

Faith

Where are signs today?

John 21:1-19
In the gospel of John the writer refers to Jesus' miracles as signs. The first sign is the providing of wine for a wedding in Cana. This may seem like a trivial or unimportant sign, but not according to John: "Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him."

The writer reveals what he considers the purpose behind the various signs that Jesus will perform. They are meant to reveal to his disciples who he is and to cause them to believe in him. The fascinating thing about these signs is that the Jewish religious leadership never gets it. Throughout the narrative they continue to ask Jesus for a sign to prove his authority, and they fail to see the signs he does perform.

Even when he raises Lazarus from the dead, which is an awesome, divine sign, they conspire to kill Jesus and Lazarus both. Perhaps these signs are in the eyes of the beholder (or believer). Some people see the signs and believe and others do not.

Of course, one might say that back in those days Jesus performed many signs, but what about today? Jesus has been raised from the dead and is back in heaven at the right hand of the Father; hence, there are no more signs to be seen.

John faced this same mistaken belief among his church. He wrote his gospel account somewhere around 90 AD, and Jesus was raised from the dead some 60 years earlier. Therefore, his church began to lose faith just like we do today. Yet, this story that he tells contains an important message about signs. Not only does Jesus make a post-resurrection appearance



JOE MILLER JR.

to the disciples who have been fishing all night, he also performs some signs for them. They make a huge catch of fish, and the nets do not break. Both events are genuine signs. He also serves them a meal just like he did at the Last Supper before he was crucified.

John is reminding his church that Jesus is still with us and still very capable of producing signs when he chooses to do so.

Signs, Signs, Everywhere There's Signs was a song produced by the Five Man Electrical Band in 1971. While this group was referring to a different sort of signs, their song rings true. Where are the signs today? The negative signs are easy to find, just turn on the news and catch the story about the killings at Virginia Tech that took place last week. But what about the awesome, divine signs of a living savior and Lord in our midst?

What did Jesus tell Peter right after these events? He told him three different times to "feed my sheep." Today there are divine signs anywhere the church is tending Jesus' sheep. Peter said that he loved Jesus, but to love Jesus he was commanded to feed Jesus' sheep. One cannot truly love Jesus unless one feeds Jesus' sheep. If you want to see the signs in this age being performed by Jesus, go to where his sheep are being fed. Of course, today, just like in Jesus' day, some people see the signs and believe, and some do not. Do you see the signs?

Do you consider yourself a Christian? Are you feeding Jesus' sheep? The best place to begin fulfilling that mission is at church. If you have a church, worship passionately. If you do not have a church, find one. East Texas is full of good churches. Email me at newtonumc@valornet.com with your thoughts.

Joe Miller Jr. is pastor of First United Methodist Church in Newton.

Bits of Faith

Tent revival

The Fellowship Community of Churches will hold a tent revival April 25 - 28 at the Old Bleakwood School Grounds at 7 p.m. nightly. Speakers will be Ted Williams April 25, James Kinman April 26, Ralph Nicol April 27 and Richard Boyd April 28. Friday night will be a bi-lingual English/Spanish service. Nursery will be provided.

Trinity Baptist revival

Trinity Baptist Church on U.S. Highway 96 North, will host a revival April 26-28 at 7:00 p.m. nightly/ Chris DuBose will preach and music will be provided by Allen Hancock. For more information call Andy Rogers at 384-4773.

Coleman canteen

First Presbyterian Church at 740 Verna Street will have Coleman Canteen Friday Night Social April 28 from 5 - 9 p.m. Mexican train dominoes, card games, chess dinner, movie and fellowship will all be available.

Annual prayer breakfast

The Moore Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal Church Women's Missionary Society will hold their annual prayer breakfast April 29 at 7:30 a.m. Guest speaker will be Sheila Henderson of Pasadena. Tickets are \$5 per person for the program and breakfast.

First Presbyterian Church

First Presbyterian Church is hosting a reception honoring Phyllis Danhof Speck who is leaving the church, at Coleman Hall, 740 West Verna St., April 29 at 2 p.m. For more information call 384-8415.

Cemetery memorial

The annual Campground Cemetery memorial service will be Sunday, April 29, at 2:30 p.m. in the Armstrong Memorial Christian Methodist Episcopal

Church in Jasper. Lester Renfro of Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church of Houston will be guest speaker, followed by dinner and fellowship. For more information, call Willie G. or Carol McFarland, 384-8452.

Annual scholarship

Call Community Center COGIC will host their annual scholarship program April 29 at 2:30 p.m. with James Pippert of St. Mary's COGIC in DeBrida, LA., as guest speaker.

Call revival

Call Community Center COGIC will have Mable Rubit of Maxson Memorial COGIC in Beaumont as guest speaker at revival April 30 - May 4 at 8 p.m. nightly.

National Prayer Day

The Ministerial Alliance of Jasper is having a special time of prayer at noon May 3 for National Prayer Day at the gazebo in the Jasper courthouse square.

Brookeland revival

First Baptist Church of Brookeland will hold a revival May 4-5 at 7 p.m. and May 6 at 11 a.m. Call Linnie Broyles at (409) 698-9943 or (409) 698-2827 for more information.

