE

This story is another documentary about how Jesus met with people, and gives us a clear example of the interwoven strands of the kingdom of God:

These three strands are LOVE, and SERVICE, and HOLINESS. Put into inter-human terms, they are loving fellowship, caring service, and faithful proclamation; (the Greek, or New Testament terms are koinonia, diakonia, and kerigma.) Jesus taught, and Jesus showed by his example that all three, LOVING, and SHARING, and PROCLAMATION, were vital, important to Him.

We're tempted to try to bring in the kingdom of God simply by telling people, "this is HOW to become a Christian!" And we prefer if a minister does the telling in a revival or church service. But look at how Jesus modeled the kingdom:

- A. THIS MIRACLE SHOWS US THAT JESUS LOVED PEOPLE. John simply records that Jesus looked up and saw the crowd coming. But Mark tells us (1) that Jesus had gone on a retreat, to get away; no doubt He was tired, perhaps even worn out. But Mark also says (probably with the eye-witness of Peter prompting him) that (2) when Jesus saw the multitude, He had compassion on them, because they were like a sheep without a shepherd.
- **IT IS JUST ABOUT IMPOSSIBLE TO EVANGELIZE APART FROM LOVE.**

The Gospel is GOOD NEWS; the evangel is the message of God's love. And somewhere along the way it has to be fleshed out.

(Illus: The story is told of a little boy on a bitter, snowy, windy day in Chicago, coming into Dwight L. Moody's Sunday School, stamping the snow off his feet, and looking almost frozen to death.

"Where do you live?" the boy was asked. When he told, the questioner said, "You walked past several good churches to get here this cold morning. Why didn't you go to one closer to your home?"

The little boy answered: "I guess its because they love a feller here!")

- B. THIS MIRACLE ALSO SHOWED US THAT JESUS SAW PEOPLE AS MORE THAN SOULS TO BE SAVED. JESUS UNDERSTOOD PEOPLE. He knew that they were not just lost souls, or damned sinners, but they were also hungry stomachs. He knew that they were teenagers wondering what people might think of them— or what they were thinking of themselves. He knew they were older folk wondering if the health would hold out as long as the savings. He knew they were middle-aged people carrying burdens for grown-up children as well as aged parents.

So, when He saw the multitude, He knew they were hungry. And He said, "Where are we going to get food for these people?"

Mark has it a little different, again. The disciples knew it was impossible, so they said: "Send them away before it gets too dark to see the road to the store!" But Jesus aid: "YOU feed them!"

This can have a literal application: we need to share our food. It also is a principle:

****IT IS JUST ABOUT IMPOSSIBLE TO EVANGELIZE "SPIRITUALLY."**

At least this is true if we are defining "spiritual" to mean apart and separate from the all the rest of the person.

We might begin our witnessing with a genuine interest in the person we want to bring to Jesus. The need may not be bread, but there is a need. And we may not have what the person needs, any more than the disciples had bread for the 5,000. But we can care, and we can share what we DO have.

- C. BUT THIS MIRACLE ALSO REVEALED WHAT TO MANY SEEMED TO BE A 'NEW SIDE' OF JESUS. JESUS LEVELED WITH PEOPLE. He didn't sail under false colors. He knew when the people wanted simply to USE Him. And He said: "This is what I AM! I AM the Bread of heaven!"

This was a watershed miracle, and a watershed time.

****THERE IS NO EVANGELISM THAT BY-PASSES THE CROSS OF CHRIST!**

Sooner or later, and the sooner the better as a rule, we have to come face-to-face with the eternal needs of the people we love. We have to be faithful in saying: "JESUS IS LOVING, JESUS IS CARING, BUT JESUS IS LORD! AND JESUS IS LIFE! AND ONLY JESUS IS LIFE!"

CONCLUSION:

1. From this miracle, ultimately, came a DIVISION (6:66). "Many went back, and walked with Him no more!"

If it had simply been "Loaves and fishes Day" every day there never would have been a problem. If we simply had Praise gatherings, and hand-clapping, toe-tapping times all the time there would be no problem.

