

The Miracles of Jesus



2018 Summer Bible Study - Adult Workbook

By Daniel R. Vess

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Introduction to the Miracles of Jesus

Introduction

- A. **ILL:** A boy, aged 6, comes home from church all excited and his father asks why. He replies that he learned the story of Passover. He relates: "Moses was about to take the Jews out of Egypt when suddenly the Israeli air-force appeared with their thundering jets, and bombed Egypt. The Egyptian forces sent out their helicopters and the Israeli air-force shot them down, whereupon Moses crossed the ocean." The father, amazed at the story, incredulously asks his son: "Is this the story that they taught you in school?" The boy replies, "Nope, but if I would tell you the real story, you wouldn't believe me."
- B. **Jesus uses the unbelievable to produce belief.**

I. Definition of a Miracle

- A. **Redefining miracles.**
1. We speak of the latest computer triumph as a "technological miracles"
 2. We refer to the new advance in medical treatment as a "Miracle drug."
 3. We call the rapid growth of a company's stock value "miraculous."
 4. Are these the normal events of daily life? Car accident "it was a miracles that he was not killed." Incidents beyond the pale of everyday life.
 5. Supernatural as being 'primitive' and 'unscientific' was demolishing miracles.
 6. The production of results beyond the capacity of man.
 7. In the sense of "wonders," science can already perform them.
 8. Roland H Worth, Jr., wrote: "Since our minds are finite and God's infinite, there is no way that we will ever have the full mastery of the natural laws of this universe in the sense and to the degree that he does."
 9. Science will never perform "miracles" in the sene that the Bible uses the term.
- B. **An exacted definition of a miracles can be elusive.**
1. An interposition of Divine power to produce a specific result.
 2. A Miracle is "an event...that apparently contradicts known scientific laws and is hence thought to be due to supernatural causes, especially to an act of God" (Webster's New 20th Century Dictionary, Unabridged).
 3. "A wonderful happening that is above against, or independent of the known laws of nature" (Thorndike Barnhart Junior Dictionary.)
 4. "What is a miracle? A miracle has been defined as a work wrought by a divine power for a divine purpose by means beyond the read of man." Lockyer
 5. "A miracle is an event in the external world wrought by the immediate power of God and intended as a sign or attestation." Gene Taylor
 6. A supernatural event resulting from supernatural power.
 7. Bible miracles often display the reversal of nature's course. Deviation form the known laws of nature, proving that God is not only the Maker of all these laws, but also their Sovereign. Power to control and change it, suspend or direct its laws for a season. God is beyond and above nature, He never violates any of its laws.
- C. A perfectly complete list of miracles wold depend on one's definition of a miracles.

II. Descriptive Terms for Miracles

A. Three Words

1. Three words in **Acts 2:22** - *“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—*
2. See 2 Cor. 12:12; 2 Th. 2:9

B. Miracles or Mighty Works

1. Greek - dunamis
2. Indicating works of supernatural origin.

C. Wonders

1. Greek - terata
2. Astonishment
3. (Mark 2:12; 4:41; 6:51; 7:37)

D. Signs

1. Greek - semeion
2. Philip Yancey writes that a “sign is not the same thing as proof; a sign is merely a marker for someone who is looking in the right direction.” The miracles point us in the direction of Jesus as the Son of God. Are we paying attention to the signs?

E. Other Terms or Phrases

1. “Mighty works” (Matt. 11:20; Mark 6:14; Luke 10:13).
2. “Works” John 5:36; 7:21; 10:25,32) “great things” Luke 1:49
3. “glorious things” Luke 13:17
4. “strange things” Luke 5:26
5. “wonderful things” Matt. 21:15
6. “marvelous things” Ps. 78:12
7. “marvelous works” Ps. 105:5; Is. 29:14).

- F. The healing of the paralytic (Mark 2:1-2) was a wonder, for they who beheld it “were all amazed”; it was a power, for the man at Christ’s word “arose, took up his bed” it was a sign, power on earth to forgive sin.

III. Variety of Jesus’ Miracles

- A. We have only samples out of the mass of miracles Jesus performed.

B. Types of Miracle

1. Power over nature. He stilled a storm (Matthew 8:26-27).
2. Power over material things. He fed 5,000 men with a few loaves and fishes (Luke 9:10-17).
3. Power over all manner of diseases (Matthew 8:16).
4. Power over the spirit world (Matthew 8:16).
5. Power over life and death (John 11:14-44).
6. The Johannine Jesus displays supernatural knowledge of hidden realities (Jn. 1:47-49; 2:24-25; 4:16-19; 5:62; 6:64; 7:0-71; 13:1; 21:6).

- C. **Subjects:** women, lepers, Samaritans, Gentiles, tax-collectors, prostitutes, adulteress, Children, people with withered limbs, the deaf, the dumb, the blind the lame and the dead.

- D. **Places:** near and at a distance, on the water on land, etc.

- E. **Times:** in the daytime and nighttime

F. General:

1. **Matthew 4:23** - *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.*

2. **Matt. 4:24** - *Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them.*
 3. **Matt. 8:16** - *When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick,*
 4. **Matt. 9:35** - *Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.*
 5. **Matt. 14:14** - *And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.*
 6. **Matt. 15:30** - *Then great multitudes came to Him, having with them the lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them.*
 7. **Matt. 19:2** - *And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.*
 8. **Matt. 21:14** - *Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.*
- G. Methods:** The miracle of Bethsaida precisely shows us a man who passes from blindness to sight in two stages 'people walking like trees" see plainly.

IV. Design of Jesus' Miracles

A. Confirmation of the Word

1. Jesus made many claims
 - a. He claimed to be the Son of God (John 10:35-37).
 - b. He claimed to be the Messiah (John 4:25-26)
 - c. Savior of the world (John 14:6).
 - d. Where is the proof?
2. The miracles are the proof
 - a. Mohammed no miracles attesting the divinity of his mission.
 - b. **Mark 16:20** - *And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.*
 - c. Indispensable proofs of revelation.
 - 1) Without miracles there would have been incomplete evidence backing up His supernatural claims and the authority of His teaching.
 - 2) Supernatural Book - the Bible needs supernatural evidence.
 - 3) Mathematical truth requires a mathematical demonstration, so supernatural truth requires supernatural attestation.

B. Compassion for Suffering Sinners

1. What is God like? What does God feel? How does God respond to human suffering? God is loving enough and powerful enough and willing to help the suffering.
2. Jesus performed miracles to show compassion and meet human need.
 - a. **Mark 1:41** - *Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed."*
3. Often these healing miracles lay emphasis on Jesus' touching the sufferer. Contagion quarantine rules the untouchables.
4. His goal, for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10

- a. Forgiveness of sins was of greater concern to Him than physical healings.
- C. Creating Faith**
1. **John 20:30-31** - *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*
- D. Consummation of Prophecy**
1. It would have been very strange if He had not performed signs and wonders.
 2. Also in Matt. 11:1-6 when John the Baptist went two of his disciples to Him to ask if He was the coming one.
 - a. **Mt. 11:2-5** - *And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples 3 and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" 4 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*
 2. Jesus quoted from the passage in Isaiah 61 while in the synagogue at Nazareth, and indicated that it was fulfilled in him (Luke 4:18–21).
 - a. **Isaiah 61:1** - *"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;*
 - b. Not the prophet himself, but He who had been appointed to be the Mediator of a new covenant, the light of the Gentiles, the salvation of Jehovah for the whole world.
 - c. Jesus who read this in the synagogue at Nazareth applied it entirely to Himself (Luke 4:17,18,21).
- E. Confirmation of His Deity**
1. We would expect an alien for a far galaxy far more advanced tech than earth to demonstrate such.
 2. Five Proofs of Jesus' Deity, John 5:1-39
 - a. His own testimony, 31
 - b. John the Baptist 33-35
 - c. Father 37
 - d. Word of God 38-39
 - e. His works 36
 - 1) **John 5:36** - *But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.*
 3. John 20:30-31
- F. Certification as the Messiah**
1. **John 3:2** - *This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him*
 2. When John doubted His Messiahship, Jesus pointed to the miracles.
- G. Command over Satan**
1. Demonstrations of a power superior to that of Satan.
 2. **Matt. 12:29** - *Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.*
 3. By the power to cast out demons.

