

# Popish Miracles

by Ian Paisley

---

*The Church of Rome's claims of miraculous power are false and serve only to confirm the prophecy of the apostasy.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 24:24, 1 Corinthians 13:2, 2 Corinthians 11:13, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 1 John 4:1

**Topics:** "False Miracles", "Apostasy Warning"

---

## Description

Ian Paisley delivers a sermon warning about the dangers of the kingdom of Antichrist, emphasizing the use of miracles, signs, and lying wonders to deceive people. He criticizes Popery for claiming to have worked miracles in favor of the Catholic Church, pointing out the lack of evidence and credibility in these claims. Paisley questions the authenticity of supposed miracles performed by figures like St. Francis Xavier, highlighting the absurdity and lack of proof in these stories. He challenges the Church of Rome's reliance on miraculous power to validate its religion, suggesting that these supposed miracles have transitioned from true to false over time, aligning with prophecies of apostasy.

---

## Transcript

THAT the kingdom of Antichrist may bear in full the stamp of prophecy, miracles, signs, and lying wonders, of some sort, must be mixed up with it, since otherwise it would not be the system to which the Word of God so clearly pointed. As this is a subject of such danger, especially where a tolerable measure of common sense prevails, and the habit of inquiry is being extensively formed, it might have been supposed that Popery would have been cautious in claiming too much; however, it is not easy always to combine craft with caution. A certain measure of arrogance is indispensable to her successful working among the ignorant multitude, and the difficulty is, to prevent her utterances being heard beyond the Popish camp, else she would hold one language to Papists and another to Protestants.

Her great champion, Dr. Milner, who displays much subtlety, with a strange dash occasionally of indiscretion, in his "End of Controversy," lays it down as a doctrine that "God has wrought many incontestable miracles in favour of the Catholic Church, her doctrines and practices, from the age of the Apostles down to the present time." Now, here we have him. Wily and skilful as the Jesuit was, he fairly committed himself. If miracles have been wrought, they have a history through which the times, places, and persons may be got at. The doughty champion of the tiara condescended to specify two or three which he doubtless deemed the best and safest. One of these rested on the cures performed at St. Winefred's Well, in the years 1805 and 1809. He specifies another case, well known in the annals of

imposture—a cure performed by the hand of a priest, executed at a distance of some 200 years. The stock supplied in England was very small, and the last generation has not much contributed to enlarge it. It has been done in Ireland, but Irish commodities of this sort are not in demand on this side of the channel; therefore the Doctor goes back a little, and to a distance, throwing himself on the famous Francis Xavier, of whom we have the following account: --

"The miracles of St. Francis Xavierus, the apostle of India, who was contemporary, with Luther, in number, splendour, and publicity, may vie with St. Bernard's. They consisted in foretelling future events, speaking unknown languages, calming tempests at sea, curing various maladies, and raising the dead to life; and though they took place in remote countries, yet they were verified in the same soon after the saint's death, by virtue of a commission from John III. King of Portugal, and were generally acknowledged, not only by Europeans of different religions in India, but also by the native Mohammedans and Pagans."

There can be no doubt that Xavier was a very worthy sort of man, and that he manifested considerable talents and much zeal. As to the wonders he wrought in the way of conversion in the East, the thing is romance, containing very little truth. Where is the proof that he spake unknown languages without tuition? —that he calmed sea-tempests, and raised the dead to life? The thing is not meant, of course, for the meridian of Protestantism; and for that of Popery, truth is not necessary. This puts us in mind of what we read of Luther's corpse, which could not be kept in a coffin. Night after night it always came out, and laid itself down hard by, and it was not without difficulty that the great heretic could be made to keep the peace, even when underground! It consists with our knowledge that this story, with all its concomitant nonsense, was told recently to an individual, a convert to Popery, from whose lips we had it. But they who want more of the wonders of St. Francis, may find them in his Life, which provides a very considerable supply of the article. We cannot withhold a specimen. It refers to a consecrated crucifix, for which he had an especial value; but on a sea-voyage one day, he dropped it overboard, which deeply distressed him as an evil omen and a great calamity.

However, the vessel sped her way across the ocean, and he reached his desired haven, giving up the crucifix for lost, till one day, walking on the seashore, he saw the object of his reverential regard moving towards him, elevated above the surface of the water as if self-conducted, or borne by the spirits of the deep. Filled with astonishment and delight, he went to meet it, when it was reverentially deposited at his feet by a crab, which seemed to have had a Divine commission! There has been a great oversight here. What became of the crab? Why was it not secured? This would have made one of the most precious relics in Rome, and might at least have counted upon a million of pilgrims annually to worship it.

But enough of St. Francis, and enough of the nonsense of which we have spoken. We willingly concede to Popery a great deal in the way of signs, and lying wonders as a kingdom of darkness; the spirits of evil may have had more to do with it than the children of light are prepared to believe; and it is also possible, indeed, it can scarcely be doubted, that millions and millions of the poor infatuated members of the Romish Church sincerely believe the lying legends, which are told them, and the mock miracles which are daily being performed in their presence.

Now, the Church of Rome holds miraculous power necessary to prove the divinity of her religion, and the truth of her mission; and on these grounds she asserts that, from the days of the Apostles down to the present time, she has never been without this power of working miracles. It is her boast, that the fact was believed in all Christian countries, and in all ages till the evil hour which brought into being Luther, Calvin, and their heretical associates. Here, then, supposing the truth of the assertion, a great point is gained, and

it is not without consistency that she challenges Protestants to produce their miracles in proof of their mission and the truth of their system.

There is a slight hitch, however, which the Jesuits have deemed it prudent to conceal. It is not denied by the opponents of Popery that the chain of miracles has extended from the days of the Lord himself down to the present time; but there is this difference, they were first true and then false; for a period the links were gold, afterwards they became the basest metal; true miracles were succeeded by lying wonders, and hence their utter worthlessness, or rather their confirmation of the prophecy which declared that the apostasy foretold would largely deal in such things. If, in very deed, these miracles were true, they would suffice to demonstrate the divine character of Popery and the schismatic character of Protestantism, which would stand a confessed imposture. Popish miracles were most abundant in the darkest periods of Popish history. In number and magnitude, there was a noticeable abatement as time advanced. Since the Reformation, indeed, they have been gradually dwindling in number; and it deserves to be particularly noticed, that they are at this moment still confined to the darkest regions.

How comes it to pass, that the Popish priesthood in Great Britain have not vindicated their claims by the exercise of miraculous power? How comes it that they have not raised the dead, opened the eyes of the blind, enabled the dumb to speak, and made the lame to walk? A few such incontrovertible exhibitions of divine power would settle the question as between them and the Protestants, and give them at once a complete, a universal, and an ever-during victory.

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ian-paisley/popish-miracles/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**