But Jesus spoke of DEATH and of SHARING HIS DEATH AND HIS LIFE! And that has a repulsive side to it! It is a humbling thing to NEED a sacrifice! It is a humbling thing to be DIED FOR!

So— the GIFT-SEEKERS BEGAN TO LEAVE! The FREE-LOADERS, and the SCRIPTURE-EDITORS WENT AWAY FOR GOOD!

2. From this miracle came also came a reinforced DECISION (6:67-8) "Do you want to go, too?"

There is real pathos in this scene. Jesus looks at His closest friends, The Twelve, who have only recently been out working for Him. Are YOU looking for what I can DO, rather than for ME?

Peter speaks for us all: "Lord, to whom shall we go? YOU have the words of eternal life!"

3. JESUS CLAIMS HE IS THE ONLY WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE!
 - HAVE YOU MADE A DECISION ABOUT JESUS? Have YOU / ARE you a partaker in the blood and body of the Lord? Through GRACE, by FAITH, have you come to eternal life?
 - ARE YOU WILLING TO SHARE THIS MESSAGE? Will you be an evangel? To CARE? To SERVE? And then, as God gives you grace, to SHARE YOUR FAITH? If you follow the Lord Jesus for Himself, and not just for what He gives and does, I challenge you to take someone on your heart to care about, and to serve, and as the opportunity presents itself, to introduce them to Jesus Christ.

#391 *At Calvary*

Jesus Walks on the Water

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January 22, 1989 PM

John 6:15-25

Introduction:

After the feeding of the five thousand, (remember that Jesus had gone to the remote region trying to get some "time away,") Jesus was still very weary, and needed some time alone. So he sent the disciples back to Capernaum in their boats and went alone up into the hills to pray. A series of things challenged the disciples:

I. A TIME OF CHALLENGE

[Scene: The Sea of Galilee lies 600 feet below Mediterranean Sea; channels of valleys cut toward the mountains of Lebanon in the north; Mt. Hermon. Winds whip down the valleys— treacherous storms blow up. One does just NOW!]

The certainty of change.

It was a quick transition for the disciples. From the excitement of a disaster (not having enough to eat with thousands hungry) that was turned into a triumph (the feeding of the 5,000); from the "starring role" of miracle-helper and from gathering in baskets of left-overs, the disciples had gone to rowing against the wind, in the dark, with water slopping into their boat.

Jesus Walks on the Water

The mystery of the adverse winds and waves.

Christians experience dark hours when they cannot see/know the Presence; we are NOT called to be fair-weather sailors. So— the gales stirred up the sea. Why? The scriptures don't say. Did Jesus "cause" the wind? Or did it begin with a storm far out over the Mediterranean Sea miles and miles away? Who knows? Does it help to know? GOD PERMITS SOME THINGS WE BLAME HIM FOR. Some things we can/never will understand this side of heaven.

The mystery of the timing of Jesus.

The disciples were on the sea at Jesus' direct command. They were NOT out of His will for them. But they certainly were without the comforting re-assurance of the presence of the Master. Sometimes JESUS SEEMS NOT IN ANY HURRY TO ALLAY FEARS:

Certainly He does see; He does care. But He does not always do what we might THINK He should do. (Martha said: "Lord, if You had been here my brother would not have died.")

Even God's people, on His assignment, for a time experience fear and danger and storms. But Jesus has NOT deserted His own; He knows. And He will never abandon His own!

II. A TIME OF REASSURANCE Jesus Came!

He came in an unexpected way. He just about always does! The very elements that threaten and terrify are the stepping stones, the pathway on which Jesus comes.

He makes Himself KNOWN. There are times when we must hold on in naked faith— there are times when we have no assurance. But in this case Jesus, Himself, assures them it is He: "It is I! Don't be afraid!"

The Presence of Jesus is assurance. They invited Him aboard! And immediately the boat was where they were headed (at His command in the first place!) Sometimes we must build an altar where we are— that the fire may fall where God intends it to do the task assigned!

