

Sermon ~ Sunday, July 5, 2020

Text: Matthew 11: 3

KJV ~ "And said unto HIM, Art THOU HE that should come, or do we look for another?"

Title: "Birth Pangs of a Miracle"

Birth pangs... ok, I know nothing about them, but after two children, the first, *now* 33 years old; the second, *now* 29 years old; it's like yesterday, I *hear* and *see* Gayla my wife expressing *repetitive pain, indescribable hurt, uncontrollable spasms, sudden sharp pains* associated with *development and transition*. I personally know nothing about 'birth pangs' but what I'm *hearing* and *seeing* and *feeling* today (COVID-19; the churring tides of racism; the wait for a breakthrough), reminds me of Gayla, the children and 'birth pangs.'

John the Baptist no doubt was in *anguish*, in that gloomy dungeon in the castle of Machaerus, on the farther shores of the Dead Sea. They thought him to be some, crazy, mad-man that called himself a preacher, that the desert heat fried his brain, but now entrapped. They thought the darkness of his dungeon cell *depressed* his spirit; his messages of *repentance*, calling a snake a snake, and adultery, a damnable sin; caused John to forget "he was the man sent from **GOD**—John 1: 6", and **JESUS'** fore-runner. They thought John now 'doubted', *if JESUS was The MESSIAH*, when he sent two of his disciples to ask **JESUS**, "...Art **THOU HE** that should come, or do we look for another?" No, it was,

"Birth Pangs of a Miracle"

A *miracle* is a supernatural event (it *must* have no other reasonable explanation—it is not simply a lucky escape or an amazing coincidence). To be a *miracle*, an event *must* be witnessed—it cannot be a "sign" to anyone, *if* it is not seen by anyone. *Miracles* are "signs" that **GOD** was *with JESUS*. The Greek word translated "*miracle*" means "sign." A *miracle* is where **The Power of GOD** causes an *effect* that would not have occurred *if GOD had not* intervened.

The *chief purpose* behind 'miracles' was not to alleviate sufferings. 'Miracles' happened (happens) to show the world **JESUS** was sent from **GOD**! {Nicodemus, the Pharisee, the Ruler of the Jews, said of **JESUS**, 'Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from **GOD**: for no man can do these *miracles* that **THOU** doest, except **GOD** be with **HIM**—John 3: 2c. **JESUS HIMSELF** said, "But I have greater witness than *that* of John the Baptist: for the works which **The FATHER** hath given **ME** to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of **ME**, that **The FATHER** hath sent **ME**—John 5: 36. Read for yourself, John 10: 25, 37-38. 'Miracles' validate **JESUS'** claim to be **GOD'S SON**—Acts 2: 22.}

True 'miracles' are an event that has no explanation except "**GOD** is behind it!" True 'miracles' cannot be explained by natural means. We either have to say, "I don't know how that was done." Or, in Faith, say, "**GOD** did it! **GOD** did it again!"

"Birth Pangs of a Miracle"

In times like these, we all need the testimony **JESUS** gave to John's disciples, "...Go and *show* John again those things which ye do *hear* (Faith comes by *hearing*...) and *see* (that is, look to **JESUS, The Miracle-Worker**): The *blind* receive their *sight*, the *lame* walk, the *lepers* are *cleansed*, the *deaf* hear, the *dead* are *raised up*, and the *poor* have *The Gospel preached* to them. And *blessed* is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended *in ME*." (Matthew 11: 4-6)

I can testify, JESUS heals the blind—Matthew 9: 27-30... I *followed JESUS*; I *cried, GOD*, have *mercy* on me; I was *going to the church-house* but **The Church** was *not* in me; but I *came* to **JESUS**! **HE** said to me, Believe ye that I **AM** able to give you *sight*? I said, Yes, **LORD**! **JESUS** touch my eyes saying, according to your faith in **ME**, be it unto you!

“Birth Pangs of a Miracle”

I can testify, JESUS heals the lame—Matthew 9: 2-8... I once could *walk*, but because of *sin*, I became *paralyzed* and bed-ridden; but I had 4 others, who no doubt been through what I was going through to carry me... **JESUS** saw the Faith of their hearts, in action, bringing me; **JESUS** saw the *sin* in my heart and *forgave* me; **JESUS** saw the unbelief in the hearts of the scribes and Pharisees; but look at me now...

“Birth Pangs of a Miracle”

I can testify, JESUS heals lepers—Matthew 8: 1-4... I know now, how *dirty, filthy, depraved, wretched* and *no-good, miserable* and *a-shamed*, I should have been; *ceremonially unclean* and *unfit* to worship **GOD**. *Sin* was killing me. But **JESUS**, *touched me*—showing **HIS** Authority over all diseases and *immediately HE* made me whole!

“Birth Pangs of a Miracle”

I can testify, JESUS heals the deaf—Matthew 9: 32, 33... Although the demons caused this affliction, *I must testify* as the crowd in the text, when **JESUS** *cast out* the demons in me, ‘I never seen *nothing* like this before.’ I said, I wasn’t going to tell nobody but I, couldn’t keep it to myself.’

“Birth Pangs of a Miracle”

I can testify, JESUS raise the dead—Matthew 9: 18-26... Like Jairus daughter—the situation was *to late* for anyone else *to help... to hopeless* for anyone *to hope*. But **JESUS**, *I can testify*, raised me from death to life, and life, more abundantly!

I can testify, JESUS will preach The Gospel—GOD News, to your soul... ‘Repent, for **The Kingdom of Heaven** is at hand. ‘I *heard* and I *came*, to **JESUS** just as I was, weary, wounded and sad. I fought in **HIM** a resting place and **HE** has made me *soul-glad*.”

“Birth Pangs of a Miracle”

Where are you right now? —we do *not* seek *freedom* until we are *miserable* in our *bondage*.
Where are you right now? —*sin-pleasures* can control you for years, decades, even a lifetime.
Where are you right now? — it’s *not* until you can’t...no more. They may say, it’s too late, the *masters of lust, sin, alcohol, drugs, fear, anger, inferiority, COVID-19, racism*, got him...

“Birth Pangs of a Miracle”

With **GOD**, with **JESUS CHRIST**, our *helplessness/hopelessness*, are but

“Birth Pangs of a Miracle”

Two words I leave with you...

1. All we are going through these days, are but **“Birth Pangs of a Miracle!”**
2. **JESUS** is saying, “...apart from **ME**, you can do *nothing*.” (John 15: 5)

Somebody Within

Preachers and teachers would make their appeal, Fighting as soldiers on great battle fields;
When to their pleadings my poor heart did yield,
All I could say, there is **Somebody Within.**

Have you that **Somebody**, that burning desire? Have you that **Somebody**,
that never doth tire?

Oh, if you have **HIM**—that Heavenly Fire!
Then let the world know there is something within.

I met GOD one morning, my soul feeling bad, Heart heavy laden with a bowed down head.
HE lifted my burden and made me so glad,
All that I know there is **Somebody Within.**

Somebody Within me that holdeth the reins,
Somebody Within me that banishes pain;
Somebody Within me, I cannot explain,
All that I know there is **Somebody Within.**

(L. E. Campbell—Something Within)

(I testify, JESUS is HIS NAME!!!)

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