H. Coming of the Kingdom

1. Jesus' miracles were signs of the presence of the kingdom of God (Matt. 12:39).
2. **Luke 11:20** - *But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

I. Causing Repentance

1. **Mt. 11:21** - *"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.*

J. Clarifying Spiritual Truths

1. If Jesus once turned 120 gallons of water into wine at a country wedding, so what?
2. The miracles were relevant to the people back then. But what about now?
3. We fail to be spiritually helped or nourished by them because we miss their inner meaning.
4. Jesus claimed the power to give life by raising the dead.
 - a. **John 5:21** - *For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.*
 - b. After claiming to be the resurrection and the life (John 11:25) he raised Lazarus from the dead.
5. He claimed to be the Bread of Life after feeding the 5000.
6. He claimed to be the light of the World by bringing a blind man out of a lifetime of darkness.
7. The healing of lepers illustrates the removal of sins' loathsome defilement.
8. He healed 10 lepers and taught a lesson on gratitude.
9. He healed and spoke of great faith.
10. He healed to showed his power to forgive sins.
11. Discover more of their relevance to you and your faith.

Conclusion

A. The miracles offer a glimpse of Heaven

1. A glimpse of the world that is to come. The supernatural acts of Jesus are like a flash of lightening that illuminates a dark night for a few moments, allowing us to see clearly.
2. Tim Keller comments, "We modern people think of miracles as the suspension of the natural order, but Jesus meant them to be the restoration of the natural order.
3. God did not originally make the world to have disease, hunger, and death in it.
4. In Heaven no sickness, pain, death, demons, etc. No bad weather or darkness. All will have a new body forever.

Faith: The Miracle of Walking on Water

Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-54; John 6:15-21

Matthew 14:22-36

22 Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. 23 And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. 24 But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. 25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." 28 And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." 29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" 31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

Mark 6:45-54

45 Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. 46 And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray. 47 Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. 48 Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by. 49 And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out; 50 for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." 51 Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. 52 For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened. 53 When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there. 54 And when they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him,

John 6:15-21

15 Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone. 16 Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, 17 got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. 18 Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. 19 So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid. 20 But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." 21 Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

An elder and a deacon decided to take the new preacher at the congregation out fishing with them early one morning. As the morning wore on they had been visiting and drinking hot coffee to stay warm. Suddenly elder announced, "Boys, you will have to excuse me, I need to visit the little boys room." He laid down his pole, stood up, stepped over the side of the boat, and preceded to walk to the shore. He head to the bushes at the edge of the woods. After he returned the same way, he re-entered the boat. Next the deacon stood up and said, "I too have to hit the head." He stepped out and walked across the water to the shore, to the bush, and back. The preacher was amazed. He thought to himself that if the elder and the deacon had enough faith to walk upon the water, he should demonstrate the same. So he stood up announced, "I believe it is time for me to make water." As soon as he stepped out of his end of the boat, he sunk straight down into the lake. When his head popped back up through the surface of the water, he yelled, "save me!" As the elder and the deacon were hauling him back into the boat, the deacon said to the elder, "do you suppose we should have pointed out the stepping stones in the water before he got out of the boat?"

When Peter got out of the boat to walk upon the water to Jesus, he did not need any stepping stones. He needed to have a big enough faith to keep his eyes upon the object of his faith: Jesus.

Following the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, the crowd wanted to take Jesus "by force, to make Him king" (John 6:14,15a). The idea of becoming king of the Jews so easily and without crucifixion would have been a temptation to Christ as it had been in the wilderness (Luke 5:1-13). Now He has twelve disciples plus thousands of followers. It may have been a greater temptation for His disciples who were looking for an earthly kingdom and Jesus as their king. However, to combat these temptations Jesus commanded His disciples to leave to the opposite shore of the Sea of Galilee by way of their boat, Meanwhile He went alone to the mountain to pray.

◆ **Faith Big Enough To Obey the Lord**

Having sent the disciples away by boat might have made it easier for Jesus dissuade the crowd from making Him a monarch. Furthermore, the disciples would not have been influenced by the multitudes' desires. Notice Jesus compelled or made the disciples leave (Matt. 14:22; Mark 6:45).

Obedying Jesus is not without difficulty. He sent them into a storm. If you are going to be following Jesus you need to obey Him, but do not expect smooth sailing. The first time they were caught up in a storm which tested their faith, Jesus was asleep in the boat, but at least He was with them (Matt. 8:23–27). Now they are alone on the sea.

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Overcome Fear**

The multitudes were fed earlier in the evening. The disciples were sent away by Jesus in the later part of the evening between seven and eight o'clock. Jesus did not come to them until the fourth watch of the night. Whereas in the Old Testament the Jews had three watches in the night, in the first century they went by the Roman method which called for four watches in the night. These watches started at six in the evening, the second started at nine, and third at midnight. The fourth watch would have been some time between three and six o'clock in the morning. Therefore, he had been on the mountain praying for several hours, while they were on the sea rolling against the wind and waves for about the same amount of time.

The Sea of Galilee is also called the Sea of Tiberius or the Lake of Gennesaret. It is about eight miles wide and thirteen miles long. After several hours fighting the waves and rowing against the wind they were only three or four miles across the lake. This would have put them right in the middle in waters about two hundred feet deep and far from any help from land. Although there were twelve in this boat. Only four were experienced fishermen. The boat would have been large enough. A boat about eight feet wide and over twenty-five feet long was found preserved in the mud along the shore of the sea in the mid-eighties. However, their faith in the boat would have been waning at this point. Perhaps all twelve were bailing water and rowing as fast and hard as they could hoping just to stay afloat long enough to last out the storm.

The Twelve would have had a good reason to be afraid. The worst part of the storm was that

Jesus was not with them. Where was He when they needed Him most. He commanded them to get into the boat and sent them into a storm only to be absent when they needed Him to command the winds and the waves to be still. He was miles away on the mountain. Jesus making intercession for them in prayer was all the help they needed. Despite the distance He knew their plight. No matter what the distance, Jesus is near and He can hear our cries for help. No matter what the storm, He can calm it or walk through it. No matter where we are lost, He knows how to find us.

Why did Jesus not come earlier? Did He not care about their plight? The purpose of sending them into the storm without His physical presence was to strengthen their faith. Fear and faith do not go well together. Fear stunts the growth of faith. Yet to get past their fears, they had to face the storm. Faith is victorious, only when fears are conquered. They saw the storm as the means of their destruction, Jesus used it as a means of instruction. They were getting no where on their current course in the storm, though Jesus used the waves as a path to walk to them.

When Jesus did come to them by walking upon the water in the middle of the night, they were even more afraid. Sailing on the seas have often produced superstitions in sailors. They thought Jesus to be a ghost. The Greek term for "ghost" is *phantasma* from which is derived the English terms "phantom" and "phantasm." They were being attacked by the physical storm and now a spiritual attack forewarning of their imminent doom. Fortunately as He came nearer, they were able to see and hear His voice.

