

These Are Written

“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe ... and that by believing you may have life in [Jesus’] name.”

Have you ever wondered about the other miracles that are not recorded in Holy Scripture? St. John tells us that Jesus did MANY other miracles. There are many stories from tradition – but they may be just stories.

There is a story about 5-year-old Jesus forming 12 birds out of clay – clapping His hands – and they flew away. There is a story about Jesus stretching a board that had been cut too short for His carpenter father Joseph.

Apparently one of Jesus’ playmates named Zeno falls off the upper story of his house and dies, and as the story goes, Jesus jumped down from the roof, stood over the boy and resurrected him. There’s a story about curing His brother James who had been bit by a venomous snake (and for good measure, the snake exploded). And then there is the story of Jesus taming dragons in a cave in Egypt.

Jesus did MANY other miracles – and whether He did any of these just mentioned, or not – “these ARE written so that you may believe ...”

These miracles. Biblical miracles – which God Himself had recorded for you. Think of all the biblical miracles – which would make your Top Ten?

Changing water into wine? Walking on water? Muzzling the demons and/or the wind and waves? Raising Lazarus? How about creating the heavens and the earth and everything in them – through His almighty Word?

As John writes these words at the end of his Gospel – what miracles are the closest in proximity? Should we have the resurrection of Jesus foremost in our minds? Yes, but there is one that is even closer – when Jesus (not once, but twice) stands in the midst of His disciples who were hiding out in fear behind locked doors.

The doors are locked, how did He get in there? He is not a ghost, He has flesh and blood. How does the flesh and blood Jesus come and stand in the middle of them? It’s a miracle.

People tend to get all excited about miracles – not just fascinated by them, but attracted to them – even to the point of putting their faith in the miracle itself. “If only Jesus would do a miracle for me, then I would believe ...”

The miracles of Jesus serve a purpose – and it’s not just to amaze you – and it’s more than showing you that He is the all-powerful God. Ultimately, the miracles are done to give visual and tangible evidence of what Jesus has preached and taught – that your sins are forgiven, and in Him, you have eternal life.

And like many of His other miracles, that’s what this one is about – when He comes to His disciples who are locked away in fear. He comes to release them from what binds them, their fear – He comes to give them peace.

What are you afraid of? What is it that binds you, locks you away in fear? The disciples were afraid that the Jews would do to them what they did to Jesus. They were afraid for their lives.

It’s been said that there are different fears at different stages of life. Infants and toddler fear being separated from mom and dad. Teenagers fear not having friends, not fitting in, being looked down on. In the 20’s its about performance, career path, being independent, even the meaning and purpose of life.

As one grows older, there are fears about marriage and family – making money and moving up the ladder – fading looks and health – fear of keeping up the pace, retirement, health issues, and where will I live. Fears of usefulness, and isolation, and death. Folks, there are many things that can lock you up in fear.

This very day Jesus comes and stands in the midst of your fears. The resurrected Christ says, “Peace be with you.” But like Thomas, you have to see to believe. Your fears seem so real – but the peace which Jesus speaks seems empty. You need to touch, to grasp, to hold onto. A miracle would be great but these are written so that you may believe.

God's Word, His promises, that's ALL you need – and yet, He knows you, just like He knows Thomas. We are tangible people. He doesn't reject Thomas – He comes to Him – He gives Him His hands and His side – to see, to touch – so that he may believe. And believe he does – “My Lord and my God,” he declares.

And while you sit there thinking it would be cool if He'd give you a miracle – He does – but it's not the glamorous, glitzy miracle you expect – it is simple, yet profound. The resurrected Jesus – the same one who appeared to Thomas – comes and stands in your midst today and declares to you – “Peace be with you.”

He is not dead, He is risen! His words create a faith that believes He is indeed risen – and if Jesus is risen from the dead – that means all of your sin is paid for, it's gone, you ARE forgiven.

Because you are tangible-type people – He pours water over you with the promise that your sins are washed away. He gives His resurrected Body and Blood for you to touch – to eat and to drink – and by faith, like Thomas, you declare that “My Lord and my God” is standing right here with you – behind locked doors – giving you peace.

Dearly beloved, whatever you are afraid of – whatever has you all locked up in fear – Jesus comes this day and sets you free – gives you peace. Do not be afraid, for Christ is with you – saving you, resurrecting you – so that you HAVE life in His name.

Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!