

Who was Jesus of Nazareth?

**3. What Can Be Discerned
About Jesus From His Deeds
and Words Proclaiming The
Kingdom of God**

Outline of Presentation

- 1. Introduction: The Messiah and the Kingdom of God**
- 2. What Jesus' *Deeds* Proclaiming the Kingdom Tell Us about His Christology**
 - 2.1. Acts of Power**
 - 2.2. Table Fellowship in Anticipation of the Eschatological Banquet**
 - 2.3. Forgiveness of Sins**
- 3. What Jesus' *Words* Proclaiming the Kingdom Tell Us about His Christology**
 - 3.1. The Parables**
 - 3.2. Statements on the Importance of Following Him**
 - 3.3. Statements Where Jesus Speaks As If With the Authority of God**
- 4. Summary**

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Introduction: The Messiah and the Kingdom of God

Jesus' primary interest was the
proclamation of the Kingdom of God

- “kingdom” = translation of Greek *basileia*
- primarily used as an activity (rule, reign)
 - at times associated with spatial imagery (door, entering into . . .)
 - refers to both kingship and the kingdom produced by that kingship

Introduction: The Messiah and the Kingdom of God

Jewish Expectations at Jesus' Time:

- Messiah (anointed King of the House of David)
- Defeat of Israel's enemies
- Kingdom (Egypt to Mesopotamia) of prosperity, peace, justice

Jesus' Kingdom:

- Kingship of God, not of David
- Defeat of Satan and the Forces of Evil
- Kingdom without geographical borders that affects all of the creation

1. Introduction: The Messiah and the Kingdom of God

➤ **2. What Jesus' *Deeds***

Proclaiming the Kingdom

Tell Us about His Christology

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**What Jesus' *Deeds*
Proclaiming the Kingdom
Tell Us about His Christology
Acts of Power**

Jesus' Acts of Power (commonly called miracles) were one of the *means by which the Kingdom of God broke into the world,* reclaiming people and the world from the domination of evil. The lines of demarcation between Jesus and God in this intervention are very vague.

**What Jesus' *Deeds*
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Acts of Power**

Modern Skepticism About Jesus' Miracles

Bultmann's attitude: "modern" man does not believe in miracles, so Jesus must not have worked miracles

The modern worldview cannot be the measure of history

Even Jesus' enemies are not portrayed as denying he did extraordinary deeds

**What Jesus' *Deeds*
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Tell Us about His Christology
Acts of Power**

Claim that Jesus was One of Many Miracle-Working Teachers in His Era

- largely a fiction
- Jesus' combination of teaching and miracles may be unique

What Jesus' *Deeds* Proclaiming the Kingdom Tell Us about His Christology Acts of Power

Commonly cited Jewish “wonder-workers”

- **Honi** (Onias) **the rainmaker** (or circle-maker). 1st century B.C.
- Galilean **Hannina**. 1st century A.D.
- portraits are from much later Rabbinic literature
- unclear if they worked miracles or brought God's help through persuasive prayer

What Jesus' *Deeds* Proclaiming the Kingdom Tell Us about His Christology Acts of Power

Commonly cited pagan parallel to Jesus:

Apollonius of Tyana (first century neo-Pythagorean philosopher)

- knowledge of his life comes from book by Philostratus written 200 years later, regarded by some scholars as largely fictitious
- miracles attributed to Apollonius may have been influenced by stories about Jesus

What Jesus' *Deeds* Proclaiming the Kingdom Tell Us about His Christology Acts of Power

English “miracle” (from Latin *mirari* “to wonder at”) emphasizes deeds as astounding and is thus somewhat misleading

- Jesus refused to work miracles to “show off”

Word used in the Synoptic Gospels” Greek *dynamis* = “acts of power”

**What Jesus' *Deeds*
Proclaiming the Kingdom
Tell Us about His Christology
Acts of Power**

**Jesus' use of "miracles" or Acts of Power
were tied to the coming of the Kingdom of
God**

Matt 12:28 (Luke 11:20): "But if it is by
the Spirit of God that I cast out
demons, then the kingdom of God has
come to you." (NRSV)

Luke 7:16 (resuscitation of the son of the
widow of Nain): "God has visited his
people."

**What Jesus' *Deeds*
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Acts of Power**

**Jesus' use of "miracles" or Acts of Power
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Mark 4:37-41: Calming of the storm,
seen in light of the worldview that
Satan showed his power by disrupting
nature

The healing of the blind, lame, lepers,
raising the dead, seen in the light of
Isaiah 61:1-3

**What Jesus' *Deeds*
Proclaiming the Kingdom
Tell Us about His Christology
Acts of Power – Summary**

Jesus by his Acts of Power presents himself
as *introducing God's dominion (the
Kingdom of God) over the evil that has
ruled the world since Adam's sin*

Line of demarcation between Jesus and God
in this intervention is very vague

**What Jesus' *Deeds*
Proclaiming the Kingdom
Tell Us about His Christology
Table Fellowship in Anticipation of
the Eschatological Banquet**

The **Eschatological Banquet**: a great banquet to be eaten by the just with God when the Kingdom has come (Jesus uses this imagery in the Parable of the Great Supper or Wedding Feast)

- Jesus' meals with tax collectors and sinners
- Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples: last meal in anticipation of the heavenly banquet (Mark 14:25; Matt 26:29; Luke 22:18)

**What Jesus' *Deeds*
Proclaiming the Kingdom
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Table Fellowship in Anticipation of
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Jesus in his table fellowship is in the same position as God in the Eschatological Banquet

What Jesus' *Deeds*
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The Forgiveness of Sins

Jesus claimed the *power to forgive sins* (a power of God alone)
- often caused dissent (Mark 2:5-12)

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What Jesus' Words Proclaiming the Kingdom Tell Us about His Christology The Parables

Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom

- Accept above all else (*Pearl of Great Value*)
- Try not to lose anyone (*Lost Sheep*)
- Choice must be made (*Wedding Feast*)
- Be ready (*Ten Maidens*)
- Judgment coming based on acceptance/rejection values of the Kingdom's values (*Unforgiving Servant, Sheep and the Goats*)
- Jesus like the bridegroom (*Mark 2:19*)

Proclaiming the Kingdom

Tell Us about His Christology

Statements on the Importance of Following Him

Following Jesus:

- more important than burying the dead (Luke 9:59-60)
- more important than family ties (Luke 14:26, Matt 10:37)

Salvation depends on Jesus:

- judgment based on acknowledgment / rejection of Jesus (Luke 12:8-9; Matt 7:21-27)
- losing one life for Jesus' sake brings salvation (Luke 9:24)
- must accept Jesus' standards to enter the kingdom (Mark 10:15)

Proclaiming the Kingdom

Tell Us about His Christology

Statements Where Jesus Speaks As If With the Authority of God

Jesus has the power to assign his disciples roles in heaven (Matt 19:28; Luke 22:28-30)

Jesus can modify or eliminate what God said to Moses:

- “You have heard it said. . . But I say to you. . .” sayings (Matt 5:21-44)
- He is not bound by interpretations of Sabbath Laws and purity

Proclaiming the Kingdom Tell Us about His Christology Statements Where Jesus Speaks As If With the Authority of God

Jesus' teachings & demands were spoken with first person authority: "Amen, I say to you," "Truly I tell you," (= Jesus pledges his person behind the truth of his proclamation), rather than invoking the authority of God

- contrast with the prophetic custom of "The Lord says. . ." (Isa. 1:24, Jer. 2:12, Hosea 11:11, Amos 3:11)

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Summary

Jesus' Deeds and Words about the Kingdom of God and his self-understanding of who he was. Jesus:

- believed he was bringing the Kingdom of God into a world under the domination of evil, in part through the means of Acts of Power
- acted in the role of God through his Table Fellowship and his forgiveness of sins
- spoke with first person authority:
 - demanding urgent acceptance of his proclamation of the Kingdom,
 - as one who could overrule Moses, not needing to invoke the authority of God

Reference and Source

**An Introduction to New Testament
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