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Trust in the Power of the Almighty**

As Jesus approached the boat, He encouraged the disciples by calling out three statements of comfort: "*Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.*" To "*be of good cheer*" is the opposite of "*do not be afraid.*" Fear was robbing them of joy. However, the basis of being cheerful and not fearful is found in who was speaking to them. He is the great I Am not a ghost. The literal translation of the Greek is "I Am" which is more accurate than the English rendering of "*it is I.*" It is not just their Teacher and Master, Jesus. The one coming to them upon the waves of the sea is God. The great "*I AM*" (Ex. 3:14). He is the Almighty One who has authority and might over the wind and the waves.

Recognizing Jesus, Peter longs to come to Him. So he requests in faith that Jesus ask him to come out upon the water. If Jesus is really the Almighty One, Peter can do anything. After all, "*with God all things are possible*" (Mat. 19:26b) and "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*" (Phil. 4:13). One might think that Peter was expressing a bit of doubt when he asked Jesus: "*Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water*" (Matt. 14:28). James Coffman explains what the statement really meant: "Peter's 'if' in this place is not a word of doubt but an argumentative 'if' such as Christ himself used when he said, 'if I go, I will come again.' The true meaning is, 'Since it is you...'"

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Get Out of the Boat**

Big faith required Peter to get out of the boat. He needed to have more trust in Jesus power to keep him safe on the waves and in the wind, than the trust he put into the boat. Jesus was not in the boat.

Faith is often demonstrated by taking risks. We are not talking about the risk of sky diving or bungee jumping. Peter had the risk stepping out of the logical place to be and onto a raging sea. It is impossible enough to walk on the waters that are still and the wind is calm. Peter got out of the boat onto waves that would toss him around and wind which would blow him over. Life is risky. Eighty percent of all accidents take place within a mile of home. When I told that to my neighbor he moved. Just think of the trust issues the man had who was the first one to eat the round white thing that he watch fall out of the back of a chicken. Putting your trust in the Lord involves taking risks. When I went to share the gospel in Korea by myself at the age of 31, I stepped off the plane on foreign land and I asked myself: "What was I thinking?"

The failure of Peter was not getting out of the boat. The failure is seen by the other eleven who stayed in the boat. They are not noticed in the story, because they did not even try to get out of the boat. Peter is the only other man (except Jesus) to walk upon the water. He alone experienced the glory with the Lord. However, you will never experience the joy and trill of walking on the water with Jesus until you

are brave enough to get out of the boat. Never play football and you will never suffer from getting tackled, however you will never know the thrill of making a touchdown.

Did Peter fail? Yes. But he alone could learn from the failure, because he alone got out of the boat. He was the only one who could experience the joy in Jesus being there to pick him up out of the water. Peter, not the other eleven, would demonstrate what a *"little faith"* could do. Anyone can sit in the safety of the boat and watch. Peter had enough faith to get out of the boat and do with God's help what no other man has ever done.

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Stay Focused on Christ**

Peter's failure was when he took his eyes off of Jesus and started to focus on the waves and the wind of the storm. The sinking feeling came over him when he forgot about the presence and power of the Lord out of the fear of the storm. France wrote, "true faith is single-mindedly focused on Jesus". Big faith keeps one focused on Jesus in the storms of life.

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Look Jesus for Salvation**

Peter's faith may have been paralyzed by the winds and the waves, yet this was only for a moment. He still believed in Jesus' power to save. He cried out, "*Lord, save me!*" He did not turn back to the boat or cry out to the other disciples to rescue him. His request showed even more faith. Even in his failure Peter's faith could still grow bigger.

How far did Peter walk upon the water? The Bible does not say. No matter the distance he was closer to the Lord when sinking than when walking. The Psalmist wrote, "*if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Thy hand will lead me, and Thy right hand will lay hold of me*" (Ps. 139:8-10).

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Overcome Doubts**

Jesus' saving of Peter came with a scolding: "*O you of little faith, why did you doubt?*" (Matt. 14:31). Jesus did not rebuke Peter for getting out of the boat or even sinking, He noted his little faith which led to doubt. Bengel put it this way: "he was not blamed because he came out of the ship, but because he did not remain in the firmness of faith."

Did Peter have *"little faith"*? Yes, but look at what he could do with the little faith he had. Jesus did not reject Him for his little faith and doubting, but saved him. Peter's faith was not enough to get him across the waves to Jesus but Jesus was willing to come to Peter. Peter means "rock." Peter sunk like a rock because of his "little faith." The Lord is able to take that rock and build upon it a big faith.

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Understand the Truth**

After Peter and Jesus got into the boat the storm suddenly ceased. As a result of the three miracles of Jesus and Peter walking upon the water and the immediate calming of the storm, the disciples were amazed. Before they witnessed these events "*they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened*" (Mark 6:52). Now they know the truth. Jesus is able to do anything because of who He is: "*the Son of God.*" The feeding of the five thousand was not just a great wonder it was a sign to point out to them who Jesus really was.

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Worship Christ**

With Jesus in the boat, the disciples no longer feared him as a ghost. They did not see him as a great prophet who happened to do great wonders by God's power. They worshiped Him because He is God. This is the first time they worshiped Jesus.

◆ **Faith Big Enough to Confess Jesus as the Son of God**

Although God and demons have addressed Jesus as deity in the past the disciples as a whole proclaim: "*Truly You are the Son of God.*" When He had calmed the sea before the disciples merely asked, "What manner of man is this?" (Matt. 8:23-27). Now they recognize this man was the Son of God.

This event has more than just one miracle. First, Jesus even at a great distance knew of the disciples' plight as they suffered in the storm. He walked upon the water to them. Jesus enabled Peter to walk upon the water. He was able to stand on the water and save Peter. The storm ceased when they entered the boat. Finally, they were transported in the boat "*instantaneously*" to the shore (John 6:21). All these were faith builders.

Would you have had a big enough faith to get out of the boat and walk upon the water to Jesus? Better yet, do you have enough faith to get out of your comfort zone and walk to the water to be baptized into Christ to wash away your sins?

Questions:

1. Why would it have presented at temptation to Jesus and/or His disciples that the masses were trying to take Jesus and make Him King by force?
2. Why did the disciples cross over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee?
3. Did the disciples know they were heading into a storm when they got into the boat? Did Jesus?
4. What happened during a previous storm (Matthew 8:23-27)?
5. List the various fears and difficulties that the disciples had to contend with in crossing the Sea of Galilee that night.
6. Was the absence of Jesus from the boat really that serious of an issue? Explain.
7. How does fear hinder the growth of our faith?
8. What did they believe Jesus was when He came walking to them upon the water at night?
9. What three things did Jesus say to the disciples to give them courage?
10. What is the real meaning behind "it is I"?
11. Did Peter express doubt in His ability to come walking on the water to Jesus? Explain.

12. Can one have faith without obedience and risks? Explain.
13. How would you evaluate the faith of the eleven other disciples?
14. What benefits did Peter receive from getting out of the boat?
15. What was Peter's failure?
16. Instead of crying out to "*Lord, save me!*" when he was sinking ,what could have Peter tried to do?
17. What can be done with a little faith (see Matthew 17:20; Luke 17:6)?
18. Why did the disciples fail to understand the meaning of the feeding of the 5000?
19. Why did the disciples worship Jesus in the boat?
20. What are the various miracles which take place in our texts?