Jesus bids us be like Him! (Matthew records the episode of Peter asking Jesus to let HIM walk on the sea, too: Peter on the sea... the significance... I'll come to that again, perhaps ???)

III. BUT WHAT DO WE SEE OF JESUS HERE?

(Our series is "Seeing JESUS in His miracles: AND THIS IS ANOTHER CANDID CAMERA SHOT OF JESUS AT WORK)

He still needed that time alone with God the Father— and he got it!

He was the Master of His disciples. They moved at His command. He gave direct commands to the disciples: they knew what the next step was. And He was obeyed.

He was AWESOME: A GLIMPSE OF HIS MAJESTY HERE— beyond the mere "trick" of walking on the water— the elements knew their Master. Something of the TERROR of the night comes through in the telling— first of the storm— then of the seeming apparition— but then of the AWESOME LORD! ("He is NOT "safe" but He is good" is what one character said of Aslan the Lion in the C.S Lewis series in the Chronicles of Narnia.)

He was in CONTROL! (That is beyond "command.")

He permitted Peter (and us) a hint/glimpse? of the FUN/JOY of mastery! There are deeper lessons than that, I'm certain, and yet I have the sense that it was no big deal to Jesus to walk on the water!

IV. APPLICATION(S):

Some people here just NOW may be in a "night-storm" of trouble- financial crisis— absent friends; perhaps facing the reality of DEATH: [we ALL will one day pass through the waters of death: we will see Him then ... "When thou passeth through the waters, I will be with thee..."]

There is STRONG ENCOURAGEMENT in this miracle! This glimpse of our great Lord, Who is not just strong in so-called "religious" matters, but is Master of the entire Universe, including, and maybe especially, the "material" Universe! ... THE LORD

Jesus Walks on the Water

JESUS CHRIST'S Kingdom is a kingdom wider in its range and more profound in extent than we are capable of understanding.

I CAN SEE THREE LESSONS:

1. Jesus can "use" the surges, billows, waves, unrest. Christ's commands to us, as we carry them out, will be opposed. But He can overrule, He does see us; and our part is not to whine or complain.
2. Jesus comes to us where we toil. NO one cries out to Him in vain; He does not turn deaf ears. If we are following His commands, the wind may be against us. We may be afraid, but Jesus has never turned a deaf ear to the cry for help, for assurance, for succor. He may seem "late" by our measuring, but He comes all the same! And the worst of the trouble is gone when Jesus comes and shares it with us.
3. What we see Jesus do, we can ask to do, too!

The Christ-life- the way God expects us to LIVE as we walk with His Son, Jesus Christ, is in many ways as foreign to the way we "naturally" live as literally walking on water. (How many people have said, "I can't LIVE like that!") But when Jesus bids us, we like Peter, can begin to "walk on water." Not in a literal sense now, of course. And not perfectly, unhesitatingly. Like Peter we get our eyes on the waves and stumble and start to sink down. But by God's grace Christians can do some things even harder than walking on water! Sometimes we can be Christ-like through transforming love.

It is natural to be small and petty. It is natural to love friends and hate enemies. Perhaps the hardest thing of all is to find grace to forgive real injustice. The desire for vengeance is great, especially when we have been offended. Jesus enables us to forgive from the heart, as He forgave His enemies:

Don Ratzlaff in his book *The Christian Leader*, from Ernest Gordon's *Miracle on the River Kwai*: (and I quote)

The Scottish soldiers had been forced by their captors to labor on a jungle railroad, and they had degenerated to barbarous behavior, more and more acting like animals. But then something happened:

"A shovel was missing. The officer in charge became enraged. He demanded that the missing shovel be produced, or else. When nobody in the squadron budged, the officer got his gun and threatened to kill them all on the spot. .. It was obvious that the officer meant what he had said. Then, finally, one man stepped forward. The officer put away his gun, picked up a shovel, and beat the man to death. When it was over, the survivors picked up the bloody corpse and carried it with them to the second tool check. This time, no shovel was missing. Indeed, there had been a miscount at the first check point.

