

Ministers:
the congregation

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Sunday:
8:00 AM: WGCY
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:
6:30 PM: Bible Study

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This Past Week:
Worship—29
Wednesday—6

For meditation:
Ecclesiastes 8.2–3
Based on these
verses, what should
a public servant
(bureaucrat, soldier,
etc.) do when given
an ungodly order?

Radio program:
WGCY FM, 106.3
Sundays at 8 AM

The significance of “signs”

Exodus 4

- After forty years in the Sinai wilderness, God tells Moses he's sending him to Pharaoh for the purpose of delivering His people from slavery.
- Moses's response isn't worship but an objection: "I'm a nobody."
- God assures Moses that He will be with him.
- Moses still objects: the Israelites won't believe You have sent me (4.1).
- God asks Moses what he has in his hand. "A rod/staff," says Moses.
- "Throw it on the ground," says God. Moses does and the rod becomes a snake. "Pick it up by the tail," says God. Moses does and the snake again becomes a shepherd's staff.
- The purpose of this miracle was "That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you" (4.5).
- This is the first time in the Bible a miracle is identified as a sign. A miracle's purpose was to point unbelievers to God. Frequently in Scripture, a miracle is said to confirm the activity of God. A miracle, by definition, cannot be explained naturally. If a genuine miracle occurs, the supernatural must be brought in to explain it. A genuine miracle, therefore, confirms/authenticates the existence and activity of the supernatural—God (Mk. 16.17–20, Heb. 2.1–4).
- Because the sign incident in Exodus 4 is the first of its kind in the Bible, it ought to be studied carefully. We'll do some of this in the next article.

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Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL

from my reading . . .

"Mr. Jones the butcher never sold bad meat, never charged for an ounce more than he delivered, and when he sold to the poor he usually slashed his price without their knowledge. A local preacher once asked him if he knew what the plan of salvation was. He answered with the utmost innocence, while cutting him a great leg of beef for a family the preacher had just told him was starving, that he hadn't the least idea what the plan of salvation was."

George MacDonald, *Paul Faber, Surgeon*

I don't cite the above to diminish in the least the importance of knowing the plan of salvation but to make the point that there is more to the plan of salvation than repent, confess, and be baptized. Read 1 John 3.16—it's as much a part of the plan of salvation as John 3.16. Giving food to the hungry, as Mr. Jones was doing, is part of the plan of salvation (Matt. 25.35), as is helping the vulnerable in their trouble (Jas. 1.27).

When we teach *the plan of salvation*, shouldn't we teach the "whole counsel of God" on the subject.

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Sermon: Hebrews 11.29

Faith and the impossible

11 January 2026

Jesus saw Himself as the Son of Man

Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?

Matthew. 16.13

Yes, Jesus was the Son of Abraham, but He was more. He was the Son of David, but He was more. He was the Son of Mary, but He was more. “Son of Abraham” imposes a racial limitation. “Son of David” imposes a kingly limitation (“if you can walk with kings, nor lose the common touch”). “Son of Mary” imposes a domestic limitation. But “Son of Man” breaks all these limitations and connects Him to every one of us.

Son of Man was Christ’s favorite description of Himself. The term is found in the book of Daniel. “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days . . . Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away” (7.13–14). Theologians debate whether Christ’s hearers understood “Son of Man” to be a Messianic designation, but whether they did nor not, I think the following conclusions are reasonable.

First, on the surface, Son of Man connected Christ with our humanity. Jesus was a member of the human race, not just in outward appearance but in His nature. He was bone of our bones and flesh of our flesh. Born of a woman, made under the law, in all things made like His brethren.

Second, it’s significant that Jesus didn’t say He was *a* Son of Man but *the* Son of Man. Son of Man indicates commonality with us, but the definite article underscores Christ’s *uniqueness* among us. Jesus was the ideal man; the picture of what a man ought to be. When God said, “let us make man,” all He meant by that was seen in the incarnate Christ. When God saw manhood as exemplified by Jesus, He could truly say, “it is very good.”

Third, real man, representative man, and *reigning* man are implied in the words *the Son of Man*. “The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24.30). These words are linked in thought to Daniel’s vision where beastly nations are subdued by a Son of Man and brute force is conquered by the gentleness of manhood.

It’s because He was the Son of Man that our high priest sympathizes with our weakness and for us there is a throne of grace.

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God’s hardness is kinder than our softness

He finally preached the message he was sent to preach, but Jonah raged against the result. How ironic that he who begged for mercy when in a whale’s belly, resented the mercy shown a great city full of innocent children (4.11).

When C. S. Lewis left his unbelief to come to Christ, he came “kicking, struggling, resentful, and darting his eyes in every direction for a chance of escape” . . . “the most reluctant convert in all England.” But in his conversion, Lewis saw what many miss: “the most shining and obvious thing; the Divine humility which will accept a convert on such terms.” The depth of the Divine mercy, observed Lewis, is such that “the hardness of God is kinder than the softness of men” (*Surprised by Joy*, 228–29).

“For I am meek and *lowly* in heart” (Matt. 11.28,29). “Lowliness” was a despised quality in proud Rome. The Gr. word means, “not rising far from the ground.” *Strong’s* says it meant, “deferring servilely to others.” Christ’s lowliness/ servility was such that He threw a party for a prodigal who came home only when he had nowhere else to go. His servility is seen in a statement like: “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven Him.” His servility accepted a deathbed confession from a crucified criminal. His servility forgave a man who acted a coward under fire, and then restored him to the apostolic pastorate on the condition of love.

Read how God reacted when that debauched, evil man Ahab showed the tiniest speck of repentance (1 Kgs. 21.27–29). Be reminded of how it was God’s lowliness/servility that angered Jonah when He (God) “relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon Nineveh . . . but did not do” (Jon. 3.10).

If we, in our self-righteousness, have ever protested when some sinner didn’t pay his pound of flesh, or when it seemed someone was let off the hook, or when a sinner didn’t do enough penance or groveling (in our opinion) to atone for his sin, we’ve a lot to learn about the grace and mercy that make up the “manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God” (1 Jn. 3.1).

In the judgment, I want a judge who will let me off the hook. I’m guessing Jonah, the elder brother, and you will want the same.

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