Application & Discussion:

1. What can be done to grow our little faith today?
2. What are the fears which hinder our faith today?

Gratitude: Healing of the Ten Lepers

Luke 17:11-19

11 Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12 Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off. 13 And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed. 15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16 and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. 17 So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? 18 Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?" 19 And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

When a boat began to sink off shore of a college, one student who was a strong swimmer came to the rescue. He saved seventeen passengers from drowning. Years later he was asked, "what stands out most in your memory of this great rescue?" "The thing I remember most," came the man's quiet reply, "was that of the seventeen that I helped save, not one of them ever thanked me!"

Jesus experiences a similar situation after he had healed ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19). Only one of the lepers returned to say "thanks".

- **Recognizing the Need for God's Gift**

As Christ traveled through Galilee and Samaria to Jerusalem ten lepers cried out to Him for help. To comprehend their need, we must understand the dreadful disease called "leprosy". "The victim's hair is bleached white. The body becomes a mass of scales and sores. The bones and marrow are pervaded. The joints separate; the fingers, toes, and other members fall off one by one, leaving a body hideous and awful. Few diseases are more devastating than leprosy. It brings pain and discomfort; it is life-threatening; it is a lingering malady; and, worst of all, perhaps, it resulted in their being socially ostracized." It is also known as Hansen's disease. "The disease is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium leprae*, discovered by the Norwegian scientist G. H. A. Hansen in 1873 (it was the first bacterium to be identified as the cause of a human disease). The bacterium was communicable through touch and breath" (MacArthur). It is also called lion's disease due to the lion like disfigurement of the leper's face. Today, leprosy is rare due to the fact that over ninety percent of humanity is immune to the bacterium.

When a person was suspected of having leprosy, he came before a priest, who examined him. If the priest decided that he had leprosy, he was considered unclean. Since there was no known cure for the disease, this was the only way to keep it from becoming an epidemic. The Law of Moses was very strict concerning leprosy. Leviticus 13:42-46 - 42 is just one of many passages which outline the rules and regulations for those with this disease.

And if there is on the bald head or bald forehead a reddish-white sore, it is leprosy breaking out on his bald head or his bald forehead. Then the priest shall examine it; and indeed if the swelling of the sore is reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, as the appearance of leprosy on the skin of the body, he is a leprous man. He is unclean. The priest shall surely pronounce him unclean; his sore is on his head. Now the leper on whom the sore is, his clothes

shall be torn and his head bare; and he shall cover his mustache, and cry, 'Unclean! Unclean!' He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He is unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.

Due to the strict rules about quarantine the worst part of the disease was the loneliness. So fearful of this malady, the healthy of society would ostracized lepers. As lepers would approach, the crowd would pull back. The lepers would call out the warning "Tame, Tame!" (i.e. "unclean"). They were not allowed to live in the village. The leper was not allowed in public gatherings, even for worship. No specified distance is given, but traditionally they were to be at least fifty yards away.

Lepers are often mentioned in groups. Due to their mutual misery they are drawn together by the need for human companionship and support.

- **Mercy is the Conduit of God's Gift**

Normally lepers who only approach others seeking alms or food. They ask Jesus for mercy not money. Often Jesus was approached by those in desperate need of help with the plea, *"have mercy on us"* (Matt.9:27; 15:22; 17:15; 20:30-31; Mark 10:47,48). These lepers must have had some previous knowledge of Jesus' ability and willingness to show compassion. These disease was fatal. Jesus was their only hope for a cure and return to normal society. Their faith in His ability to help is seen in their addressing Him as "Master" which is translated from *epistates* which was used to refer to someone who had great authority.

- **Obedying the Conditions for God's Gift**

Jesus responded to the lepers' request by telling them to go to the priest and on their way they were healed (14). It was necessary that a healed leper go to the Jewish priest in order to be pronounced clean. *"This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest"* (Lev. 14:2). By sending them to the priests, Jesus showed that He had not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it. Furthermore, the very priest who often and ultimately rejected Jesus would have to verify the miraculous healing of these lepers.

Suppose they had not had enough faith to start to find a priest. Would they have been healed? Apparently not. We are not told how far they had gone before they discovered that they were healed. It was sufficient distance to test their faith. Naaman was required by the prophet of God, Elisha, to go dip seven times in the river Jordan to be cleansed (2 Kings 5:1f). He was not healed unto he obeyed.

- **Trust in the Giving of God's Gift**

It was only in departing they were cleansed. This required trusting the word of Jesus. What good is it to go to the priest, if one is not healed of leprosy? Although Jesus could have cleansed them right then, He wanted to test their faith by not healing them at that instance. How far they walked we do not know, but Jesus had the power to heal at anytime at any distance. All ten showed enough faith to obey and be rewarded.

- **Worshipping and Glorifying on Account of God's Gift**

All had faith and obedient trust in Jesus' power to save them from leprosy. Only one had the heart to return to express his gratitude. He did so with a loud voice showing that the disease's damage to his vocal cords have been healed. He did not disobey the command to go to the priest. He could do that later. He had to express to Jesus his over-whelming appreciation. By worshipping Jesus he recognized him as God for only God is to receive worship. Additionally, when God is not worshiped and thanked, He is not glorified. Next time you are cleansed your spiritual leprosy and restored to fellowship with God, take time immediately to worship, glorify, and thank Him.

- **Giving Thanks For God's Gift**

One of the first phrases parents teach their children to say is, "Thank You." They do this before the children can even pronounce the words correctly. Why? They hope this will be taught early enough to make it an ingrained habit.

How often do we take our blessings for granted and fail to thank the Lord? How dare we enjoy the gift and forget the Giver.

- **Few Are Grateful for God's Gift**

Jesus could not help but point out the failure of the others by asking three rhetorical questions: "*Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?*" (17,18). Jesus' words were more of a commentary than a question. Only ten percent of those who received the blessings showed gratitude. Ten is a number used symbolically in the Bible for a complete set in God's Order, such as, the ten plagues of Egypt and the Ten Commandments.

The Bible student can almost hear an undertone of disappointment in Jesus' voice when he asked the three questions. What an extreme example of ingratitude did the other nine show? Up to this point the ten were unified in their quest. We think to ourselves: "Surely if I had been one of the ten lepers and Jesus came and cleansed me of that dreadful disease, I would have been eternally grateful."

- **Strangers Receiving God's Gift**

As if it is not embarrassing enough that God's people (the Jews) were ungrateful and unresponsive to God's grace, the only one who returned to give thanks is a Samaritan. Samaritans were a group of racial half-breeds from the mixing of the Jewish races with the races brought into Israel when the Assyrian Empire moved in Gentile settlers. They were also considered religious heretics. They would not worship at Jerusalem but set up a temple on Mount Gerizem. For these two reasons the Jews and Samaritans hated each other. "*For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans*" (John 4:9).

The Greek term for "foreigner" is the term *allogenes*. "Josephus tells us that *allogenes* appeared on the fence signs guarding the inner court of the temple. Herodian era inscriptions on stones bearing warnings in Greek and Latin have been discovered in Jerusalem. 'No foreigner is to enter beyond the dividing wall into the balustrade and embankment around the sanctuary; whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his death which follows'" (Caldwell 920,921), The term implies "a religious alien."

The Gospel of Luke is particularly interested in the Samaritans. Only Luke who gives us the story of the Good Samaritan. John has Jesus conversing with the Samaritan woman at the well. In all three the Samaritans are the heroes of the story. Jews would never have expected a despised Samaritan to be more righteous than they.

