

Life Church Message 2012-12-30 - The Miracle, the Grateful, and the Haters

- **The Miracle, the Grateful, and the Haters**
Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday December 30, 2012
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<http://www.LifeChurchBoston.org/>
- **The Miracle, the Grateful, and the Haters**
 - **Preparation**
 - **Standing Issues**
 - From a word Bishop gave me:
 - Make sure people do something with God's message.
 - Make it plain:
 - Use accessible language.
 - Use modern day parables based on every day occurrences:
 - Sitting at a stop light
 - Driving through a green light
 - Approaching a yellow light
 - Being cut off in traffic
 - Going shopping
 - Going to a mall
 - Going to school; sitting in class
 - Going to work; sitting in your office;
 - Keep it simple.
 - Use illustrations of truth out of my own experience.
 - Impart faith to obey the Word and receive God's promises.
 - **Introduction**
 - Welcome to another church meeting at the Hampton Inn & Suites.
 - Welcome Cards -
 - “I want to call your attention to the Welcome Card that you were given on your way into the auditorium”
 - These cards do two things for us:
 - They help us get to know our new visitors better.
 - They also give anyone (visitors or members) a chance to express a need or to give us feedback.
 - By filling it out you will help us to better serve you.

- We're going to provide time for you to complete the cards at the end of our service, but we encourage you to start filling them out now.

- **Please use this card:**

- if you're a **first time visitor** or if you've **never** filled one out before,
- to tell us about a **decision you made** today,
- to ask us for more information, or to give us **feedback**.

Please include your contact information unless we already have it. At the **end of service** we'll ask you to complete the card and then place it in the designated box or give it to someone from our staff on your way out.

- Regularly Invite People To Join Life Church
- Transition
- Review what it means to be a Christian.
 - What does it mean to be a Christian?
 - "Christ" = "anointed one" - effectively "king".
 - The Disciples were first called "Christians" at Antioch - Acts 11:19-26

Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews. Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. **The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.**
 - "Christian" = "belonging to Christ".
- Christians follow Jesus
 - Jesus' people know his voice and follow him - John 10:22-30

Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I

give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

- Remind them of how we illustrated "following" with "Simon Says".
- As followers of Jesus, we gather on Sundays (The Lord's Day) to celebrate him.
- This Sunday is special because it precedes the day when we celebrate Jesus' birth.
- **Read the Passage: Matthew 9:32-34**

While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."

- **Exegetical Idea**

Jesus' act of deliverance inspires amazement from the crowd, but jealousy from the Pharisees.
- **What does this mean?**
 - All of this happens on a timeline. Jesus' ministry is progressing strategically:
 - Incarnation
 - Human childhood and early adult life.
 - Inaugurate public ministry at Baptism.
 - Jesus proves himself via temptation in the wilderness.
 - Proclaim the Kingdom.
 - Call disciples.
 - Disciples learn by watching Jesus proclaim the Kingdom.
 - Send disciples out as apostles (the 12).
 - Debrief apostles.
 - Train and send out next wave of disciples (the 72).
 - Prepare disciples for his arrest, trial, death, burial, resurrection.
 - Complete his mission by dying for our sins.
 - Because he didn't conform to their rules, the Pharisees rejected Jesus' healing and deliverance ministry and considered him to be operating through Satan's power.
 - The Jews' world view differs from ours.

- We see miracles as proof of divine sanction.
- They believed in exorcisms and claimed to practice it themselves:
 - **Matthew 12:27; Luke 11:19**
 - Jews (including seven sons of Sceva) exorcised: Acts 19:11-19
 - Some thought John the Baptist had a demon: Matthew 11:16-19
- Jesus was demonstrating that in God's Kingdom there is healing and deliverance. - **Isaiah 35**
- **Is it True? Do I believe it?**
 - Similar events: **Matthew 12:22-37; Luke 11:14-26**
- **Homiletical Idea:**
 - The miracle, the grateful, and the haters
- **Purpose of the Sermon (what listeners should do)**
 - Recognize that the Kingdom is here.
 - Bring the needs of those around you to Jesus.
 - Expect God's power to be manifested in their lives.
 - Identify with the disciples rather than with the crowd or the Pharisees.
 - Don't succumb to either appreciation or opposition.
- **Recognize that the Kingdom is here.**
 - The Kingdom exists wherever Jesus' followers are - this means you!
 - We should expect healing and deliverance to take place wherever we proclaim the Kingdom.
- **Bring the needs of those around you to Jesus.**
 - Start by praying consistently for them.
 - Ask the Father what he wants you to do.
 - Learn to listen to his voice by hanging out with other listeners.
- **Expect God's power to be manifested in their lives.**
 - Expect God to speak to you about the people you pray for.
 - God wants to manifest his power in ways that will build up the body and not tear it down.
- **Identify with the disciples rather than with the crowd or the Pharisees.**
 - Don't settle for being part of the appreciative crowd. Be a follower!
 - We should expect ministry to develop strategically.