"The word spread like wildfire through the whole camp. An innocent man had been willing to die to save the others! ... The incident had a profound effect. . . the men began to treat each other like brothers.

"When the victorious Allies swept in, the survivors, human skeletons, line up in front of their captors . . . [and instead of attacking their captors] insisted: 'No more hatred. No more killing. Now what we need is forgiveness.'"

To forgive like that, to my mind, is as impossible as walking on water. And I know that concentration-camp stuff is extreme— but a lot of what Jesus expects us to do is just about as hard. To love our enemies. To love people, and use things, and not the other way around. All that stuff in the Sermon on the Mount about not even harboring anger or resentment in our hearts against those who spitefully use us.

Jesus did those things. But He is God. But He says to us: YOU CAN DO IT, TOO!

#58 I Lay My Sins on Jesus (all three verses) "I long to be like Jesus, Meek, loving, lowly, mild; I long to be like Jesus, the Father's holy Child."

The Man Born Blind

Seeing Jesus in His Miracles—Part 5 of 7

- [Miracle at Cana](#)
- [The Healing at Bethesda](#)
- [Five Thousand Fed](#)
- [Jesus Walks on the Water](#)
- **The Man Born Blind**
- [Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead](#)
- [The Miraculous Catch](#)

NOTE: This sermon is an outline and not a manuscript, which means in some spots you'll have to supply your own "polish."

January 29, 1989

John 9:35 *Jesus found him and said: "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 38 And he said: "Lord, I believe!"*

Statement of purpose for this sermon: To show that the gifts of God's grace must be used to discern God Himself; to understand that better than having sight is to see Christ and worship Him.

I. QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE PRESENCE OF THE BLIND MAN

Was this caused by sin? Why is he here?

As old as the Book of Job and older— we tend to see life and especially to see our relationship with God as direct cause-and-effect; the good prosper, the bad suffer. But life is not as simple as all that. There is mystery in every "connection" with the eternal. Our challenge is to come to know and love God and to believe that He is GOOD.

Blindness as a curse. Shared curse of sin.

All evil derives from "The Fall." The significance of Genesis 3 can hardly be over-estimated. A particular person's blindness may not be the result of his sin— but all humanity groans under the curse that blinds us from the light of God's pure love.

II. THE MIRACLE

Clay made - blind man sent away unseeing: he had never seen Jesus face to face. But he went obediently, and came seeing. But still he had never seen the face of Jesus. He could not identify Him.

The simple story here is fascinating. Who could/would invent such a thing? Jesus *spit* on the ground and made a little mud and rubbed in on this blind man's eyes. He didn't *need* to do it— just a word would have sufficed. The blind man simply did as Jesus told him. *We* are so sophisticated we probably would have argued.

III. DECLARATION: I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

One of the seven great "I AM" statements of Jesus found in John's Gospel- - each of the seven miracles cited illustrates and illuminates a facet of Jesus' divine glory and power.

The "Door" the "Good Shepherd" the "Way, Truth, Life," the "Bread of Heaven" the "Resurrection and Life" and the "True Vine" combine with the "Light of the world" to give us a glimpse of the radiant, many-splendor-ed glory that is our Lord.

IV. THE FUROR CAUSED

There is something wrong when a great problem is caused by HONESTY. The blind man speaks what he knows from experience: "The facts speak clearly: I was blind. I now see."

Jesus is a threat to comfortable religion-in-power. The authorities cannot deny a miracle— but are quick to try to get the formerly blind man to denounce Jesus. Remember— this blind man has never seen Jesus! He had to go away and wash in the Pool of Siloam while Jesus went on about his business. This miracle resonates with the elder brother character in Luke 15, and with the parable of the Pharisee and

the tax collector— where grace extended to those outside the circle bring up resentment.

When pressed, in all honesty, the blind man confounded, infuriated the power structure. "What's your problem?" he seems to say to the authorities.

But there was more than just a division of opinions. There was a threat to the control of the power bloc. The need to analyze: "Give God the glory: "we KNOW this man is a sinner"

THEY CAST HIM OUT.

