

CHRIST'S MINISTRY
Part II
Matthew 4:23-25

Introduction: The first four books of the New Testament, called the Gospels, contain a voluminous repository of facts relating to Jesus' life. These accounts are replete with a capacious amount of digestible knowledge from the Redeemer of the world designed to enhance our lives. The ministry that we are focusing on is built on the fundamental teachings of Jesus, which contain a construct of the highest moral and ethical content. Without question, His life-altering teachings, along with their implications, are the most profound of any writings. They offer a transparent "road map" to salvation and wholeness to everyone who believes.

- I. Christ's ministry. The teachings of Christ.
 - A. Christ's parables – there are about seventy parables. Fifty are parables proper (natural meaning), and twenty are parabolic illustrations, and these deal with a great variety of subjects that are of supreme importance.
 - B. There are also about forty-five discourses, all dealing with matters of importance to God: blessedness, discipleship, faith, faithfulness, forgiveness, the future, gaining and losing life, the Holy Spirit, humility, hypocrisy, the kingdom of God, love, mercy, offenses, prayer, regeneration, repentance, self-denial, service, sin, stewardship, true greatness, unbelief, and watchfulness.
 1. Christ's discourses show that the soul is of more importance than the stomach, eternity than time, the spiritual than the material, purity than pleasure, truth than expediency, and morality than money.
 2. Two of Christ's discourses deserve special attention because of their contrasting standpoints – *the Sermon on the Mount*, and *the Upper Room talk*. The one deals with the law, and the other with the Gospel. The one looks back, and the other looks on. The one is a confirmation and consummation of the past, and the other an anticipation of the future. *Matthew chapters 5 – 7*, and *John chapters 13 – 16*.
 3. The Sermon on the Mount can never be out of date because it relates to character and conduct, but what it omits to say will become evident as we compare it to the Upper Room talk, the distinctive revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Christian age. The ministry of Christ embraces both His teaching and His work, and of these, His works are more important because by them is the power of salvation.
- II. Christ's evidential work. The narrative of the Gospels is replete with the evidence of miracles. Miracles are not incredible when you read the witness of the Gospels concerning the person of the Messiah.
 - A. The supreme miracle was that He was without sin as a human and also eternal in His divinity.
 1. His entrance into the world was miraculous.
 2. His departure from the world was miraculous.
 3. His life in the world was miraculous. No one who believes in who He was will find it difficult to believe in what He did.
 4. We believe in the miracles because we believe in Christ, not in Christ because we believe in the miracles.
 - B. There are four different terms used to describe the miracles found in the Gospels.
 1. *Ergon* (work). *John 3:21* (the loaves and the fishes). This is talking about a deed designed to attract attention.
 2. *Teras* (wonder). *John 4:48* (signs and wonders). This is a wonderful act that creates wonder in those who behold it. *Mark 2:12, 4:41*.
 3. *Dunamis* (power). *Mark 5:2, 5, 14*. This is translated "*mighty work*." *Acts 8:10*. This indicates the source of the miracle, as *teras* is its effect.
 4. *Semeion* (sign). *Mark 8:11-12*. This means a token of the presence and works of God. This is the word which is translated "*miracle*" in *John 3:2, 7:31*, and more than any of the others it indicates the ethical end and purpose of the act. It declares that the prime object of the miracle is to lead to something that is out of and beyond itself. *Mark 16:20*.
 5. A miracle, then, is an act of God. This act visibly deviates from the ordinary working of His power, designed, while capable of serving other uses, to authenticate a divine message. A miracle is an occurrence so marked in its departure from the usual order of things as to be to men a sign of God's special power. "*It is an interposition of a power above nature and above man.*"