

The Paradox Box

Luke 5:26

This verse contains a word used only once in the New Testament - "*We have seen remarkable things today*" - translated 'strange' (KJV) and 'amazing' (NIV). The word is actually 'paradox' - When God moves, the Paradox Box is opened. John Gill says, "Jesus brings paradoxes, things wonderful, unthought of, unexpected, and incredible by carnal reason, and what were never seen, nor known before; as that a man, who was so enfeebled by the palsy, that he was obliged to be carried on a bed by four men, yet, on a sudden, by a word speaking, rose up, and carried his bed, on his back, home." Amazing, isn't it?

I. God does strange things *with* sinners.

"Paradox speaks of things *contrary to all common opinion and ordinary experience.*" J.C. Ryle.

God's ways are not our ways. The natural man does not and cannot understand the things of God.

Those who know Christ have seen and experienced many 'strange things' which bring amazement.

(A). What the people heard Jesus say amazed them.

He first said, "*Friend, your sins are forgiven you*" (v. 20). An amazing sentence in any language.

Jesus read the minds of the Pharisees who thought "Who can forgive sins but God?" (v. 21).

"Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts..." (v. 22).

(B). What the people saw Jesus do amazed them.

He healed the man with paralysis. Which was the greater miracle? Was it healing the man?

Absolutely not! Jesus loved and forgave. That which was seen only confirmed what was unseen.

The sign of maturity is the ability to believe 'without seeing' (John 20:29). Jesus blesses us for it!

II. God does strange things *for* sinners.

"God, who at different times and in diverse manners spoke in times past to our fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us through his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, by whom He also made the worlds. Jesus is the brightness of God's glory, and the expressed image of his Person, and He upholds all things by the word of His power, when He had *by himself purged our sins*, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Well might the sun in darkness hide, and shut his glories in,

When God the mighty Maker died, for man the creature's sin!

Amazing love! How can it be, that Thou my God shouldst die for me!

John Newton said that heaven will be full of strange things. He once wrote - "When I get to heaven, I shall see three wonders there. The first wonder will be to see many people there whom I did not expect to see. The second wonder will be to miss many people whom I did expect to see. And the third and greatest wonder of all will be to find myself there." Indeed, God does strange things for us.

III. God does strange things *through* sinners.

When a lawyer comes into courtroom, if he is an honest man, he desires to plead the case of an innocent person and justify the innocent before the court from things which have been falsely laid to his client's charge. *It is not man's right nor is it in man's power to truly justify the guilty.* It's strange. Yet, this is precisely what God has done. He's devised a way of making the ungodly person stand justly accepted before Him: He has set up a system by which with perfect justice He can treat the guilty as if he had been all his life free from offence. God justifies the ungodly by faith (Rom. 4:5). Then, God takes that person who has royally messed up in the eyes of man and He uses that sinner for His glory and others' good. *Don't ever forget that God is not through with you.* That's a paradox!