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**SERMON NOTES May 21, 2023**

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Today's notes also available at [CCPL.life/Connect](https://ccpl.life/Connect)

**Matthew 12:38-42  
Demanding Our Own Sign  
Pastor Mike**

I. The underlying \_\_\_\_\_

II. The \_\_\_\_\_ to a simple request

Why does Jesus respond \_\_\_\_\_

III. The \_\_\_\_\_ of what God \_\_\_\_\_

IV. The ultimate sign of \_\_\_\_\_

V. The \_\_\_\_\_ behind the request

They weren't asking \_\_\_\_\_...

... but were \_\_\_\_\_ God do \_\_\_\_\_

VI. The \_\_\_\_\_ to God and his word

Belief is a \_\_\_\_\_ and an act of \_\_\_\_\_

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. The religious leaders asked Jesus to prove his claims by giving them a sign shortly after he had cast a demon out of a man, healing him of his blindness and muteness. When they asked, they were ignoring the miracle that was standing in front of them.
  - a. Why do you think they did this? Why did they ignore this miracle standing in front of them, but instead, it demanded that Jesus do another miracle to prove himself?
  - b. Can we still do the same thing today? How can we overlook God's miraculous work in our life, and instead demand that he do another miracle to prove himself?
2. After the religious leaders asked Jesus for a sign, Jesus responded in a way that seems extremely harsh and confrontational, telling them, *"An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."*
  - a. Why does Jesus respond so harshly?
  - b. If any believer today ever responded to anyone in this way, they would likely be criticized as responding in a way that wasn't very Christlike. How are we to understand this response as expression of Jesus love and grace?
3. In Matthew 12:39-40 Jesus teaches that he has given us the sign of Jonah, or the miracle of his resurrection as the ultimate sign or evidence that we need to believe in him.
  - a. Why is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the ultimate sign or evidence proving the truthfulness of his claims?
  - b. How would you respond to someone who argued that the resurrection was just a religious story that Christians choose to believe, and not actually evidence proving Jesus' claims?
4. Have you ever talked to a non-believer who had told you in so many words, "I cannot believe until I have proof," or in other words, "I will not believe until God gives me a sign."
  - a. If you were to ask them, "what kind of sign or what kind of proof would God need to give you for you to believe," what do you think they may say?
  - b. In your experience, have you felt that those who say they need proof before they believe are really basing their objection on an intellectual struggle or are they using that as an excuse? Explain your answer.
5. There are many who claim to be followers of Jesus who struggle with their faith because God failed to answer a prayer, or he failed to do a sign they expected him to do. What does this passage teach those for whom this may be the case?
6. In his message Pastor Mike said that belief is a choice and an act of the will, and not just a matter of convincing the intellect. What did he mean by what? Do you agree that this is always the case? Why or why not?