- Embrace the message of the Kingdom.
- Learn to enjoy knowing Jesus without bad FIGS.
- Learn to follow Jesus together with others as his family.
- Learn to function together with others as Jesus' body.
- Learn to work together with others to expand Jesus' Kingdom.
- Opposition develops as ministry develops.
- Official opposition to Jesus was picking up steam.
- **Don't succumb to either appreciation or opposition.**
 - Opposition
 - The Pharisees demonstrated that they were unqualified shepherds leaving the people "harassed and helpless".
 - Jesus didn't let opposition stop him - we shouldn't either.
 - Appreciation
 - Appreciation can be a trap.
 - Jesus tried to manage the response of the crowd. He often asked people not to tell what he had done for them.
 - Jesus is the only one who should be the center of attention and he often asked people not to tell what he had done for them.
 - When we become the center of attention we're in dangerous territory.
 - We are Jesus' body and it takes all of us to express him.
 - Look for healing to happen in the context of the body rather than at the hands of a "superstar".
- **Discussion Questions & Topics**
 - What does the Kingdom mean to you? What role do you play in it?
 - Do you bring the needs of the people around you to Jesus? Discuss.
 - In what ways have you seen God's power manifested around you?
 - In what ways would you like to see God's power manifested around you? What are you willing to do to see this happen?
- **Conclusion**
 - What did you learn?
 - How are you going to keep this conversation going?
 - Where will you keep this conversation going?
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- **Life Group Material**

- **Life Group Word Material**

These are sample discussion questions / topics. Your life group leaders may choose to adjust these questions, substitute new ones, or spend the Word section of the meeting in a different way altogether.

Scripture taken from the [HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION \(NIV\)](#)
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Zondervan Bible Publishers.

Matthew 9:32-34

While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.”

But the Pharisees said, “It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons.”

Matthew 12:22-37

Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see. All the people were astonished and said, “Could this be the Son of David?”

But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, “It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons.”

Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

“Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man’s house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house.

“He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters. And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Luke 11:14-26

Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed. But some of them said, “By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons.” Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven.

Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: “Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebub. Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

“When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.

“He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.

“When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.”

Isaiah 35

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God. Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, “Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.” **Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy.** Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the LORD

will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Matthew 7:21-27 - Put Jesus' Words Into Practice

Discussion Questions & Topics

- What does the Kingdom mean to you? What role do you play in it?
- Do you bring the needs of the people around you to Jesus? Discuss.
- In what ways have you seen God's power manifested around you?
- In what ways would you like to see God's power manifested around you? What are you willing to do to see this happen?

- **Scriptures For 12/30/2012 Life Church Sermon**

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Life Church Mission Statement

Our mission is to teach people:

- to enjoy knowing Jesus without fear, inadequacy, guilt, or shame,
- to follow him together as his family,
- to function together as his body,
- and to work together to expand his kingdom.

Understanding The Bible

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Here, for your convenience, are the Bible passages for today's sermon at Life Church. We use mostly the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible so that you can read it in modern English. You may have been accustomed to reading or hearing the King James Version of the Bible, which uses older English (with words like "thee" , "thou", "thine", "believeth", etc.). Don't be alarmed - the passages are really from the Bible!

The Bible was originally written in three ancient languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. None of the people in the Bible, and none of the people who God used to write it spoke English. In fact, English did not even exist as a language when the Bible was written. The King James Version, first published in 1611, was a translation of the Bible from it's original languages into the every day English that people used back then - almost 400 years ago! They didn't just speak that way in church - they spoke that way with everyone. The King James Version was "modernized" in 1769, but, even so, English has certainly changed a lot since then! **We believe that if you're reading an English translation of the Bible it ought to be up to date - written in the English you speak every day. God wants you to understand his Word so that you can put it into practice!**