V. WHAT DO WE SEE OF JESUS IN THIS MIRACLE?

1. The "usual" compassion, yes.
2. Jesus, although a part of the religious community, established the fact that He is the Leader of the true Church; man cannot excommunicate the man or woman who is "included in" by Jesus.
3. Jesus is in the business of "including people IN!" Not in setting up ways to keep people OUT.

[Illus: Long ago and far away a young woman "protected the integrity" of a church I attended by slapping a cigarette out of the mouth of a man who lit up as he left a service. The message was clear— *we* don't do those filthy things! But it was no wonder if he never returned. We have to WANT people to be "IN."]

Jesus FOUND him and took him IN! Spiritual insight was added to physical vision: "WHO IS HE?" The reality of Jesus as a Person cannot be assumed; it cannot be accepted as fact just because someone says so. There must be a revelation, built on faith/obedience: "acting as if."

Jesus made the statement: "I AM HE!" "LORD, I BELIEVE!" ...AND HE WORSHIPED!

APPLICATIONS:

1. We cannot "force faith." We cannot see what we cannot see. But to each of us there comes a Word of faith; we cannot see until we obey.

The Man Born Blind

2. Obscurantism. The facts are not allowed to confuse the issue at hand. We cannot ask people to believe what is patently untrue. But there is such a thing as obscurantist "Christianity."
3. The danger— of trying to understand— to "see" before we are healed!
4. Also the danger of stopping short of a commitment! Thomas was honest. This blind man was honest! But honest doubt, coupled with a willingness to be shown, and a willingness to obey when shown is not a hindrance to Jesus. Jesus revealed Himself to Thomas. Jesus said to this blind man: "I AM the Messiah!" And He will say to you, if you are willing to see: "I AM Almighty God!"
5. Jesus is the Light of the world.
6. This man actually was excommunicated because he would not "see things" the way he was told.
7. Preclude the arguments of the need for expression of sin.

In accommodation to changing times "seeker friendly" approaches could degenerate into excusing Christ's clear demands for self denial and taking up the cross. There is only ONE Savior, and Jesus says "I AM HE!"

The beginning of a moving of the Spirit in New Jersey 25 years ago— the Maranatha Church of the Nazarene's foundings from "hippie" roots— started when Jack White, a very "straight" even old-fashioned but humble, Spirit-filled man of God preached a weekend series in New Milford, New Jersey. His messages were anything but "hip." But they were loving, simple, personal testimony to Jack White's own conversion as a teenager in Indiana. "I don't understand all your music or language," Jack seemed to say. "But I know I needed a Friend and a Savior to forgive my sins." It was the same testimony of the blind man. "I don't know a lot about this Jesus. But I know I was blind and he made me see!"

8. Our culture is BLIND to the word "sin." It does not "compute." But even the fact that there are good reasons for keeping the Ten Commandments does not obscure the fact that it is SIN, not just poor judgment, to break them.

CONCLUSION

Warning!! Finding your spiritual sight will put you at odds with the way most of the world views life!

Jesus understood that VISION had gotten the formerly blind man into trouble. Just being honest about how he had received his sight got the formerly blind man kicked out of his "hope of heaven!"

But Jesus went looking for him. He found him; and brought him into fellowship with the Father. This fellowship is OUR privilege, through grace!

Warning! The religious power bloc said: ARE WE BLIND?

Jesus: If you admitted you were blind you might have hope. But no, you have eaten of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil— you "know" without God's help what is right and wrong— and so on you go in darkness that leads to outer, utter darkness!

**** Outline incomplete**

Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

Seeing Jesus in His Miracles—Part 6 of 7

- [Miracle at Cana](#)
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February 12, 1989

John 11

Introduction: In this passage of scripture we have the crowning miracle of all the miracles that Jesus did before His passion. It is the climax of John's revelation of the mastery of Jesus. It brought about a crisis in His opposition that led directly to his arrest, trial, and crucifixion. From the point of view of Christ's enemies, desperate measures were needed against One who could demonstrate authority even over death.