Although the Jewish lepers may have made it to the priests and consequently back into society before the Samaritan, only the one who took the time to give thanks would know the further extent of God's grace.

- **Salvation is the Greatest of God's Gifts**

Christ said to the grateful Samaritan, "*Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well*" (19). Jesus commended him for his faith. It had made him whole. We would expect his faith to grow and become saving faith. "The phrase 'made you well' does not translate the word *katharizo* (cleansed)" from verse 14, or the word *iaomai* ("healed") from verse 15. It is *sozo*, the familiar New Testament term from being saved from sin (e.g., Matt. 1:21; 10:22; 19:25; 24:13; Luke 7:50; 8:12; 13:23; 19:10; John 3:17; 12:47; Acts 2:21,47,4:12; 16:30-31; Rom. 5:9-10; 10:9; 13; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15; Eph. 2:8; 1 Tim. 1:15; 2 Tim. 1:9; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 7:25; James 1:21) (MacArthur). Thus, Jesus emphasized the fact that the blessing came through faith, encouraging the man to seek higher blessings by the same means.

By taking the time to come to Jesus first, he obtained a greater blessing than just a healing. Yet Jesus has come to us and cleansed us of the leprosy of soul. A spiritual malady which always has eternal damnation as its prognosis unless we are cured through the blood of the Great Physician. Are we really thankful to Him for this cleansing like the Samaritan or does our ingratitude emulate that of the nine Jews? He asked for mercy from leprosy, only the Samaritan received mercy also for his soul. Ten men may have been healed that day, but only one man was saved.

Questions:

1. What do the ten lepers ask of Jesus?

2. Matching: Leprosy

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----|--|
| _____ hair | a. | amount of people immune |
| _____ fingers and toes | b. | appears on bald head or forehead |
| _____ Mycobacterium leprae | c. | bleached white |
| _____ over ninety percent | d. | fall off |
| _____ reddish-white sore | e. | first bacterium identified as the cause of a human disease |
| _____ priest | f. | leper must call out to warn others |
| _____ unclean | g. | must examine suspect sores |
| _____ Lion's disease | h. | so-called due to the disfigurement of the face |

2. What did Jesus tell them to do?

4. At what point were they healed?

5. At what point was Naaman healed?

6. How had the Lord healed a leper in Luke 5:12-13?

7. Did the Samaritan leper disobey Jesus' command to go to the priest? Explain.

8. How did the Samaritan recognize Jesus as deity?

9. What are the answers to the three rhetorical questions asked by Jesus?

10. Why did the Jews hate the Samaritans?

11. What interesting fact about the word "*foreigner*" used in this text does Josephus tell us?
12. Why is it so ironic that Samaritans are viewed as the "hero" in the events and parables of the Gospels?
13. What blessing was given to the Samaritan when Jesus said: "*Your faith has made you well*"?
14. True False Ten men had been healed that day, but only one man was saved.

Application & Discussion:

1. What are the causes and results of spiritual "leprosy" on the sinner? Who can cure it?
2. Make a list of things you should but rarely thank God for?

Saturday (9:30 am) July 28, 2018

Forgiveness: Healing of the Paralytic

Matthew 9:2-7; Mark 2:3-12; Luke 5:18-25

Matthew 9:2-7

2 Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." 3 And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" 4 But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? 6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." 7 And he arose and departed to his house.

crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." 6 And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic, 11 "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." 12 Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." 21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? 23 Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'? 24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." 25 Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. 26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today!"

Mark 2:3-12

3 Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. 4 And when they could not come near Him because of the

Luke 5:18-25

18 Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. 19 And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus. 20 When He saw their

Matthew says that Jesus went to *"His own city."* The city was Capernaum where Jesus ends His first preaching tour of Galilee. "This is the place where Jesus had healed the mother-in-law of Peter (Mark 1:30-31). Modern archaeologists believe they have found the actual house of Peter at the ancient site of Cappernaum...one-story building surrounded by a large, walled courtyard. Peter's (apparent) house in Capernaum was approximately twenty-eight feet long and would have been fifteen to eighteen feet deep" (2004/05, 343). Jesus may have been raised in Nazareth and born in Bethlehem and killed in Jerusalem but Capernaum was His base of operations in Galilee and during His earthly ministry. The last time He visited, all manner of sick were brought to Him for healing (Mark 1:33-34).

■ **Concerned Supporters**

At the time of this visit to Capernaum a paralytic is brought before Jesus to be healed. His four friends were deeply concerned. However, due to the crowd the four friends carrying him cannot bring him through the door. So they must find another way to get their friend to Jesus. Would it not be great if those who want to help and support us were concerned enough to find a way to get us to Jesus even if there were obstacles in the way. Will we bring others to Jesus due to our concern for their souls even when faced with hindrances?

The friends were not just concerned, they were determined and resourceful. They could have said, "Oh, well tomorrow is another day. Perhaps, we will get to Jesus earlier and find help for our friend." Neither were they the type who said, "we will pray for you" and leave it at that. Instead, they put their back and brains into it. They do not simply return him to the city gate, where he would have begged for his daily sustenance.

They went up on the housetop and were going to lower the paralytic down through the roof. William Barclay describes the average home of the time: "The Palestinian house was flat-roofed. The roof had only the slightest tilt, sufficient to make the rain water run off. It was composed of beams laid from wall to wall and quite a short distance apart. The space between the beams was filled with close packed twigs, compacted together with mortar and then marled over. It was the easiest thing in the world to take out the packing between two beams. In fact coffins were very often taken in and out of a house via the roof."

While they were up on the roof digging a hole. Jesus was down below teaching the crowd. Among the audience were the scribes and Pharisees who had front row seating. First, they heard the sound of the men moving around up on the roof. Then came the sound of scraping and digging as pieces of the roof and ceiling started to fall on the curious spectators below. The annoyed religious leaders were shaking the debris off their robes. As the bed descends from above the crowd scatters to safety. Perhaps Peter's mother-in-law was standing there looking up yelling at them, "Okay, now who is going to pay of the repairs to my roof."

Jesus noticed their faith. They had an active faith which did not stop until they achieved the goal of reaching Jesus. Christ was the only answer to the paralytic's problem. They had a fellowship of faith allowing them to work together to get him to Jesus.

What if all personal evangelists had this kind of faith, determination, and love as demonstrated by these four who were supporting a crippled man who could not support himself. Perhaps more like them are needed to bring those paralyzed by sin to Jesus. Willing to find a way to get them to Him instead of finding a plethora of excuses. Those who will love the lost enough to tear through the roof if necessary. After all "God so loved the world that he made the ultimate sacrifice for us (John 3:16). He dug, so to speak, though the roof of the world and lowered his Son down so Jesus could die for our sins" (Hughes 175).

These men labored to bring the man to Jesus without regard to reward. Other than Jesus' taking note of their faith, they are not praised. Their actions alone speak volumes about their compassion and conviction. Perhaps, they were the ones who were going to pay for and repair the roof.

■ **Crippled Sinner**

The man was suffering from a form of palsy resulting in a gradual paralysis. Palsy is the Greek

word *paralytidōs* from which the English word “paralytic” is derived. Palsy is an abbreviation of the word “paralysis.”

Jesus tells him, “*Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you*” (Matt. 9:2b). Perhaps, the man felt a burden of guilt or embarrassment. Crippled bodies sin. After all sin begins not in the hands and legs but in the heart.

