

October 18, 2020

Viewpoint from the **Valley Grove Church Of Christ**

Miracles: The Power Of Satan Or The Finger Of God?

By Clarence R. Johnson

In Matthew 9:32-34, Matthew records, *“As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed. And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, ‘It was never seen like this in Israel!’ But the Pharisees said, ‘He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.’ ”*

Glancing back over the last few chapters, Matthew has told us of the cleansing of a leper, the healing of the paralyzed servant of a Roman centurion, the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law who was sick with a high fever, the calming of a storm at sea, the freeing of two demon-possessed men who had been extremely wild and dangerous before Jesus freed them from demon-possession, the raising of a girl from the dead, the healing of the woman who had a flow of blood for 12 years, the healing of two blind men, and numerous others who came to Him — and now this freeing of the mute who had been demon possessed. No wonder the multitudes marveled “It was never seen like this in Israel!”

But even in the light of Jesus’ marvelous accomplishments, He always had His detractors. “The Pharsisees said, ‘He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.’ ”

Luke 11:14-23 shows that still others came, asking for a sign from heaven. Indeed, after all the miracles He had worked in the immediate setting, what else could He have done to prove He came from heaven?

In fact, as He defended Himself against the charge of using Satanic powers He reasoned that Satan certainly would not cast out demons. To do so would be to work against himself. Not only that, but the sons of the Pharisees — perhaps a reference to their disciples — also cast out demons, or at least claimed to do so. By whose power did they seek to overcome Satan? The only logical conclusion — the necessary inference — was that Jesus was operating by the

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power of God, and the logical application of that realization was that the very reign of God Himself was evident in Jesus' ministry: "If I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you." (Lk. 11:20)

Finally, Jesus further illustrates this principle with a parable. The only one who can throw a strong man out of his palace is an even stronger man than the first. Likewise, the only one who could cast demons out of their dwelling place would be someone who possesses a power greater than even the prince of the demons. Only the power of God would suffice. Jesus did it with "the finger of God."

How A Christian Is Like A Watch

By Johnie Edwards

By taking something with which we are familiar we can draw some simple comparisons. Let's show how a Christian is like a watch.

1. Full of good works. A watch is full of good works. Each one who is a Christian should be full of good works also. It is said that Dorcas, "was full of good works and alms deeds which she did" (Acts 9:36). This woman was not only full of good works but she did good works! Every individual member of the church must "be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1). We are also admonished, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

2. Keeps going in all kinds of weather. We have cold weather this winter but my watch has kept right on going regardless of the weather. Paul has told us to be steadfast. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

3. Has useful hands. The hands on a watch are important and useful. The hands of a Christian are important and have purpose. Solomon said, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do; do it with all thy might . . ." (Eccl. 9:10). Let's find a use for our hands and use them for good.

4. Cleanliness insures good performance. For a watch to function properly, it must be kept clean. This is also true of a Christian. He must have a clean heart. The Psalmist said, "Create in me a clean heart" (Ps. 51:10). We are made clean by the word (John 15:3).

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5. The main spring must be kept right. The main spring in watches must be kept right for them to run properly. The heart of man is his main spring and it must be right. “Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23).

6. Has to be regulated. Often times a watch has to be adjusted for accuracy. Christians need to be regulated. We are regulated by the word of God. Paul said, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

“He Never Let On!”

By Robert Turner

The musical “Oklahoma” has a character. Judd, who is eulogized in a mock funeral as one who was kind and gentle and loved the whole human race; “Only they never knowed it — he never let on.”

Poor Judd is not dead — he isn’t even sick. There are thousands of his kind in the church. They love all people, and long to see the whole world converted — only the world never discovers this burning desire. They never “let on,” even to a hair dresser.

They love the truth, according to public prayers and songs. But if they attend Bible study at all, it is to give their opinion or experience, not to study the text. If a passage seems to run counter to their traditional concepts. They ignore it or “explain it away.”

They believe in salvation by grace — and if you push them hard enough they will admit it. They know that one may fall from grace — i.e.. some one other than themselves. If they really believe that the Lord will reveal and judge the secrets of their lives and thoughts, “they never let on.” You would never guess it.

They “love the brotherhood” if not the brethren. They long for unity of all saints, and would do almost anything to see all issues properly settled — except meeting with those with whom they differ for an honorable and scriptural discussion of the issues which divide them.

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This is not intended as a blanket indictment of all church members, for I know the salt of the earth is at work. Christians are concerned, and endeavor to teach their neighbors. Gospel preachers are demonstrating by sacrificial efforts, their love for souls. There are those who care more for peace with God, than for approval of “the party”.

But this is a reminder that such love, concern, and endeavor are not “done in a corner.” If people about you have never suspected that you are a Christian, there’s a good chance that you have never “let on” with a fair sample of Christian living. Do not ask me to preach your funeral.



Do not confuse your mistakes with your value as a human being. Put your trust in God — obey Him.

In view of 1 Corinthians 10:13, true Christians should never say, “I had to sin” or “I tried but could not resist sin” or “I can’t keep from sinning.” Also see James 1:12-15

Visitors — We pray that you benefit spiritually from our worship together and hope to see you again.

October Birthdays:

The 20th Joan Blue; The 23rd Doug Threadgill; The 24th Diana Hinds

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Sunday
Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.
Worship 10:30 A.M.
Worship 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday
Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

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