But we are interested in what this miracle reveals to us of the character of Jesus:

Jesus is 'beyond Jordan' in a wilderness area, under pressure and threat from the religious leaders. He gets word that Lazarus is in trouble. It looks like He is afraid, because He remains in place two days longer. And He is warned (v 8) NOT to go back. Thomas (v 16) says: 'Let's go die with Him!' Jesus is on the way. But He is "late."

I. THE TIMING OF JESUS IN RESPONSE TO EXPRESSED APPEAL FOR HELP ...

Jesus' TIMING is usually far from what WE might think He ought to be doing:

Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

Verse 6 "When therefore He heard that he was sick, He stayed then two days longer in the place where He was."

I cannot hope to explain why Jesus, when he heard that Lazarus was sick, stayed right where He was and apparently let Lazarus die. But I am convinced that Jesus had reasons we will not know until eternity why he tarried. Jesus has the "timing" of the whole world in his control. And Jesus does not toy with personalities; He does not treat people like laboratory animals.

As Jesus drew near, we know what He is going to do. In a few minutes Lazarus will be restored to his family. But still Jesus is deeply moved in His spirit (v 33). He weeps with those who are weeping.

II. THE OBVIOUS AND APPARENT EMPATHY OF JESUS FOR THOSE WHO MOURNED

Jesus shared in the grief of those who mourned. He knew that bereavement and sorrow are the keenest of pain; and He knew that His delay had added to the pain.

Verse 35 "Jesus wept."

1. WHY? WHY DID JESUS WEEP?

Was He simply weak, and couldn't stand to see tears? Personally, I believe that Jesus was strong like no other man or woman was ever strong. In the words of the songwriter: "He had no tears for His own grief, but sweat drops of blood for MINE!"

I believe Jesus wept because He cared! And I still think that God grieves, and cares. I DON'T KNOW WHY HE DOESN'T INTERVENE AT TIMES. HE HAS LIMITED HIMSELF. BUT I CHOOSE TO BELIEVE THAT HE IS GOD, AND THAT HE IS GOOD.

2. WHEN DID JESUS WEEP? at least two times:

Here. Over the sorrowing.

Over the city of Jerusalem. When He knew the city of Jerusalem was rejecting Him. Over the lost, the rejectors.

Jesus cares enough about others — about YOU and ME to have His heart broken. Have you ever had your heart broken because people you love were hurting themselves, or were going through deep water and you couldn't help them?

Have YOU ever broken the heart of Jesus?

But one other thought here:

3. WHY and WHEN do WE weep??

[It certainly isn't weak or wrong to weep occasionally.] But what do we weep about? "As the World Turns?" 'A dent in the new car?' Lost opportunities?

Or, do we care enough about others to listen, and to love, and to weep???

If Jesus wept, Jesus certainly also changed the expected course of the proceedings that day! Jesus was not weeping because He knew that death was the end! Jesus didn't see Lazarus illness and death the same as anyone else there that day:

III. THE PERSPECTIVE OF JESUS ON THE ILLNESS AND DEATH OF LAZARUS, AND THE MASTERY OF JESUS REVEALED

... This different perspective is apparent early on:

(11:4) "But when Jesus heard it (that Lazarus was sick) He said: 'This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of man may be glorified by it.'"

Jesus certainly did not view the situation in the same way as any one else could view it. He said: "This illness is not unto death." — and yet Lazarus did die. How can we understand what Jesus meant??

Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

1. He could have been mistaken. (I discount that.)
2. He could have meant: "I know in advance that I will be in Bethany in four days and I will reverse the process of death and disintegration, and so the end will not what it seems now." It looks on the face of it that this is what Jesus meant. But I am convinced that Jesus had reasons we will not know until eternity why he tarried. Jesus has the "timing" of the whole world in his control. AND JESUS DOES NOT MANIPULATE US like laboratory animals.
3. What Jesus said is: "This illness of Lazarus, OR ANY OTHER ILLNESS OR SITUATION IN MORTAL LIFE, does not finally end in death."