Does the fact Jesus forgives the man and then heals him prove that his sickness is linked in some way with his personal sin? It is true that some have brought upon themselves illnesses and injuries do to their sinful lifestyle. Some of the Jews of the day would have claimed the man suffered physically because of his own sinfulness (John 9:2). Just as Job’s friends attributed his suffering to his sin. The Babylonian Talmud claimed, “the sick man recovers not from his sickness until (God) has forgiven all his sins” (Nedarim 41a). Jesus did not attribute the paralysis to evil in his life. Men suffering in general because of human sinfulness is generally in the world.

Jesus is not demonstrating a promise of physical healing for all those who receive forgiveness. The Health/Wealth gospel claims if one is a faithful follower of Jesus they were be prospered in material wealth and physical health. The New Testament makes no such promise.

Notice when Jesus heals the man He commands him to do three things: 1) arise; 2) take up bed; 3) and go into thine house. He obeys. And while obeying he glorifies God for the gifts of both walking home and walking in fellowship with God. Certainly this is the only way to travel home.

■ **Charitable Savior**

Although the most noticeable need of the crippled man being lowered through the roof was his palsy, Jesus focuses on that which was not so visible: the sinful condition of the man’s soul. At first Jesus remarks might seem cruel. Here four men bring a man in obvious physical need and Jesus decides to deal with the greater, deeper need first. The greatest problem of facing every man and woman is their sin and the greatest need is salvation through Divine forgiveness. Jesus did not come to heal the sick. “*Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance*” (Mark 2:17).

In truth all of Jesus miracles in one way or another point to the spiritual needs of the man. Healing the body demonstrates Jesus power and man’s need for the healing of the soul. Jesus proved He was the only one who could do both. Jesus said, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*” (John 14:6). Peter proclaimed to the Jewish council, “*nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12).

■ **Critical Scribes**

The critics of Jesus were composed of scribes and pharisees. The scribes were men who copied the Scriptures and preserved them. Their job resulted in a great knowledge of the Scriptures. This enabled them to teach the people. The pharisees were a group of men numbering about six thousand at this time in Palestine according to Josephus. Their name comes from the Hebrew word *perushim*. They are the “separated ones.” They would strive to be holy and separated from the Greco-Roman culture and true to the Law of Moses. They have gathered to watch Jesus who is a growing threat to their leadership and control and influence over the Jewish people.

The scribes and pharisees became more and more critical of Jesus. They accused Him have having fellowship with publicans and sinners, violating the traditions, violating the Sabbath Day, casting out demons by the power of the devil, being demon-possessed, a wine-bibber and a drunkard, and here they are about to accuse Him of blasphemy.

Although there was standing room only, they were sitting. They were ready to criticize Jesus the moment that found anything they could disagree with about His teachings. They are the self-appointed investigative committee predisposed to object in their hearts to anything they found offensive.

Nonetheless their accusation of blasphemy would be accurate and justified, if they assume that Jesus was a mere man and not God incarnate. After all, men can forgive offense against themselves by another, but only God can forgive sins men.

God is *"forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty..."* (Ex. 34:7). *"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins"* (Is. 43:25).

The Jews defined three levels of blasphemy. 1) One blasphemed God by speaking evil of His law as Stephen and Paul (Acts 21;27,28). 2) To slander, speak evil of, or curse God Himself is to blaspheme Him (Lev. 24:10-16; E. 20:7). 3) One can blaspheme by usurping the role of God and act as if one were God. This is Jesus' blasphemy in the eyes of the scribes and pharisees.

If guilty of blasphemy Jesus could be stoned according to the Law of Moses. Blasphemy was a capital crime punishable by stoning (Lev. 24:10-23). If Jesus is a blasphemer, he could not be just a good man but a fake and liar. He could not be a true prophet. He could not be the sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Today, there are preachers and denominational priests who claim the authority to forgive sins against God by succession through the apostles. The authority to pronounce absolution has never been given to men. To do so is a true case of blasphemy. If these men can forgive sin then they need to prove it by healing the sick.

■ **Cognizant Seer**

A seer is one who has supernatural insight. In Jesus' case He was cognizant or aware of the thoughts of the scribes and pharisees. Only God can read the thoughts of man.

Jesus *"had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man"* (John 2:25)

"...the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts..." (1 Chron. 28:9)

"I am he who searches the minds and hearts" (Rev. 2:23)

"Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:27)

By knowing the unspoken thoughts of the enemies of truth Jesus was able to speak directly to their criticisms before they were verbalized. This not only proves His deity, since only God is omniscient, but allows Him to deal with the evil thoughts.

■ **Called "Son of Man"**

Jesus describes himself as the *"Son of man"* in this healing. He identifies himself as a man and the term connects himself to those men who were prophets. The phrase was used to refer to Ezekiel over eighty times. The phrase is used by Daniel and applied to the coming Messiah (Dan. 7:13, 18). It is used over eighty times in the Gospels as a messianic title to connect the humanity of Jesus with His divine mission for God. It compliments His other title *"Son of God"* (Matt. 27:43; Luke 22:70; John 5:25; 9:35; 10:36; 11:4) which speaks to His deity.

■ **Confirming Signs**

Knowing their thoughts Jesus is able to provide proof that He is God who can forgive sin. He asked them which would be easier to say *"your sins are forgiven"* or *"raise up and walk."* The answer is quite obvious. Forgiving of sins is not physically observable. Nor can one weigh a sinful soul and compare it with the weight of a soul that has been forgiven. Of course, it is easy to just say either. But if the physical manifestation of a supernatural event is verified then the spiritual event is proven. "If someone couples the forgiveness of sins, which is invisible and unseen, to physical healing, which is both visible and verifiable, and then actually performs the healing, the claim is substantiated" (Boice 148). Therefore both are impossible for a mere man to do, even if it is easy for a mere man to say.

Jesus' miracle of healing is undeniable proof. The man was completely and instantaneously healed. There was no need for weeks of physical therapy or the man needing to regain strength enough to carry the bed or learn to walk. Although the proof is solid, all men still have the right to reject the proof. Of Jesus' detractors it is said, *"but although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe"*

in Him" (John 12:37).

Jesus power to do miracles proves His authority to heal the soul. When He brings light to the eyes of the blind, He shows His power to remove the darkness blinding the soul. When He cleansed the lepers of their physical spots, He proves His power to remove the sin stains from the soul.

This is only one of three recorded occasions where Jesus forgave sins (Luke 7:48; 23:43). Jesus' authority to forgive sin proves His deity. Supernatural claims demand supernatural evidence. To claim to be Superman requires a man of super strength and abilities to support the claim. Jesus forgave and Jesus healed, therefore Jesus is God. He can do it on earth by the same authority by which forgiveness takes place in Heaven.

■ **Captivated Spectators**

Bengel wrote, "The bed had borne the man, now the man was bearing the bed; and the crowd once blocking up his path when he was carried to the house, now makes a way for him to walk out with a cleansed soul and a thoroughly healed body." The Gospel of Luke informs us of the crowds response to these healing: "*And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, 'We have seen strange things today!'*" (Luke 5:26). There was a three-fold response. First, they were "amazed." This term is from the Greek *ekstasis* from which the English terms "ecstasy" and "ecstatic" are derived. They were in a state of ecstasy over what they had witnessed. Jesus forgave a man, He challenged the scribes and pharisees by reading their minds, and healed the paralytic. Second, they glorified God. Third, they were "*filled with fear.*" The term fear is from the Greek *phobos* from which the English "phobia" comes. They were fearful because: "*We never saw anything like this!*" (Mark 2:12).

The advertising slogan for the Louisiana tourist industry is, "Come as you are. Leave different!" The paralytic arrived through the roof as a sinful cripple and left leaping for joy carrying his bed as a forgiven man.

