

Miracles

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1. Share any supernatural experiences you feel like you have had in your life
2. Would you say you're generally skeptical of the supernatural?

Miracles have been something which a lot of people have found difficult to accept. Thomas Jefferson for example created the "Jefferson Bible" which was the story of Jesus but with all the miracles taken out.

It ends with Jesus dying and being buried with no resurrection.

It makes sense to be skeptical, people lie all the time

People lie all the time

Throughout history we see lots of cases of people lying to masses of people about miracles

Why can we believe in Jesus' claims

2 Peter 1:16-17 (NKJV)

16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Now saying "We can believe the claims of Jesus because the Bible says so" is obviously problematic. But there are two things which help me believe its credibility:

1. History
2. Experience

Historicity of Jesus

Now, one thing is for sure. Scholars are agreed that Jesus was 100% a real person that really lived, no scholar would deny the existence of Him. What is debated is whether he was resurrected and all the miracles that happened around him. People say that all the things He did are tall tales, legends, myths.

How long does it typically take for legends to form? Let's see what stackexchange says.

Who knows the story of King Arthur? I don't but he's one legend which we see popping up in history. He very likely was some kind of military leader in 500 AD. We start seeing legends about him first pop up in 950 AD, 450 years after the time he lived.

The difference here is that the first accounts we have of Jesus surfaced 20 to 30 years after his death

The amount of intellectual dishonesty that can happen in the span of 20 years is minimal. Some of the church members here have maybe known each other for 20 years. If someone were to start saying stuff about their friend healing people in the church 20 years ago, we could very easily go around and fact check and find out that that is false.

We have accounts of people choosing to give up their lives and die for Christ within 5 years of his Crucifixion. That means they were thoroughly convinced they saw Jesus resurrected and perform all the miracles they claimed he did.

Not only that, when we look at the entire course of history we see that so many people believed in the claims of this Jesus figure, that the entire course of modern civilization was altered and about a third of the entire world profess to follow Him, and over half of the world follow his teachings (Christians + Muslims).

I'll be honest, that's pretty dang compelling.

Experience

And the second thing is experience. When we experience God and experience Christ, that is one of the strongest markers to us that we can believe in the story of Jesus.

1. What does it mean to experience God. What does that look like practically?

When we experience God, that's one of our strongest evidences towards the veracity of the bible. Seeing how Jesus has led us in the past. One of my favorite Christian authors (Ellen White) has a quote on this.

We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.

Remembering how God has been in your life is your strongest evidence for the claims of Jesus.

Jesus claims to be someone that can utterly change the landscape of your life and uproot your selfishness, we've seen him do that in the world with the entire course of civilization altering because of him, missionaries that give up their life just to tell people about him, and he can do that in your life also.

He can change the landscape of your life, he can take some of those nasty things in your life out and turn you into a mini-Christ, changing the world one step at a time.

So yes the bible is true, but why don't we see miracles?

1. Why do you think we don't see miracles today?

Some reasons I think of include:

- They're rare. The miracles we see in the bible are over the span of thousands of years, so it's not surprising that we don't see a lot every other day
- They do happen. In third world countries you hear a lot more about miracles than 1st world. One of the pastors in my hometown always talked about them, although I'm still skeptical about his claims
- Miracles don't really make you believe in God. If you read the bible, the places that Jesus did miracles the most actually ended up being the places that didn't really believe in Him. **John 12:37 (NKJV)** "Even after Jesus had performed so many signs in their presence, they still would not believe in Him"
- Miracles will mostly be used to deceive, people will deceive people with them Matthew 24:24 "For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."

Whatever the case, one of the greatest miracle that we have to be concerned about is that which God is doing in our hearts.

Removing the selfishness, doubt, deceit that we display, washing us new. It's the miracle that required Jesus to die on the cross and be resurrected to achieve.

Luke 10:20 (NKJV)

20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

Rejoice that Christ has redeemed you. That's one of the greatest miracles.