DEATH IS NOT THE FINAL GOAL FOR WHICH WE ALL ARE HEADING. And Jesus could say that because He also could say what no one else ever can say: "I AM the Resurrection and the Life."

In the far reaching eons of eternity, when this wonderful Universe has gone through stage after stage of re-Creation the kernel of reality that is your PERSON, your SPIRIT, the real YOU will still be self-aware!

4. We grasp at the illusion of 'being in some semblance of control' of our lives. We don't like to think that there is so much about life and death that we cannot understand. Only Jesus can speak with authority about life, death, and eternity:

ILLUSTRATION: [In 1975 Henri J. M. Nouwen wrote (in his book *Reaching Out*,):

"Recently a student who had just finished his long studies for the ministry and was ready to start in his first church suddenly died after a fatal fall from his bike. Those who knew him well felt a strong, angry protest arising from their hearts. Why him, a very noble man who could have done so much for so many? Why now, just when his long, costly education could start bearing fruit? Why in this way, so unprepared and unheroic? There were no answers to all these reasonable questions. A strong angry protest seemed the only human response.

But such a protest is the continuation of our allusion that we know what life is all about, that we rule it and determine its values as well as its goals. We do not, and are challenged instead to convert our protest against the absurdities of the human

existence into a prayer lifting us beyond the boundaries of our existence to him who holds our life in his hands and heart with boundless love and mercy. In our attempts to accept this challenge, we are wise to say to ourselves with the words of the Psalmist:

You men, why shut your hearts so long, loving delusions, chasing after lies? Know this, Yahweh works wonders for those he loves, Yahweh hears me when I call to him. (Psalm 4:2-3)]

Our perspective is necessarily limited. We cannot see anything redeeming about the death of a distinguished student in a biking accident. The loss of a Rev. Dale Parry is stunning, unmixed tragedy to us, and I do not even try to explain it away. I cannot see anything attractive about burying a young man of 26 who is fast "losing" a 10-year struggle with cancer.

But it is precisely when we cannot see or understand that we need to listen to Jesus. We need to hear Him say: "This sickness is not unto death!" And by faith we need to see that HE, and not WE, are the masters of life. He, not we, determines what are life's greatest values, and what are its eternal goals.

And by faith we understand that when we put our faith, our trust, our life in Christ's keeping, then nothing of this wonderful, mysterious, transient, tragic, joyful thing we call LIFE is meant to END in death.

Conclusion: And so in this miracle we see THE MASTERY OF JESUS TO BRING HOPE BEYOND HOPE

We still use these words of Jesus at just about every Christian graveside. "I am the Resurrection and the LIFE!"

At Lazarus's grave he proved His Mastery by calling the dead man forth— but to the same kind of good life he had known before, not to the glorified life that all the Church shall know when we see Him in HIS glory.

Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

But Jesus is just the same today as He was in Bethany; He loves YOU as much as He loved Lazarus, as hard as that is to believe. He cares about YOUR deep hurts and needs.

Prayer: Be present in a healing, assuring way in our Communion this morning. Weep with us, O Lord, but also call forth the power of HOPE into our lives! YOU are the Life! You are the Resurrection of Hope! And You are HERE!

EH #28 - Oh, How He Loves You and Me

The Miraculous Catch

Seeing Jesus in His Miracles—Part 7 of 7

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- **The Miraculous Catch**

February 19, 1989 PM

John 21:1-11

Introduction: [I believe that the Book of John was intended to end with the 20th chapter. But there was the personal matter of Simon Peter that John wanted to relate. It may be one of the most beautiful and personal stories in the Bible. It is also the occasion of Jesus' last miracle on earth: The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.]

PETER RETURNED TO FISHING.

There may be many reasons, many ways to "go fishing. " Not many of them are bad. Personally, I have found that going fishing is almost ALWAYS a GOOD thing. But here...

It could have been a bad thing; a return to an occupation once abandoned. It could have meant "It's over!" Anyway, this is where Jesus first came upon Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

I. JESUS REVEALED HIMSELF

... IN A UNIQUE WAY, BY TELLING SEASONED, EXPERIENCED FISHERPEOPLE HOW TO FISH.