Which would he appreciate more? The body which was healed or the soul whose sins have been forgiven? One day his body would grow old and wither. Again, he may not be able to walk without assistance as when he was a cripple. And finally he would die. But he would not have to die crippled by sin. He would be free from sin throughout all eternity. In addition one day he would have a resurrected body free from all pain and decay.

Regardless of your physical state all sinners can obey the gospel and receive the promise of Jesus: "*Your sins are forgiven.*"

Questions:

1. Where was Jesus' "own city"?
2. What did the four supporters of the paralytic have to do in order to get him before Jesus? What does this demonstrate about them?
3. What did Jesus notice about the four friends and the paralytic? Why?
4. What is palsy?
5. What did Jesus tell the paralytic? Why?
6. Does the fact Jesus forgives the man and then heals him prove that his sickness is linked in some way with his personal sin?

7. Does this story teach that physical healing is a promised result which comes with being forgiven? Explain.
8. What three things does Jesus command the paralytic to do?
9. What is mankind's greatest problem and deepest need?
10. Who were the scribes?
11. Who were the pharisees?
12. List several things the scribes and pharisees had accused Jesus of being or doing?
13. Why did they accuse Jesus of blasphemy?
14. What were the consequences of blasphemy under the Law of Moses?
15. What does Jesus' ability to know the thoughts of a man's heart say about Him?
16. What does the phrase "*Son of Man*" identify about Jesus?
17. Which was harder to say "*your sins are forgiven*" or "*raise up and walk*"? Explain.
18. What proof did Jesus offer to show He had the power to forgive sins?
19. Explain how forgiving sins on earth proves Jesus is God come down from Heaven.
20. According to the Gospel of Luke what was the threefold response of the spectators?

Application & Discussion:

1. What obstacles should be there when we strive to bring people to Jesus to heal their soul of sin and how can we overcome these hindrances?
2. What should be our response every time God forgives us?

Raising of Lazarus from the Dead

John 11:38-46

38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" 41 Then they took away the stone [d]from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." 45 Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.

The Houston Chronicle told of a woman who favors liberal abortion laws and backs her stand on her fear of death. "I feel that it is the greatest tragedy that will ever be endured that I should die. I wish not to have been born so that I might escape dying. I wish my parents had been able to prevent my birth, as was their desire at the time., to save me from the terror of eternal death. I consider it unforgivably immoral for human beings to bring children into the world to die. If the human race ended, at least death would be abolished. ...I love children too much to bring them into the world to die. This is a valid moral position, and the state must grant me the freedom to exercise this option if need should ever arise."

The fear of death is very common to all men of all ages. This miracle represents the power of Christ in overcoming death. Since His resurrection from the dead He has taken away the fear of death. *"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage"* (Hebrews 2:14-15). With Christ's resurrection from death came the death of death.

More information is given concerning the miracle of Lazarus' resurrection and any other miracle in the Gospels. The story is centered around the town of Bethany called Azaiyeh today. Its name is derived the Lazarus' name. It was home to Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha. Jesus loved these three siblings and had made other visits in their home (Matt. 21:17; Mark 11:11, 19; Luke 10:41,42). His love for them is the kind of love a mother shows affectionately to her children and to her husband. This is the same *"Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair"* (11:2). This event is recorded in Luke 7:36ff.

When their brother became very ill, Mary and Martha sent a messenger to Jesus. The message was brief: *"Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick"* (11:3). He did not request Jesus come, they only needed to tell Him the situation knowing He cared enough to help. They must have thought He could come and heal Lazarus.

Instead of getting up that very moment and leaving for Bethany, Jesus says, *"This sickness is not unto death"* (11:4). He did not mean to imply that he would not die but that his death would serve another purpose: That is bring glory to God and the Son of God when Jesus raised his friend from the dead.

Jesus stayed two days after He learned of Lazarus' illness. He was at Bethabara some twenty miles from Bethany (10:40). Suddenly He tells the twelve to get ready to go to Bethany (11:7). His

disciples remind him that the last time He entered Judea about four months prior to this event the Jews tried to stone Him (10:31). This did not make any sense to them. So Jesus explains it to them in an analogy. *“Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him”* (11:9-10). Jesus is defending His choices based on the idea of working safely in the daylight hours which are twelve in all. As a man travels about in the day, he does not need to worry about stumbling and getting hurt. The light of the sun will expose all hazards. However, if a man starts to work or go on a journey at night, he will trip over some unseen danger and get hurt. At night man has no light. Jesus knows He still has the light from above keeping Him safe. He is not worried about traveling to Judea.

Next, He informs the disciples that Lazarus sleeps and He will going to wake him up. They assumed that if he is asleep the rest will help restore his health and Jesus best not interrupt this. So Jesus plainly tells them *“Lazarus is dead”* (11:14). In fact, Lazarus would have died the very day the messenger arrived from Bethany in order for him to have been in the grave for four days by the time Jesus arrived.

Jesus said He was glad he was not their at Bethany. This same a little cold-hearted on the part of Jesus who had healed so many out of love and compassion. He is glad not that Lazarus is dead but that he would have felt constrained to heal his sickness had he been there. His delay was to create greater faith in the disciples. But in spite of the fact His friend is dead they needed to go to him

Thomas may have been contemplating the dangers of going into Judea, so he agrees to go with Jesus on this suicide mission. He speaks for all twelve when he says, *“Let us also go, that we may die with Him”* (11:15).

Finally arriving in Bethany it is discovered Lazarus' body had been in the grave for four days. This is not going to be a problem for Jesus. After all, God would raise Him up on the third day. He had risen Jairus' daughter after her death. The son of the widow of Nain was raised on the way to the grave. The authenticity of this sign would be in the fact that Lazarus was dead and did not swoon. A superstition of the Jews was that the soul hovered over the body for three days and then departed. Jesus would have to call Lazarus' soul back into the reanimated body.

Bethany was only one and seven-eighths miles or *“about two miles away”* (11:18) from Jerusalem. This permitted many of the Jews to be there to comfort the two sisters.

The first sister to come to Jesus was Martha. She said to Jesus, *“Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You”* (11:21,22). Mary would claim the same. Perhaps they had been talking to each other about that before Jesus came.

Both sisters would demonstrate a firm faith that Jesus could have saved their brother, but did they consider the possibility He could raise him from the dead? Jesus promises Lazarus would rise again. Martha agreed but was only thinking of the future resurrection in the last day not a resurrection of her brother happening today.

Next Jesus proclaims one of seven of His “I am” proclamations found in the Gospel of John. *“I am the resurrection, and the life”* (11:25). This miracle illustrated His claim to be the resurrection and the life. Jesus' raising of Lazarus was a preview of the divine power He will display when He raises all the dead on the last day. Furthermore, He does not just raise the dead He is the resurrection. The Lord repeatedly told His disciples that He would rise from the dead (Matt. 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19; Luke 24:6-7). His resurrection is the greatest proof He is the Son of God. Paul said Jesus was *“declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead”* (Romans 1:4).

Jesus asked Martha if she believed His promise of life after death. She did. In fact the doctrine of the resurrection was held by most Jews. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. That is why they were *sad you see*. Martha did not just believe Jesus to be the Resurrection and the Life, she believe Him to be *“the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world”* (11:27). The tense of the

verb “believe” indicates here faith was made certain in the past and will continue in the future.

After this conversation with Jesus outside of town, Martha went and fetched her sister Mary who had been sitting in the house with the Jews. The Jews thinking she was running off to the grave to weep got up and followed her. Finding Jesus Mary fell at His feet. All three times Mary appears in the Gospels she is at the feet of Jesus (Luke 10:39; John 11:32; 12:3).