Ford Cemetery Association

The Ford Cemetery Association will hold a work day May 5 to prepare for their annual homecoming May 20. If you are part of a gospel group and interested in providing entertainment for homecoming, contact Malinda Ortolon at 397-4569.

Senior adult day

First Baptist Church will hold senior adult day with music and testimony by seniors during morning worship May 6. Lunch will be provided after worship for all senior adults 65 and older.

Mt. Olive Baptist Church

The Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church will have their unity prayer meeting Tuesday, May 8 at 6:30 p.m. Sunday, May 13, they will have a Mother's Day breakfast at 8 a.m. and at 10:45 p.m. a youth tribute to mothers.

Spirit riders

The spirit riders trailride will be held May 8 - 9. Original Coggin's papers are required. For more information call Robert and Janis Jackson at 423-3860 or John and Kim Barnett at 423-5141.

Mother's Mini Mall

May 11 there will be a mother's mini mall at Community Church on 720 S. Wheeler with spa treatments, vendor booths, food and fellowship. For more information call Kym Kilcrease at 594-8329 or Kristi Dyer at 384-4848.

Anchor Baptist Church

Anchor Baptist Church on U.S. Highway 96 North will host a gospel singing May 12 at 6 p.m. They will feature the Slaughter Family from Florien, LA. Refreshments will follow after service. For more information call 698-3245 or 383-4124.

Baby dedication

The First Baptist Church will have a baby dedication during morning worship service on Mother's Day, May 13. There will be no evening service.

Honoring seniors

First Baptist Church will honor high school seniors during morning worship service May 20.

Annual choir gathering

Church of the Living God in Brookeland will hold their annual mass choir gathering May 20 at 3 p.m. Speaker will be Melvin Edwards of Mount Zion Baptist Church. For more information call 698-9836 or 698-2195.

Few Ready Mix Concrete Co. Community Calendar May 2007

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

		1 • JEDCO monthly meeting, 6 p.m., City Hall • Harvest Way Church Food Bank, 9-11 a.m., 383-0535 for more information	2 • JISD- Progress Reports • Rowe- Student ID Pictures	3 •TopsTX Chapter 1065 meet every Thursday, 5:45 p.m. First Bank and Trust Board Room. Call 381-8642 or 383-0357 • Parnell-3rd grade Field Day • Rowe-JJHS/JHS - Band Concert	4 • Few-Olympics • Parnell-4th grade Field Day • JJHS-GT Independent Study Fair	5 • JHS-Jr./Sr. Prom
6	7 • East Texas Art League, 6 p.m. • Jasper Lakes Area Humane Society, 5:30 p.m., City Hall • Few-Kindergarten Roundup 4-7 p.m.	8 • Chamber of Commerce Embassy Club Meeting, 12 p.m. • Few - Kindergarten Roundup 8-11 a.m.	9 • Book Lovers Club, 2 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, Call 698-2602 for more information • Jasper Lions Club Rodeo Parade, 5 p.m. • Cowboy Stew, Courthouse Square, 11 a.m. - 1 pm.	10	11 • Rowe-5th grade Choir Concert, 2:20 p.m. • JJHS-Right Choice Activity • JHS-NHS/Honors Student Day	12 • Free Car Inspection, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Matthew Center Community Church
May 7-11, All Districts - Teacher Appreciation Week		May 9-12, Jasper Lions Club Rodeo				
13	14 • Commissioners Court, 9 a.m. • City Council Meeting, 6 p.m. • School Board Meeting, 7 p.m. • Deep East Texas Arch. Society meeting, Newton County History Center, 7 p.m. • JJHS-Choir Concert	15 • Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Meeting, 11:30 a.m. • Rowe-Father/Daughter Banquet • JJHS-Student/Week Lunch • JHS-Choir Concert, 7 p.m.	16 •Rowe-Community Appreciation Luncheon	17 • Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society, monthly meeting, 7 p.m. Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall •Women's Civic Club meeting, 156 W. Milam, 11:30 a.m.	18 • Few-Pre-K Graduation • Rowe-6th grade Right Choice • JJHS-8th Grade Graduation Dance • JHS-Scholarship Awards and Student Scholars' Luncheon	19
20	21 • Rowe-5th grade ice cream/autograph party • STARS Graduation	22 • "Caring Friends" Luncheon, Belle Jim Hotel, 11:00 a.m. • Chamber of Commerce Executive Meeting, 10:30 a.m. • Board of Directors Meeting, 11:30 a.m. • Rowe-6th grade ice cream/autograph party	23 •Booklovers Club, 2 p.m. at Coleman Hall, First Presbyterian Church • Rowe-Bike Awards Day	24 •TopsTX Chapter 1065 meet every Thursday, 5:45 p.m. First Bank and Trust Board Room. Call 381-8642 or 383-0357 • JISD-Student Early Release, 1:30 p.m Last Day of School	25 • JHS-Graduation 8 p.m. • JHS-Project Graduation, 11 p.m.-6 a.m.	26
27	28	29 • East Texas Photography Club monthly meeting, 7 p.m., City Hall	30	31		

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