

# **St Martins C3 – March 26, 2023**

## **The Victor Over Chaos – The Victor**

### **Sermon Notes:**

Today, we explore what Jesus being the victor has to say about the everyday worries and struggles of our life.

Life is hard. It is beautiful, but there are times when life seems overwhelming and completely out of our control. However, Jesus came to be the victor over all of the things that we struggle with. Three stories from the Gospels show this to be true.

### **1 – Jesus and Time**

Jesus never rushed. He always had time for the ones who needed His love.

### **Read Mark 6:23-34**

Our world causes us to rush. Jesus challenges us to slow down and focus only on the things that really matter.

Jesus is the victor over time.

### **2 – Jesus and Lack of Resources**

It is easy to see Jesus feeding the four thousand as nothing more than a cool magic trick. But a little detail shows us there was much more going on in this story.

### **Read Matthew 15:32-38**

This miracle takes place in the wilderness. The wilderness in scripture is the place of lack and death. It is usually a place of extreme heat without food and water. Yet, here is Jesus bringing the words of life and doing acts of healing in this place. He makes food plentifully appear from nowhere. He offers the same for us today.

Jesus is the victor over all lack.

### **3 – Jesus and the Forces of Chaos**

Another miracle that feels like a party trick is Jesus walking on the water. However, the original language does not say that Jesus walked on the water, it says He walked on the sea. The sea in ancient thought was a symbol of chaos.

#### ***Read Genesis 1:2; Job 9:8; John 6:16-21***

Jesus is acting like God himself walking over the seas. To make the meaning of this miracle clear Jesus says, literally, “Be confident, I am.” On the one hand, it simply means “Take heart, it is me, Jesus.” On the other, it is an allusion to God’s self-designation, “I am.”

Jesus is the victor over all the forces of chaos in our world.

Because Jesus is the victor we can trust Him. Even though our world may seem completely out of our control we can commit ourselves to Him and see Him come through in our lives. The amount of victory we experience will be directly related to the amount of trust we have in Him.

## **Thoughts and Questions for Connect Groups:**

*Time: What is contributing to you feeling time stress at the moment?*

*How can we be like Jesus and give attention to the things that matter – particularly the people in our lives?*

*Lack: What areas of lack do you have right now?*

*What does God's faithfulness mean to you?*

*Share some ways God has come through for you when you have had a lack.*

*How does trust in God's faithfulness change the way you face situations of lack?*

*Chaos: What areas of chaos do you face right now?*

*How concerning do you find things in the world like climate change, wars, and the emergence of AI?*

*What does it look like to trust Jesus amidst the chaos?*

*Who in your life might be going through chaos now? How can you bring God's love and providence to them?*

*How can the group support you in your ministry and mission?*

## **Monday Devotion: Water into Wine**

***Read: John 2:1-12***

In John, there are seven highlighted miracles. These are called miraculous signs and show that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah, the Lord and victor over all things. The first of these is the turning of the water into wine. It might seem like a strange miracle but it is flowing with symbolism.

This is a story of God's grace, abundance and the victorious power that He was bringing through the ministry of Jesus. In this story, Jesus takes water which is necessary for life and turns it into fine wine which is not necessary for life but it is a luxury that Jesus created just for a friend. It is a picture of abundant grace.

In the story, there are six waterpots the same as the number for the Old Testament ceremony of purification. It's Jesus' way of saying the old covenant equipment won't be needed anymore instead there is a new covenant coming that will bring even more than was experienced in the past.

Then there is the transformation power on display. Jesus changes the very chemical makeup of the water and makes it something new and extravagant. What an image of the things He wants to do in our lives.

Today, pray and ask God to continue His transforming work in your life. Thank Him for the grace that is coming through every moment you spend with Him.

## **Tuesday Devotion: The Official's Servant**

***Read John 4:43-54***

This week we are going through the seven miraculous signs of Jesus. The second is an example of the great miracle power of Jesus.

We live in a world where we can't escape sickness and death, however, our life expectancy in New Zealand is 82 years. The world Jesus lived in had an average span of 55 years (that's only if a person lived past infancy), largely due to poor medical knowledge and practice.

To have a man come who could heal at a mere word was beyond anything ever imagined. Jesus is the victor over sickness and death.

This story also explains what is required to stand with the victor. It is a theme that John comes back to repeatedly: Belief.

As we come to Jesus with our struggles, we know that He has the power to make a difference in every situation. All we need to do is bring our problems and lay them at the feet of Jesus. As we believe, we will see Him make a difference.

Today, come to Him and prayerfully ask Him to make a way in your life with the things you and those around you are going through.

## **Wednesday Devotion: Healing at the Pool**

***Read: John 5:1-15***

Jesus is the victor over sickness, and he offers new life in all areas of our life. Straight after Jesus heals the official's son, we read of Him healing a paralysed man.

This man has been waiting for 38 years for healing. His broken body lies next to miraculous water but he has no way to enter it when the waters stir. Then Jesus comes and does what the ritual water cannot do. He has real-life and healing in His very self and he imparts it to this man.

Jesus is the restorer of lost powers. He can restore what has been stolen from a person. But His power is more than just the physical. We see through His interaction with this man that Jesus wants to do more than physical healing, He wants to bring healing to all of him. To do this He tells the man to stop sinning.

The power of Jesus is to bring transformation to all of a person and leads to a life of obedient surrender to the ways of God.

Today, you may recognise your physical need, but what about the other need you have? Come to Jesus and ask Him to help you with the sin that cripples you and see Him bring restoration to you. No matter how sinful a person is, Jesus can give life, changing sinful attitudes and perspectives.

# **Thursday Devotion: The Healing of the Man Born Blind**

***Read: John 9:1-11***

The healing of the man born blind shows that even Jesus' spit has healing powers. Jesus sends the man to wash in the pool of Siloam but it is Jesus that makes the difference.

These miracles continue the theme that is expressed elsewhere. Only Jesus can control nature and perform healing.

It also shows that Jesus is our light. He enables every person who is obedient to what he knows of Christ to find still greater truth. The truth of who Jesus is.

Our world is full of darkness. The overwhelming nature of life can also make us feel like we are blind. Worries and anxieties seek to overwhelm us like a flood. Like an earthquake, our world shakes. The temperature rises and causes imbalance and strife.

The only one who can bring stability to our world and light to our darkness is Jesus. If we put our hope in Him we will see the sunrise like a new dawn.

Spend time with Jesus today bringing your chaos, darkness and struggles to Him. Rest in His presence and see Him bring His light to your world. Then pray that He would bring light to the darkness around you as well.

## **Friday Devotion: The Raising of Lazarus**

***Read: John 11:1-44***

Jesus is the victor over all. Through exploring these miraculous signs, we have seen the transformation that Jesus wants to bring to our bodies, our souls and our situations.

The final thing to explore is whether He has victory over death. This story is the ultimate confrontation. In it, the one who has brought life to so many enters a graveyard, the place of death. His followers have seen His power over sickness, but death is surely an enemy too great.

Yet, it is no problem for Jesus. He faces the great enemy and with a word from His mouth, He defeats it. As God spoke and gave life in the beginning, so Jesus speaks and gives new life to Lazarus who was dead.

We can trust Jesus to bring life to us forever. Jesus is the victor over death. His gift of life does not end with the death of the physical body. He promises that all who believe in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

Today, ponder the incomparable gift that Jesus offers to all through His death and resurrection. There will come a day when Jesus will speak, and the dead will be raised. Those who believe in Him will be redeemed, renewed, and called to live with Him forever. Celebrate Jesus' victory and what it means for you, me and all who believe in Him.