After witnessing the tears of Mary and the Jews, Jesus was deeply grieved Himself. The term “groaned” (11:33) means to “be moved with indignation” or the “snorting with fury” with the flaring of the nostrils. Jesus was mad. Perhaps, at having caused such grief for His friends or at sin and death which has caused so much pain and tears. All will die (Heb. 9:27). Everyone is terminal. One out of every one will die.

When Jesus went to see the tomb, He wept (11:35). This is not the wailing of the mourners but the tears of deep regret. It was not because He did not do anything to prevent this or because He could not do anything about it. Jesus shed tears because He cares. Pagans gods did not feel for humanity. The true God of Heaven does care. Even the Jews said, “*See how He loved him!*” (11:36). He will shed His blood one day so that others will not shed tears in vain.

Witnessing this event some naturally wondered if He could not have kept Lazarus from dying. After all, they recalled how He gave sight to a blind man (9:1-13). Indeed He could have healed Lazarus from a distance, but He needed him to be dead for four days to raise him for God’s glory and their faith. They did not expect a resurrection at this point.

Groaning again He comes to the tomb. Like His tomb will be, so Lazarus’ tomb has a stone laid against it. This prevented wild animals or grave robbers from disturbing the remains. He calls for the stone to be removed. The spectators will be participants in this miracle. Jesus will also have them loosen Lazarus’ grave clothes. They will not be able to reject the very miracle that they witnessed and took part in.

Not knowing that Jesus planned to raise Lazarus from the dead, Martha objects to the removal of the stone. Perhaps she thought Jesus wanted to see the body and mourn over it. Her point was that after four days the body would already be creating a stench due to decay. The Jews did not embalm but wrapped the body in spices. But after four days the stench would likely overpower and aroma left in the spices. This would not present a problem to Jesus who could reverse the damage done by the corruption of death.

At this point Jesus reminds Martha of the previous conversation and His promise. “*Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?*” (11:40). Lazarus’ body was not the focal point at the moment, Martha’s faith in Jesus. Jesus is not saying her brother’s resurrection depended upon her faith. Her believing is seeing the glory of what was about to take place. This is just the opposite of the old saying, “seeing is believing.” Leon Morris wrote, “the crowd would see the miracle, but only believers would perceive its real significance, the glory.”

With the tomb open Jesus lifts His eyes toward Heaven and utters a prayer. “*Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me*” (11:41-42). His prayer was not just for God but for all those in the crowd. He wanted them to know that what was about to take place came from God in Heaven. Thus it would show that Jesus was sent by God.

The resurrection of Jesus’ friend did not come with a lot of fanfare and hype. He merely cried out “*Lazarus, come forth!*” Even bound in graveclothes he comes out. The crowd employed to help the man they had formerly mourned. As was Lazarus bound in spices and graveclothes and a napkin over his face so this would soon be done to Jesus.

The resurrection of Lazarus had its desired effect. Many believed in Jesus. At least eight times in this chapter a form of the word for “believe” is used.

Although Jesus gave life to Lazarus the rulers of the Jews wanted to take His life (11:46ff). They could not reject the great miracle and sign. They were only concerned with the political consequences of the acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah and King. They felt it was better for one man, Jesus, to die

so that they would be spared the wrath of Rome. However, one man died and resurrected so all men could have the hope of eternal life. But in 70 AD the Romans did come and pour out the very wrath of God upon these murderers.

What did Lazarus say after being dead four days? What information could he give about life beyond death? Nothing is ever known of Lazarus' experience. He would one day die again and await the resurrection. But he still has a friend that can bring him back to life. You, too, have a friend that will bring you back to life one day. When dead in sin Jesus calls us to live through the Gospel.

Questions:

1. True False The resurrection of Lazarus is the most detailed and lengthiest miracle performed by Jesus.
2. What other times did Jesus visit the home of Mary and Martha?
3. True False Jesus did not think Lazarus was going to die.
4. What had the Jews tried to do to Jesus four months earlier?
5. What is the meaning of Jesus' analogy to man traveling by day in 11:9-10?
6. What did Jesus really mean when He said Lazarus sleeps and He goes to wake him?
7. True False Lazarus died the same day the messengers arrive to tell Jesus he was sick.
8. Why was Jesus glad He had not been at Bethany?
9. True False Martha, not Mary, believed Lazarus would have been saved if Jesus had only been there.
10. What did Martha think when Jesus said Lazarus would raise from the dead?
11. How many "I am" statements are made by Jesus in the Gospel of John? Which one applies to the resurrection of Lazarus?

12. True False All three times Mary appears in the Gospels she is at the feet of Jesus.
13. Why did Jesus groan and why did He weep?
14. List ways Lazarus' burial is similar to Jesus'.
15. How did spectators participate in the resurrection of Lazarus? Why?
16. How did many of the Jews react to the resurrection of Lazarus?
17. How did the rulers react?

Application & Discussion:

1. If a friend has the fear of death troubling him what could you say and do to help them?

Chart: Miracles of Jesus

	Miracle	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1	Turning Water into Grape Juice at Cana				2:1-11
2	Healing the Official's Son at Capernaum				4:43-54
3	Casting out a Demon from a man at Capernaum		1:21-27	4:31-36	
4	Healing Peter's sick mother-in-law	8:14-15	1:29-31	4:38-39	
5	Healing many sick at evening	8:16-17	1:32-34	4:40-41	
6	Catch of Fish on Lake of Gennesaret			5:1-11	
7	Cleansing of a Leprous Man	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-14	
8	Healing Centurion's paralyzed servant in Capernaum	8:5-13		7:1-10	
9	Healing a paralytic let down from roof	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
10	Healing a man's withered hand on the Sabbath	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	
11	Raising the widow's son at Nain			7:11-17	
12	Calming of the storm at sea	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
13	Casting demons into a herd of pigs	8:28-33	5:1-20	8:26-29	
14	Healing a woman in the crowd with an issue of blood	9:20-22	5:25-34	8:42-48	
15	Raising Jairus' daughter from the dead	9:18,23-26	5:21-24; 35-34	8:40-42,49-56	
16	Healing two blind men	9:27-31			
17	Healing a mute man	9:32-34			
18	Healing an invalid at Bethesda				5:1-15
19	Feeding the 5000	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-5
20	Walking on water	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:16-21
21	Healing many sick in Gennesaret by touching His garment	14:34-36	6:53-56		
22	Healing a Gentile woman's demon-possessed daughter	15:21-28	7:24-30		
23	Healing a deaf and dumb man		7:31-37		
24	Feeding the 4000	15:32-39	8:1-13		

25	Healing a blind man at Bethsaida		8:22-26		
26	Healing a man born blind by spitting in his eyes				9:1-12
27	Healing a boy with an unclean spirit	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
28	Finding Temple tax in a fish's mouth	17:24-27			
29	Healing a blind, mute demoniac	12:22-23		11:14-23	
30	Healing a woman crippled for 18 years			13:10-17	
31	Healing a man with dropsy on the Sabbath Day			14:1-6	
32	Cleansing the lepers on the way to Jerusalem			17:11-19	
33	Raising dead Lazarus at Bethany				11:1-45
34	Giving sight to blind Bartimaeus in Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
35	Withering a fig tree on the road from Bethany	21:18-22	21:18-22	11:12-14	
36	Healing a servant's severed ear			22:50-51	
37	Catch of Fish at the Sea of Tiberias				21:4-11