The Miraculous Catch

Do it MY way! And as His advice was followed there was a demonstration of mastery. Luck? Well, anyway, in this act of mastery it was the beloved disciple, John who discerned "It is the Lord!"

Jesus knows more about your business than you do! In this age of electronics and computers and public relations the Galilean Carpenter is still Almighty God! And He is eternal in His understanding. (He even understands physics!)

[I think sometimes about the story of a prosperous London businessman who was asked by Queen Victoria to leave his business for a while and tend to some of her interests in India. It meant quite a sacrifice on his part.

But when he returned home several months or years later he found that his business had prospered far beyond his fondest hopes. For, as Her Majesty said, "You have been looking after MY business, and while you were, I have been looking after YOURS!"]

The fishermen are elated: 153 LARGE fish! Not 'about 150!' Not "counting them as they came there were almost 200 seekers ... "But exactly 153 large fish!

II. JESUS DEMONSTRATED HOSPITALITY

... the first 'Men's Prayer Breakfast' had fish on the menu! This wasn't a psychological ploy: "Feed 'em, and then give 'em the business!" Jesus isn't that kind of Person. But can you imagine Jesus fixing breakfast?

III. JESUS RENEWS THE CALL TO PETER

- HE NEVER GIVES UP ON US! BUT HE WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY RIVALS!

He had simply ONE question: Do you love Me? !!

1. Hold everything and everyone else "lightly." There are no rivals. There is no expiration date on either God's call or His love. I called you once. Will you follow Me?
2. Unspoken: 'Lord, You know as well as I know that that call has been invalidated! I bragged how I would never deny You. And I did!')

Do you LOVE Me, Peter? Let's get it straight! Love is what matters! Will you let ME by Lord and God?

3. But this call is at once a CORPORATE and an INDIVIDUAL thing! I am calling you to help Me build My church! I am giving you the keys to the kingdom.

But I am calling YOU in a way that is unique to YOU!

"What about John, Lord? You love HIM more than you love me!?!?"

"What is that to YOU? Follow ME!"

[This is essentially the way I "prepared" this message: Then this noon after church Bert VanEgmond loaned me a little book by Henri Nouwen, just out (1989), titled In the Name of Jesus. It is based, partly, on this 21st chapter of John.

Henri Nouwen, whom I quoted from this morning, has left Harvard and the glitter of academia and the speaking circuit to minister in a community called L'Arche in Toronto. It was John 21:18 that gave him the courage to go. His words seem to have a fresh "bite."

This little book was written to priests (and ministers) but let me share its outline:

- i. From Relevance to Prayer The Temptation: TO BE RELEVANT The Question: DO YOU LOVE ME? The discipline: Contemplative Prayer
- ii. From Popularity to Ministry The Temptation: To be Spectacular The Task: FEED MY SHEEP The Discipline: Confession and Forgiveness
- iii. From Leading to Being Led The Temptation: To be POWERFUL "Somebody Else Will Take You" The discipline: Theological Reflection (as opposed to the psychologies and sociologies which are necessary, but NOT at the heart of Christian ministry.)

[Bill Van Buren, a member of L'Arche, went with Henri Nouwen on the original presentation of this new book as a lecture, at the 15th anniversary for the Center for Human Development. They stayed at the Clarendon Hotel in the Crystal City, a very, very posh place as Henri described it. He stood with Father Nouwen on the platform, and chimed in from time to time. They did it together.]

IV. RE-AFFIRM OUR LOYALTY TO JESUS!

1. If we need help in our BUSINESS ... whether that business is studying— or electronics— or selling— Jesus knows and cares about the kind of work you do!
2. But beyond "busyness"— even the tasks of doing the work and will of God— Jesus cares about our love! HOW DO WE ANSWER THE ONE QUESTION JESUS ASKS US ALL?
Are we doing what we do because we love HIM?
3. Can we say: "What is that to ME? I will follow Jesus!"??

EH #22 O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus