

JESUS DID
MIRACLES

A STUDY OF THE MIRACLES IN MARK



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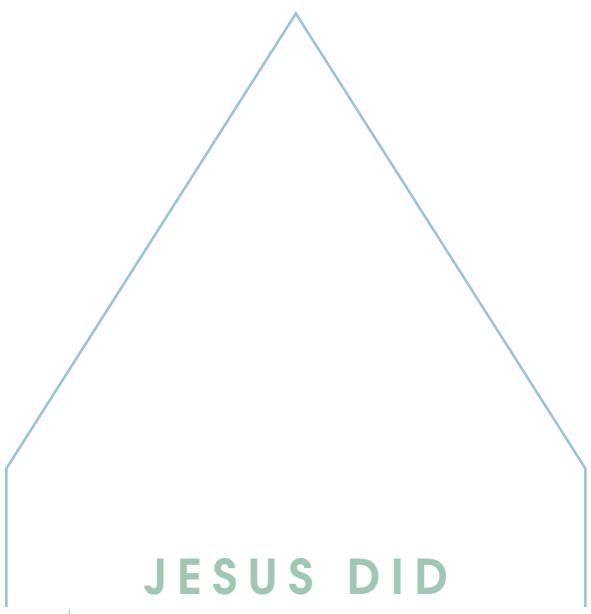
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JESUS DID

MIRACLES

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JESUS CAME
INTO GALILEE, PREACHING
THE GOSPEL OF GOD,

AND SAYING,
“THE TIME IS FULFILLED,
AND THE KINGDOM OF
GOD IS AT HAND;

REPENT AND BELIEVE IN
THE GOSPEL.”

MARK 1:14-15

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WELCOME

WHO IS JESUS?

The question of Jesus' identity has long been debated. During His earthly ministry, people speculated that He was John the Baptist, Elijah or another prophet back from the dead. At one point, Jesus questioned His followers asking, "who do the crowds say that I am?" and then pointedly asked, "who do you say that I am?" Understanding Jesus' true identity is essential for every person.

This study of Jesus' miracles in the book of Mark focuses on what He did to confirm His identity as the Messiah, the Son of God. Each miracle authenticated both His authority and His message that "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14)

This study will guide you to:

CONNECT in authentic community as you and your group share the joys and struggles of life and pray together for big things.

GROW in biblical truth by searching the scripture and actively applying this truth to your life.

ENGAGE in helping people find and follow Jesus by practicing simple disciple-making tools that tune your heart to those who are far from God.

PERSONAL STUDY + PRAYER

God's word, the Bible, is a unique and wonderful book. It is one of His greatest gifts to us. By reading it regularly, meditating on it, and studying it with others, we begin to hear God's voice and to know Him more deeply. As we put biblical truth into practice, cooperating with the Holy Spirit, our relationship with God grows. We become more like Jesus, transforming into mature sons and daughters of God.

"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does." **James 1:22-25**

Each lesson begins with personal study sections designed for you to walk through the selected passage verse by verse. The Survey provides the big picture and background information for the book of Mark. Lessons 1-8 focus on studying each miracle in detail. The Synthesis is a place to record an overall summary of what you learned in the study.

In this study, you will practice a basic Bible study method that answers three questions:

Look it Over (Observation): What do I see?

Think it Through (Interpretation): What does it mean?

Make it Real (Application): How does it work?

An overview of this method is summarized in the Bible Study Tools section in the Appendix beginning on page 105.

Prayer Reminders: We need God Himself to illuminate His word to us. As we prayerfully approach the study of His word, God shows up! Pray before, during, and at the end of each lesson for eyes to see and ears to hear the things the Holy Spirit has planned to reveal to you.

GROUP DISCUSSION

At the end of every lesson, there is a Group Discussion Guide that provides a balanced plan for the time you spend together as a group - connecting, growing and engaging. Use this guide to plan your group time.

APPENDIX

Leader Helps: This section contains a few helpful ideas for anyone leading others through this study. See pages 106-107.

Bible Study Tools: Each lesson contains descriptions of tools that will help you to observe, interpret, and apply scripture. These are summarized on pages 108-112.

Additional Study Resources: This section contains a list of recommended books and online tools on page 113.

New Testament Chronology: A list of the approximate dates of major events in the New Testament can be found on pages 114-115.

Engage Tools: We are called to partner with God in helping people find and follow Jesus. Some of the basic tools for becoming a disciple maker will be introduced in the lessons and can be found on pages 116-124.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

The Gospel is the good news of how we can be reconciled to God through Jesus.

GOD'S DESIGN

Out of God's great love, He created a world that was good. He made people to enjoy a deeply connected relationship with Him and to represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries to protect us and to allow us to fully enjoy our relationships with Him and with other people (Genesis 2:15-17).

BROKENNESS

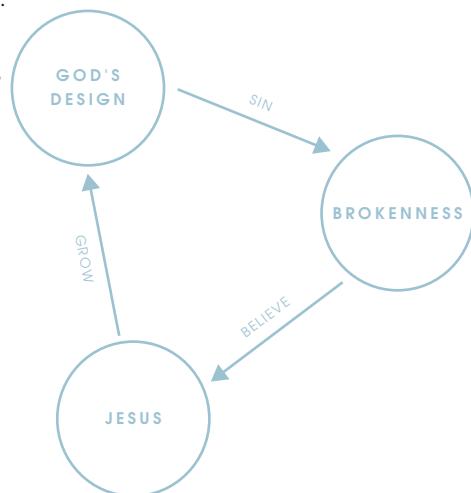
Yet, when we look around our world, brokenness and evil are evident everywhere - war, famine, disease, corruption. If we are honest, we also see brokenness and evil inside ourselves - deceit, hatred, greed, lust.

This is because we have rejected God's design and chosen to follow our own way.

Our rejection of God and His ways is what the Bible calls sin. (Romans 3:23)

Our sin results in separation from God which the Bible calls death. (Romans 6:23a)

Unless our sin is forgiven, we will remain separated from God forever.



JESUS

God does not want to leave us in our sin and brokenness!

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and to freely give us eternal life - a life connected to God both now and forever. (Romans 6:23b; John 17:3)

God's only Son Jesus died in our place. He took upon Himself the penalty that we deserve because of our sin. Then, Jesus rose from the dead, and forever defeated the power of sin and death. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

BELIEVE

We respond to Jesus by believing in Him for the forgiveness of our sin.

To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God's approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and rescue. Instead, you accept God's free gift of eternal life. Belief or faith is simply being convinced or persuaded that something or someone is trustworthy. (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Everyone who believes in Jesus is forgiven of their sin and receives eternal life. We can now know God personally and experience the life we were designed to live. (John 3:16-17)

Which circle or arrow best represents your life right now?

Have you put your trust (believed) in Jesus alone to be reconciled to God?

MEMORIZE AND MEDITATE

Ultimately, the story of Scripture is the story of Jesus. Begin to memorize and meditate on these important verses describing Jesus, our Savior and King.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of mankind. **John 1:1-4**

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **John 1:14**

No one has seen God at any time; God the only Son, who is in the arms of the Father, He has explained Him. **John 1:18**

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation: for by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. **Colossians 1:15-17**

For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over every ruler and authority. **Colossians 2:9-10**

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. **Hebrews 1:3**

Looking only at Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **Hebrews 12:2**



OVERVIEW OF BIBLICAL MIRACLES

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

In today's world, many people think that the material universe is all there is and nothing beyond it can be perceived or experienced. "Naturalists" describe the universe as the vast process of space and time that is going on of its own accord (self-organizing). Other modern people acknowledge the existence of the "supernatural" (phenomena that are beyond nature) but do not attribute these occurrences to the spiritual realm that is described in Scripture.

Transcendence and Immanence

The Bible does not distinguish between the modern concepts of "natural" and "supernatural" when it describes how God interacts with His created order. Biblical writers, like all ancient peoples, believed that God (or gods) was always active in the world in both seen and unseen ways. Prior to the time of the Enlightenment (~1700 AD), most people, including Christians, held a worldview of a transcendent cosmos (where God exists outside of, yet interacts within creation). Eventually the predominant worldview became secular which set aside transcendence in favor of an immanent universe (where nothing exists outside of what human reason can understand and experience).

Christianity asserts both that the transcendent God not only created and actively sustains the cosmos, but also became immanent in the God-man Jesus, who is the incarnate Second Person of the Trinity.

How does God interact with His creation?

The following are a few helpful excerpts that describe God's interaction with His creation from the BioLogos.org article, "Does Modern Science Make Miracles Impossible?"

God acts in more than one way in the natural world: God sustains the regular patterns of the physical world, but sometimes chooses to act outside of those patterns.

God's regular patterns are what scientists describe as natural laws or processes (like gravity or photosynthesis). God's actions outside those patterns are usually called miracles (like raising someone from the dead). [Christians] believe in the miracles of the Bible and that God can do miracles today. [We] also believe that God is just as involved in the regular patterns of the created order as in miracles.

Miracles happen against the backdrop of the regular day-to-day functioning of natural phenomena. The New Testament makes explicit that all of creation is actively sustained by God through Christ: "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by His powerful word" (Hebrews 1:3), and "He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:17). In other words, if God were to stop sustaining all things by His powerful word, the world would stop existing.

When describing nature, then, the Bible easily switches perspectives depending on whether it

is emphasizing the regular behavior of natural phenomena, or God's providential sustenance. The authors do not make a distinction between natural and supernatural events. These are modern categories.

What is a biblical miracle?

Natural laws are merely human descriptions of God's regular activity in nature. Since God is the creator and sustainer of all physical laws, He clearly has the freedom and ability to supersede those laws when He wishes. Miracles are simply cases where God chooses to work outside His usual patterns. In the Bible, miracles always point to something: they are not done simply for amazement or to demonstrate God's existence, but to testify to the Kingdom of God.

In the Bible, events variously described as miracles, signs, and wonders are performed by prophets and apostles, by Jesus, and in answer to the prayers of God's people. Biblical miracles do not occur merely for the amazement of onlookers, but serve God's kingdom purposes. They always occur within a theological context.

Throughout the biblical narrative, we see God using miracles to authenticate both His message and His messengers. In the Old Testament, Moses did miracles to demonstrate his authority as God's spokesman (Exodus 4:1–9). Similarly, the prophets were given words to speak from God, and in order to verify their authority God granted some of them the ability to perform miracles (1 Kings 17:17–24, 18:36–39, 2 Kings 1:10).

Why did Jesus of Nazareth perform miracles?

Was it simply because He was a compassionate person and wanted to help people? According to the Bible, the primary purpose of Jesus' miracles was to demonstrate the fact that He was the Messiah, the rescuing King promised by God to Israel through the Old Testament prophets. The miracles would also be a tangible demonstration of what the Kingdom of God is like, a reign of abundance, health and life as it was originally designed.

RESPONDING TO THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

How did God's people respond to the miracles of Jesus in His day?

It is evident that Jesus performed His miracles for the purpose of demonstrating to the Jews of His day that He was the Messiah. But "even though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him" (John 12:37).

This disbelief had been foretold over 700 years earlier when the Prophet Isaiah declared, "Lord, who has believed our message, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" (Isaiah 53:1; cf. John 12:38). The message to which Isaiah referred was the announcement that Jesus was the Messiah, the One who could establish the Messianic Kingdom. The revelation of the powerful arm of God came through the miracles of Jesus. Isaiah continued by foretelling that, instead of being desired by the Jews, Messiah would be despised and rejected (Isaiah 53:2–3). Isaiah also declared that, as a result of Israel's rejection of her Messiah, He would suffer and die as an offering for sin (Isaiah 53:4–12).

In other words, God would use the rejection of Jesus by the Jews as His means of providing “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Israel’s negative response to Jesus’ miracles brought tragedy to the nation as a whole and to individuals within the nation. Those individuals who rejected the witness of the miracles died in their sins. The nation as a whole was devastated a few years later by the Romans. Jesus foretold this tragedy when he said:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather you children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you would not have it! Behold, your house is left to you desolate, and I say to you, you shall not see Me again until the time comes when you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Luke 13:34-35).

How might people respond to the miracles of Jesus today?

Jesus’ miracles were performed to demonstrate His authority and messiahship, not only to the Jews of His day, but also to us who live today.

Ultimately, people have a choice to believe or to disbelieve the works and words of Jesus. For those who disbelieve or doubt the miraculous works of Jesus recorded in the New Testament, our hope is that their eyes would be opened to the truth of Jesus’ identity. For those who already believe, our hope is that we would grow deeper in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, winsomely sharing the true Jesus with people in our lives.

The Apostle John stated that he recorded Jesus’ miracles in order that “You may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (John 20:31). Let us allow the witness of the miracles recorded in God’s Word to steer us toward faith in Christ and that by “believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31).

The section above (Responding to Jesus’ Miracles) was adapted primarily from “The Purpose of Jesus’ Miracles”, Dr. Renald Showers, Professor, Philadelphia College of Bible; Israel My Glory. Vol. 33 No. 6; Dec-Jan 1975-1976; pgs. 17-21.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do the concepts of transcendence and immanence help us understand God and how He interacts with His creation?
 2. What are biblical miracles and what purpose do they serve? How do the accounts of miracles in the Bible relate to the “natural laws” described by science?
 3. What was the primary purpose of Jesus’ miracles?
 4. What is significant about Israel’s rejection of Jesus’ miracles?
 5. How do people respond to the miracles of Jesus today? How do you respond?

Bonus: Thomas Jefferson famously cut out all the references to miracles in his Bible. What else did he lose when he did that?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MARK

Of the four gospels, Mark's is the most action-packed. It is focused more on what Jesus did than what He said.

To prepare fully for this study, please...

- Pray that the Holy Spirit would give you insight into God's Word.
- Scan the entire book of Mark. NOTE: Scanning the book does not require careful reading. Simply take note of important stories, major transitions, key words, themes, etc. You are looking for the "big idea." We will fill in more details later.
- Read the following background information on Mark. Take note of key information.

AUTHORSHIP

This book was almost certainly written by John Mark of whom we read several times in the New Testament (e.g., Acts 12:12). Although the gospel itself nowhere says that it was written by Mark (the heading at the beginning is not part of the gospel but only its 'title page'), the early Christians had no doubts about it.

John Mark was not a famous figure like Paul or Peter, so there does not seem to be any good reason for his name being given as author unless it was true. He was a younger co-worker at different times with Paul, Barnabas (his relative; Colossians 4:10), and Peter.

This last link may be quite important. John Mark most likely lived in Jerusalem, where he would have known many of Jesus' followers (though he was too young at the time to have been a follower himself). If the church in Jerusalem met in his mother's house (see Acts 12:12), it is possible that the Last Supper was held there. However, even if the Last Supper was not held there, John Mark would have been a very valuable early witness to what Jesus said and did, especially during His last week.

DATE

Mark's gospel was written quite early, perhaps between AD 60 and 70, i.e., only about thirty years after the death of Christ. This would put the writing around the time of the deaths of Paul and Peter which we believe took place about AD 64, and just before the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70.

RECIPIENTS

Rome was a Gentile city, though naturally there were many Jews there as well who were drawn by trade and business. Judging from Paul's letter to the Roman Christians, the church there contained both Gentiles and Jews. Feelings probably ran high between them at times. A gospel produced in and for such a 'mixed' church would have to carefully explain Jewish words and customs, so that the non-Jewish readers could understand. That is exactly what Mark's gospel does, and in that sense it is a gospel for the non-Jew, the Gentile, or the outsider. This also explains why Mark does not quote nearly as much from the Old Testament as Matthew does. Mark's Gentile Christians would not have known the Old Testament as well as Jewish Christians, nor indeed would they have had the same interest in it.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

The structure of Mark's Gospel provides a key to the author's purpose. The first half of the book concerns the identity of Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God (Mark 1:1–8:30). The second half concerns the mission of Jesus focusing on the cross (Mark 8:31–16:8). A key word in the first half of the book is "authority." People are amazed that Jesus teaches with such authority (Mark 1:22). Whenever Jesus encounters demons, they recognize His identity and are terrified (Mark 1:24, 1:34, 3:11–12, 5:7). His authority over nature, disease and death is dramatically demonstrated in His miracles which are mostly recorded in the first half of the book.

The book of Mark reaches its center point in the confession of Peter, where in response to Jesus' question about who people say that he is, Peter declares, "You are the Christ" (Mark 8:27–29). Jesus' authoritative words and actions have convinced Peter that Jesus is indeed the Messiah, the long awaited Savior of Israel.

In a shocking twist, Jesus then begins to teach them that the role of Messiah is radically different from the conquering king they expect. He will suffer many things, be rejected by the spiritual leaders of Israel, be killed and after three days rise from the dead (Mark 8:31–32). Jesus' resurrection will become the greatest miracle of all and the very foundation of our Christian faith (I Corinthians 15).

THE GOSPEL'S ABRUPT ENDING

One of the puzzling features of Mark's gospel is the way that it ends so suddenly, without a full account of all the times that Jesus appeared to His disciples after the resurrection. The other gospels give a much fuller picture of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. The longer ending of Mark's gospel (16:9–20) is not in the earliest manuscripts, and was almost certainly not written by Mark himself, but added by the early Christians to 'round off' the book. Some say that Mark's original ending was lost. Others suggest that perhaps Mark was martyred before he could finish his book, but this is not likely. It is more likely that Mark meant his gospel to end in this way. It was not, as some have suggested, that he wanted to leave the question of the resurrection open, but that, in his day, evidence for the resurrection would be given by word of mouth by the living witnesses.

The women followers and apostles were first and foremost witnesses of the resurrection (Acts 10:41). The other gospels were probably written after the deaths of these witnesses and so had to contain a full account in writing of the resurrection appearances. This probably also explains why Mark does not have as full an account of the teaching of Jesus as the other gospels do. He expected it to be given by word of mouth, as it still is in many parts of the world today.

1

Healing the Leper

In the ancient world, leprosy was a term that covered a wider array of skin conditions than what we think of today. Leprosy was not only a contagious skin disease, it had major social and cultural effects as well. A person with one of these diseases was ostracized from society until he or she was declared cured (Leviticus 13:45-46).

This account of Jesus cleansing a leper by touching him with His hand is a compelling example of Jesus' compassion for those suffering and isolated on the outskirts of their community. We will also see how this sick man's faith resulted in exposing Jesus' true identity as the Messiah.



Mark 1:40-45

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is “What do I see?” This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of your study. Simply read the passage and write one or two observations for each verse. Your observations might identify people, places, and events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences. The first few observations have been done for you as an example.

Read Mark 1:1-39 to determine the setting and context of this miracle.

MARK 1:40-45

40 And a man with leprosy came to Jesus, imploring Him and kneeling down, and saying
The man is in great need

to Him, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.” 41 Moved with compassion, Jesus
Jesus understands the man's suffering

reached out with His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.”

42 And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. 43 And He sternly

warned him and immediately sent him away, 44 and He said to him, “See that you say

nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what

Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” 45 But he went out and began to proclaim

it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer

publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him

from everywhere.

OBSERVATION SKILL: LIST PRIMARY THEMES

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

1. List any themes or big ideas from this passage.
 2. List the events and responses to Jesus you observed in Mark 1:1-39.
 3. Circle words that describe emotions or feelings in verses 40-45.
 4. What do the man's words to Jesus in verse 40 tell us about his attitude or spiritual condition?

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. Read Leviticus 14:1-32. In addition to obeying the Law, what other reason could Jesus have had for sending this man straight to the priest? (Hint: Apart from the story of Miriam in Numbers 12, there is no record in the Old Testament of an Israelite leper being healed.)

2. Why do you think Jesus chose to heal this leper? Why didn't Jesus heal every leper or sick person? (For example, in 1:35-39, He moved to a new city to preach instead of healing everyone.)

3. What characteristics of Jesus does this miracle demonstrate?

4. In the book of Mark, Jesus repeatedly tells people not to give away His identity. Scholars refer to this as the “Messianic secret.” Why do you think Jesus instructs this man not to say anything to anybody?

IMAGINE THE SCENE

Take a few minutes and try to picture yourself at the scene of this miracle. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Who do you identify with the most or the least? Notice Jesus' demeanor and attitude. Pay attention to what He says and does.

Write down a few of your thoughts, feelings and insights:

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

Our Bible study is only complete once we apply what we've learned. Begin by answering a few reflection questions designed to demonstrate how each passage relates to our own lives. Next, step back and look at the passage as a whole and list potential principles. A principle is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. A principle is not specific to a particular person or time. Finally, decide on specific action steps that you will begin to take right away to apply the principle in your daily life and consider how the principle impacts the relationships in your life.

3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. What can we learn from the leper about approaching Jesus with our needs? What essential quality does the leper possess?

2. Who are the 'lepers' in today's society (people who are seen as less valuable or important than others)?

3. What are some concrete ways in which you can reflect the compassion of Christ this week?

4. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

5. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

MEMORIZE

Spend time meditating and memorizing a verse about Jesus on page 9.

ENGAGE TOOL

EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Jesus noticed and cared for the people around Him. He taught His disciples to do the same. As His followers, we are also called to love our neighbors, the people with whom we live, learn, work and play.

Turn to page 117 and prayerfully fill in your Every Neighbor Map.

Be ready to share it with your group next week.

For more insight, watch the Every Neighbor Map video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share something you are celebrating or something that disappointed you during the last week.
2. Ask 1-2 people to take 5 minutes and share how they found healing in Jesus and began to follow Him.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Spend a few minutes discussing your group's purpose. Of all the things we could be doing, why are we here? Why is this time important to be present for and to prioritize?

Pray for your time together.

Read the Introduction to this week's lesson on page 18.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

1. How do we observe scripture? What are we looking for and what questions are we asking?
2. Read Mark 1:40-45. Share some of your observations.
3. Why is it important to use the context to understand this miracle?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

1. Why is it important to personally apply biblical truth to your life?
2. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?
3. What kind of community do we hope to experience in our group?

ENGAGE TOOL - **Every Neighbor Map (p. 117)**

Share your maps with your group or fill them out together now.

Spend some time praying for these friends. Ask God for opportunities to deepen friendships and to practically bless them with His Love. Ask God to reveal Himself to them and to open their eyes to His grace.

GOALS:

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

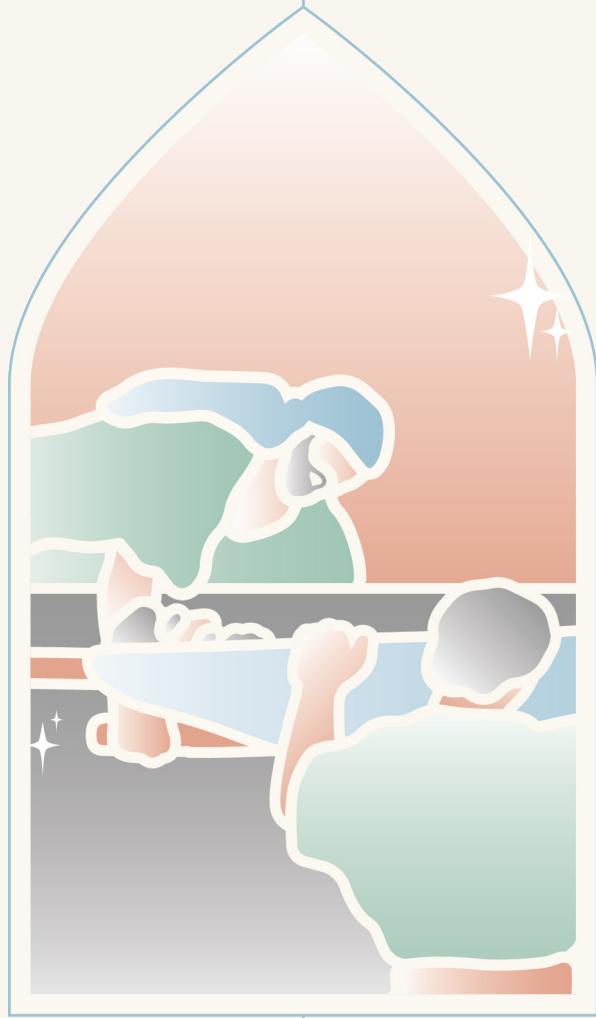
2

Healing the Paralytic

Will you do whatever it takes to be near Jesus?

Will you do whatever it takes to help a friend
be near Jesus?

In this account we will discover what a group of faith-filled friends is willing to do to bring their hurting friend to the feet of Jesus. They love him, not just in words or speech, but in action and truth (1 John 3:18). Their example points to a greater Friend, Jesus Himself, who was willing to go even further for His friends, even to the point of death on a cross, so that they may know God, experience His truly transformative power, and have eternal life (Philippians 2:8).



Mark 2:1-12

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Read the passage below and record your observations in the margin as you read.

MARK 2:1-12

1 When Jesus came back to Capernaum a few days later, it was heard that He was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer space, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them. 3 And some people came, bringing to Him a man who was paralyzed, carried by four men. 4 And when they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and after digging an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralyzed man was lying. 5 And Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 But some of the scribes were sitting there and thinking it over in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins except God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were thinking that way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you thinking about these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'? 10 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on

earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralyzed man, 11 “I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet, and go home.” 12 And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

OBSERVATION SKILL: INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS

This week, we will begin to write our own questions as well. Just record the questions that naturally come to mind as you try to understand and apply the passage. If you need help getting started, you can use these examples:

WHO IS...	WHAT IS THE...	WHY DID THE AUTHOR...	HOW...
The author talking about? accomplishing the action? benefiting from the action?	meaning of this word? significance of this phrase? implication of this statement? relationship between these phrases?	choose this word? include this phrase, statement, or command? not say _____?	was this action accomplished? will this situation occur?

1. List your interpretive questions.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

LOOK UP BACKGROUND INFORMATION

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is *The New Bible Dictionary* by Wood & Marshall. The IVP Bible Background Commentary by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

Background information can be found by visiting the online reference netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Notes” on the right side of the screen. Now, anytime you select one of the numbered annotations above particular words or verses, you can immediately see the relevant Biblical or historical context for that term or passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

Many have wondered how the friends of the paralytic burrowed through the roof (2:3-4). Below is a description of the roof in a first-century dwelling, which may shed some light on the subject.

“The roof was constructed by laying brushwood across rough sycamore beams and binding them together by using mud....A heavy roller was kept on the roof to compact the material after rain. Roofs were not watertight and therefore had two characteristics — leaks and a green colour.”

The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times

1. Why does Jesus’ initial statement to the man seem unusual (2:5)? What would you normally have expected Him to say?

2. The scribes were men who spent their time interpreting and transmitting the Law to others. Why do you think they were upset about Jesus’ words to the paralytic? (see Isaiah 43:25)

3. Which of the two statements that Jesus mentions in verse 9 do you think is easier to say? What is Jesus' point?

4. What is the connection between forgiving the man's sins and healing his physical body? Is Jesus implying that physical illness is always a direct result of sin? (see John 9:1-3) Why or why not?

5. What do we learn about the person and the nature of Christ from this account of healing?

IMAGINE THE SCENE

Take a few minutes and try to picture yourself at the scene of this miracle. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Who do you identify with the most or the least? Notice Jesus' demeanor and attitude. Pay attention to what He says and does.

Write down a few of your thoughts, feelings and insights:

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. Are there any areas of your life in which you are not currently exercising faith in Christ? Spend some time in confession and prayer over those issues.
2. Following the example of the paralytic's friend, how can you go out of your way to help someone who is experiencing need or suffering?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

MEMORIZE

Spend time meditating and memorizing a verse about Jesus on page 9.

ENGAGE TOOL

EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Continue to add names to your map on page 117. Pray for opportunities to love, serve, and engage with your friends this week.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share high or low from the week.
2. Ask 1-2 people to take 5 minutes and share how they found Jesus and began to follow Him.
3. Goals: how did you do on your application of truth last week?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to summarize your group's purpose.

Pray for your time together.

Read the Introduction to this week's lesson on page 28.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION (choose from these)

1. Read Mark 2:1-12. Share some of your observations.
2. What were some of the themes you saw in this section?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION

How does asking questions like who, what, when, where and how help us understand scripture?

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION (choose from these)

1. Are there some areas of life in which you struggle to exercise your faith in Jesus?
2. Following the example of the paralytic's friend, how can you go out of your way to help someone who is experiencing need or suffering?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Every Neighbor Map (p. 117)**

Share your maps with your group or fill them out together now. Spend some time praying for these friends. Ask God for opportunities to deepen friendships and to practically bless them with His Love. Ask God to reveal Himself to them and to open their eyes to His grace.

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

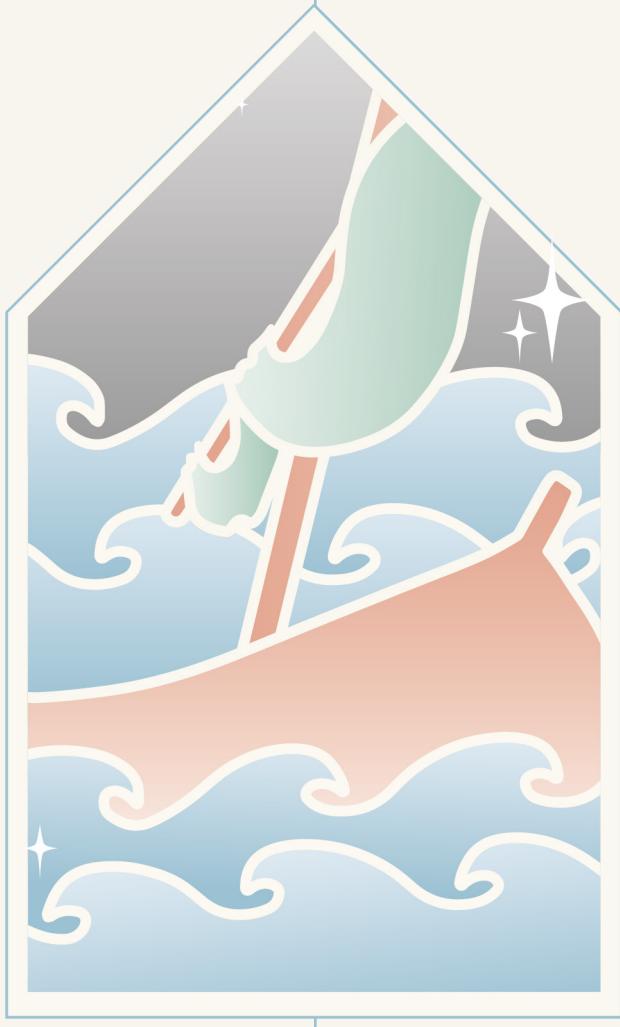
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

3

Calming the Waves

The miracles accounts show us that Jesus not only had the authority and power to heal people's physical bodies, He had authority and power over the natural world. This week we will discover Jesus as He commands the wind and waves on the Sea of Galilee. We will discuss how His power and nearness can be a great comfort to us, even when we, like the disciples, may feel surprised and terrified by it. Jesus' character has not changed. He is still with us, still in control, and still good; even when life sometimes feels like an all-encompassing storm.



Mark 4:35 - 5:1

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Read the passage below and record your observations in the margin as you read.

MARK 4:35-5:1

35 On that day, when evening came, He said to them, “Let’s go over to the other side.”

36 After dismissing the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He

was; and other boats were with Him. 37 And a fierce gale of wind developed, and the

waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling with water.

38 And yet Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and

said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” 39 And He got up and

rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Hush, be still.” And the wind died down and it

became perfectly calm. 40 And He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have

no faith?” 41 They became very much afraid and said to one another, “Who, then, is this,

that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

1 They came to the other side of the sea, into the region of the Gerasenes.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. List any themes or big ideas from this passage.

2. Highlight repeated words or phrases.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

The background article below refers to storms on the Sea of Galilee. Use it to help answer the question that follows...

“Storms often rose suddenly on the lake called the Sea of Galilee; these fishermen had usually stayed closer to Capernaum and are unprepared for a squall this far from shore. The only place one could sleep in a small fishing boat with water pouring in from a storm would be on the elevated stern, where one could use the wooden or leather-covered helmsman’s seat, or a pillow kept under that seat, as a cushion for one’s head.”

The IVP Bible Background Commentary

1. Why do you think the disciples were so afraid? What vital piece of information are they failing to take into account?

2. Why do you think Jesus fell asleep in the boat? What does the fact of His sleep reveal to us about His nature? His state of mind?

3. What was wrong with the cry of the disciples in 4:38? Does Jesus rebuke them for waking Him up or for something else?

4. What can we learn about Jesus' authority from the way the storm responds to His voice?

5. Why are the disciples so afraid in 4:41? How is this fear different from the fear they experienced at the beginning of the story?

6. Notice carefully Mark's statement in 5:1. Compare it with 4:35. What is Mark telling us about Jesus' character and ability?

IMAGINE THE SCENE

Take a few minutes and try to picture yourself at the scene of this miracle. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Who do you identify with the most or the least? Notice Jesus' demeanor and attitude. Pay attention to what He says and does.

Write down a few of your thoughts, feelings and insights:

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. Are there any “storms” in your life right now? Are you trusting in Jesus to bring you through them safely? Pray this week that the Spirit would enable you to trust in Him in those circumstances (whether you are currently facing difficulty or not).

2. What is one practical way you can remember Jesus’ power the next time your life feels out of control?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

MEMORIZE

Spend time meditating and memorizing a verse about Jesus on page 9.

ENGAGE TOOL

STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

Simply talking about Jesus as part of your everyday conversations is a great way to bring His light into the spiritual darkness all around us. Be sure your conversations include asking lots of questions and listening! Most people are open to talking about spiritual things IF they feel heard and respected.

Turn to page 118 and to learn how to turn conversations toward spiritual things. Also, watch the video on Starting a Spiritual Conversation at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. How was your week? Did you see God working in any specific ways?
2. Gratitude: read a Psalm, make a list of what your group is thankful for, offer short praise prayers.
3. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?
4. Were you able to connect with any friends from your Every Neighbor Map?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Ask someone to share why they prioritize biblical community in their life.

Pray for your time together.

Read the Introduction to this week's lesson on page 38.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Mark 4:35-5:1. Share some of your observations.
2. What are some of the themes or big ideas you saw?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Are you trusting Jesus to bring you through some "storms" in your life?
2. What is one practical way you can remember Jesus' power the next time your life feels out of control?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Starting a Spiritual Conversation (p.118)**

Read over and discuss how to start a spiritual conversation. What has been your experience talking about your faith with friends? Is there a friend or neighbor you could have a spiritual conversation with this week? Pray for opportunities!

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

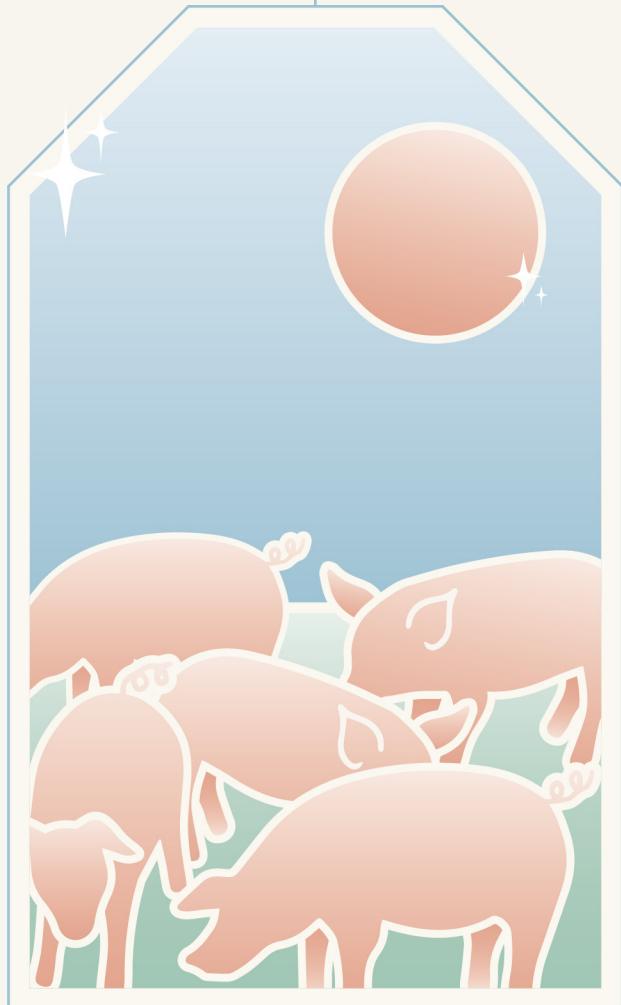
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

4

Demons and Pigs

Jesus healed people from many different ethnic, social, political, and financial backgrounds; including people from the Gentile regions which surrounded Israel. Although Gentiles were not the group He initially came for (Matthew 10:5-8), in this account of Jesus healing a demon-possessed man in Gentile territory we see His authority and power over the spiritual realm and forces of evil. Jesus came to not only fulfill the prophecies to Israel and demonstrate He was the Messiah, but to bring hope to all people so they may glorify God and know Him as their Savior (Romans 15:8-12).



Mark 5:2-20

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Read the passage below and record your observations in the margin as you read.

MARK 5:2-20

2 When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him. 3 He lived among the tombs; and no one was able to bind him anymore, not even with a chain, 4 because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces; and no one was strong enough to subdue him. 5 Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and cutting himself with stones. 6 Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him; 7 and shouting with a loud voice, he said, "What business do You have with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!" 8 For He had already been saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" 9 And He was asking him, "What is your name?" And he said to Him, "My name is Legion, for we are many." 10 And he begged Him earnestly not to send them out of the region. 11 Now there was a large herd of pigs feeding nearby on the mountain. 12 And the demons begged Him, saying, "Send us into the pigs so that we may enter them." 13 Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean

spirits entered the pigs; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand of them; and they were drowned in the sea.

14 Their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the countryside. And the people came to see what it was that had happened. 15 And then they came to Jesus and saw the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had previously had the “legion”; and they became frightened. 16 Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and all about the pigs. 17 And they began to beg Him to leave their region. 18 And as He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was begging Him that he might accompany Him. 19 And He did not let him, but He said to him, “Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you.” 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. Underline or list all descriptions of the condition of the demonized man.

2. What particularly strikes you about his condition and his current situation?

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. The “country of the Gerasenes” (5:1) was mostly inhabited by Gentiles. What does Jesus demonstrate about His mission by ministering in this region?
2. Why do the demons wish to be sent into the swine (5:12; see Luke 8:31)? Why do you think Jesus grants their request?
3. Some people have been disturbed by Jesus’ apparent destruction of the swine. However, what were the demons attempting to do to the man (5:5)? What does this incident demonstrate about Jesus’ system of values?

4. Why do the people ask Jesus to leave the area (5:17)?

5. What do we learn about Jesus' character, nature, and authority from this account?

IMAGINE THE SCENE

Take a few minutes and try to picture yourself at the scene of this miracle. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Who do you identify with the most or the least? Notice Jesus' demeanor and attitude. Pay attention to what He says and does.

Write down a few of your thoughts, feelings and insights:

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. Who are the people in your life that you partner with for the sake of the gospel?

2. What would you risk in your life for the gospel? Is there anything that you would hold back?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

MEMORIZE

Spend time meditating and memorizing a verse about Jesus on page 9.

ENGAGE TOOL

SHARING YOUR STORY

One of the most powerful ways to help people find Jesus is to share with them your own story of meeting and trusting in Him. Turn to page 119 and write a simple draft of your faith story.

For more insight, watch the Share Your Story video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. What are you thankful for this week?
2. What are you asking God for currently?
3. Goals: how did you do on your goals this week?
4. Were you able to have any spiritual conversations with friends or neighbors?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

What would happen if we just focused on one of these - Connect, Grow, Engage?

Pray for your time together.

Read the Introduction to this week's lesson on page 48.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Mark 5:2-20. Share some of your observations.
2. Discuss the condition of the demonized man.

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Are there any struggles in your life that are keeping you isolated and “in chains?”
2. Are there stories of God’s intervention in your life that you can write down and be ready to share?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Sharing Your Story (p. 119)**

Read over and discuss how to share your story. In pairs, practice sharing a story of what God has done for you. To whom could you share your story of finding and following Jesus this week?

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

PRAY

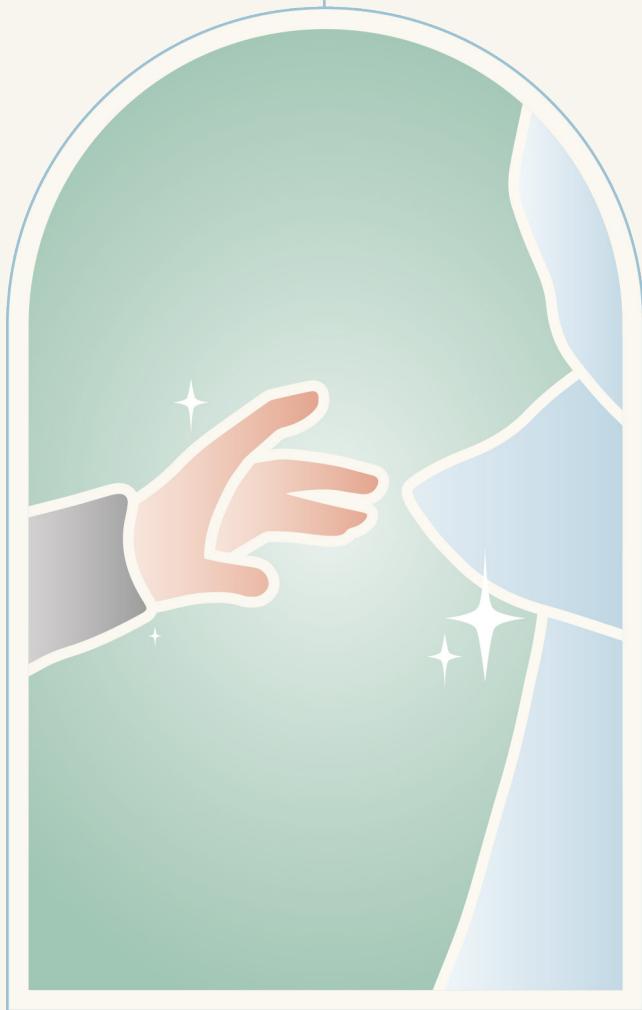
Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

5

Jairus and the Sick Woman

Jesus was an unhurried man. Like many of us, He constantly had people asking for His attention, His care, His resources. However, He didn't allow the urgency of a situation to keep Him from caring for those right in front of Him. This week, we will read and study not just one, but two miracles that Jesus performed in two desperate situations.

Belief in Jesus was at the core of both scenarios; the faith of a desperate father and the faith of a woman who had suffered for many long years. This story teaches us about God's power to heal people physically, emotionally, and spiritually. He is a God of resurrection and new life, and He calls us to trust Him with our lives.



Mark 5:21-43

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Record your observations in the margin as you read the passage.

MARK 5:21-43

21 When Jesus had crossed over again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around Him; and He stayed by the seashore. 22 And one of the synagogue officials, named Jairus, came, and upon seeing Him, fell at His feet 23 and pleaded with Him earnestly, saying, “My little daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live.” 24 And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him.

25 A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years, 26 and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but instead had become worse— 27 after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak. 28 For she had been saying to herself, “If I just touch His garments, I will get well.” 29 And immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. 30 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that power from Him had gone out, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who

touched My garments?” 31 And His disciples said to Him, “You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’” 32 And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. 33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to

her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. 34 And He said to her,

“Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be cured of your disease.”

35 While He was still speaking, people came from the house of the synagogue official, saying,

“Your daughter has died; why bother the Teacher further?” 36 But Jesus, overhearing what

was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, “Do not be afraid, only believe.” 37 And

He allowed no one to accompany Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James.

38 They came to the house of the synagogue official, and He saw a commotion, and people

loudly weeping and wailing. 39 And after entering, He said to them, “Why are you making a

commotion and weeping? The child has not died, but is asleep.” 40 And they began laughing

at Him. But putting them all outside, He took along the child’s father and mother and His

own companions, and entered the room where the child was in bed. 41 And taking the child

by the hand, He said to her, “Talitha, kum!” (which translated means, “Little girl, I say to you,

get up!”). 42 And immediately the girl got up and began to walk, for she was twelve years old.

And immediately they were completely astonished. 43 And He gave them strict orders that no

one was to know about this, and He told them to have something given her to eat.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. Underline or list all descriptions of the Jairus’ and the sick woman’s situations.

2. Compare and contrast Jairus with the woman. What are some key differences between them? Similarities?

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

Why does Jesus allow his progress toward Jairus' house to be interrupted by the woman?

The disciples are surprised by Jesus' question in 5:30. How did He distinguish the woman's touch from the jostling of the surrounding crowd? What was the difference?

Why does Jesus directly address the woman instead of allowing her to be healed anonymously?

How does the woman's healing serve as an object lesson for Jairus (compare 5:34 with 5:36)?

Why does Jesus ask that the girl be given food (5:43)? Why do you think Mark included this detail?

IMAGINE THE SCENE

Take a few minutes and try to picture yourself at the scene of this miracle. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Who do you identify with the most or the least? Notice Jesus' demeanor and attitude. Pay attention to what He says and does.

Write down a few of your thoughts, feelings and insights:

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. Both Jairus and the woman bring their afflictions straight to Jesus for healing. What problems and fears are in your life right now that need to be taken to Jesus?

2. Make a list of those things and surrender them to Christ this week in prayer.

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

PRAY - PRAYER MODEL

Prayer is one of the most important aspects of our relationship with God. Through prayer, we learn how to trust and love Him in deeper ways. Like any ongoing conversation between friends, prayer is a mixture of talking and listening. Below is a simple model to structure your time of prayer.

P - Pause and Praise

Take a deep breath and center your mind and heart on God's presence with you. Begin praising Him for who He is and for how He loves His world, including all people and you. Thank Him for specific things He is doing in your life, family, church, community and the world. (Psalm 150:6)

R - Reflect and Repent

Begin to reflect on your relationships (with God and others), thoughts, actions and words. In what ways have you sinned against God and others?

Remember, **the root of sin is ultimately idolatry**; loving, trusting, and elevating anything above God Himself as the source of life. Our thoughts, actions and words either spring from the worship of God or the worship of something else (self, relationships, wealth, success, pleasure, etc.).

Confess (tell the truth about) any sin to God. Ask Him to reveal hidden and habitual areas of idolatry in your life (Psalm 19:12-14). Ask for forgiveness and for the strength from the Holy Spirit to live in wholeness and righteousness. Gratefully receive His forgiveness and restoration. (1 John 1:9)

A - Ask

Share with God what is on your heart and mind. Present your requests to Him and cast your burdens upon Him because He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7). Listen to Him as He reveals His heart to you as well. Keep a list of people and specific areas of your life that you are praying about. (Philippians 4:6)

Y - Yield

Jesus is our great example of both asking God for His deepest needs and yielding the outcome to the Father's will (Matthew 26:39). Finish your prayers with a heart posture of surrender; trusting in His love for you. Try opening your hands, palms up, as an outward expression of your inward desire.

MEMORIZE

Spend time meditating and memorizing a verse about Jesus on page 9.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. How was your week? Share a highlight or struggle you experienced.
2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?
3. Did you have any chances to talk about your faith journey with friends?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

What are some ways to overcome the temptation to skip group time?

Pray for your time together.

Read the Introduction to this week's lesson on page 58.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Mark 5:21-43. Share some of your observations.
2. Describe Jairus' situation. Describe the sick woman's situation.

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Do you typically respond to problems in your life by taking them to Jesus? Why or why not?
2. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: PRAY Prayer Tool

Read over and discuss the practice of prayer. Why is it important? What have been your experiences or struggles in learning to pray? What could we do together as a group to grow in our prayer practice?

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

6

Feeding Five Thousand

Besides the resurrection, the feeding of five thousand is the only miracle recorded by all four gospel writers. In this account, we see many sides of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Despite the overwhelming numbers of people, He knew what each person needed, including His disciples. Because of His great compassion, He nourished minds and hearts through what He taught. He provided opportunities to partner with Him in ministry and abundantly nourished physical bodies. We, like the disciples in this story, may think that we do not have enough to partner with Jesus, yet when we give our all to Jesus, He multiplies and satisfies beyond our expectations.



Mark 6:30-44

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Read Mark 6:1-29 to determine the setting and context of this miracle. Then read the passage below and record your observations in the margin as you read.

MARK 6:30-44

30 The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. 31 And He said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a little while.” (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) 32 And they went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.

33 The people saw them going, and many recognized them and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them. 34 When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things. 35 And when it was already late, His disciples came up to Him and said, “This place is secluded and it is already late; 36 send them away so that they may go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” 37 But He answered them, “You give them something

to eat!" And they said to Him, "Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread, and give it to them to eat?" 38 But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go look!" And when they found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." 39 And He ordered them all to recline by groups on the green grass. 40 They reclined in groups of hundreds and fifties. 41 And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food and broke the loaves and He gave them to the disciples again and again to set before them; and He divided the two fish among them all. 42 And they all ate and were satisfied; 43 and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces of bread, and of the fish. 44 There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. List the different people in this narrative.

2. What were some of the needs of each?

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. Why does Jesus feel compassion for the people (6:34)?

2. The disciples want to send the people away to eat. Why does Jesus instruct them to feed the people themselves?

3. Compare the disciples' response to this situation with their response to the storm on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 4:35-41). What similarities do you see?

4. Why does Mark give so many specific numbers in this account (e.g., “twelve full baskets”, “five thousand men”)? Why are these details significant?

5. Was providing people with food the only reason Jesus performed this miracle? Or, is there something more He intended to demonstrate? If so, what?

IMAGINE THE SCENE

Take a few minutes and try to picture yourself at the scene of this miracle. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Who do you identify with the most or the least? Notice Jesus' demeanor and attitude. Pay attention to what He says and does.

Write down a few of your thoughts, feelings and insights:

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. Do you sense Jesus inviting you to partner with Him to meet any physical, relational, or spiritual needs in the lives of people around you? If so, how will you begin?

2. What are some of the small, “loaves and fish” resources in your life that you can bring to Jesus to multiply for the good of others?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

MEMORIZE

Spend time meditating and memorizing a verse about Jesus on page 9.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

SERVICE

Just as Jesus entered into a specific time and place during His earthly life, God has placed each of us into a unique context where we can partner with Him to meet spiritual, relational and physical needs in His name. When we do this, we offer a taste of what life in the Kingdom of God is like.

God has also uniquely designed each person to contribute according to their personality, experience and gifting (Ephesians 2:10).

To begin discerning where you could serve people in partnership with Jesus, ask yourself:

1. What group or types of people do you intuitively care about?
2. With what group of people do you find yourself wanting to engage?
3. What types of causes grab your attention or “light you up” when you discuss them?
4. If there was one area in which you could make a difference, what would it be?
5. What do you happily give your time toward when an opportunity presents itself?

What is one thing you can do this week to serve someone in the love and power of Jesus?

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. How was your week? Share something you are celebrating or that disappointed you during the last week.
2. Goals: how did you do on your goals to apply God's word this week?
3. Did anyone try the PRAY prayer practice this week? How did it go?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

What are some reasons you stay committed to our group?

Pray for your time together.

Read the Introduction to this week's lesson on page 68.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Mark 6:30-44. Share some of your observations.
2. Who were the different people in this story and what were their needs?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. Do you sense Jesus inviting you to partner with Him to meet any physical, relational, or spiritual needs in the lives of people around you? If so, how will you begin?
2. What are some of the small, "loaves and fish" resources in your life that you can bring to Jesus to multiply for the good of others?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: **Service**

Read over and discuss the practice of service. Why is it important? What have been your experiences serving in your gifting? What could we do together as a group to serve people?

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

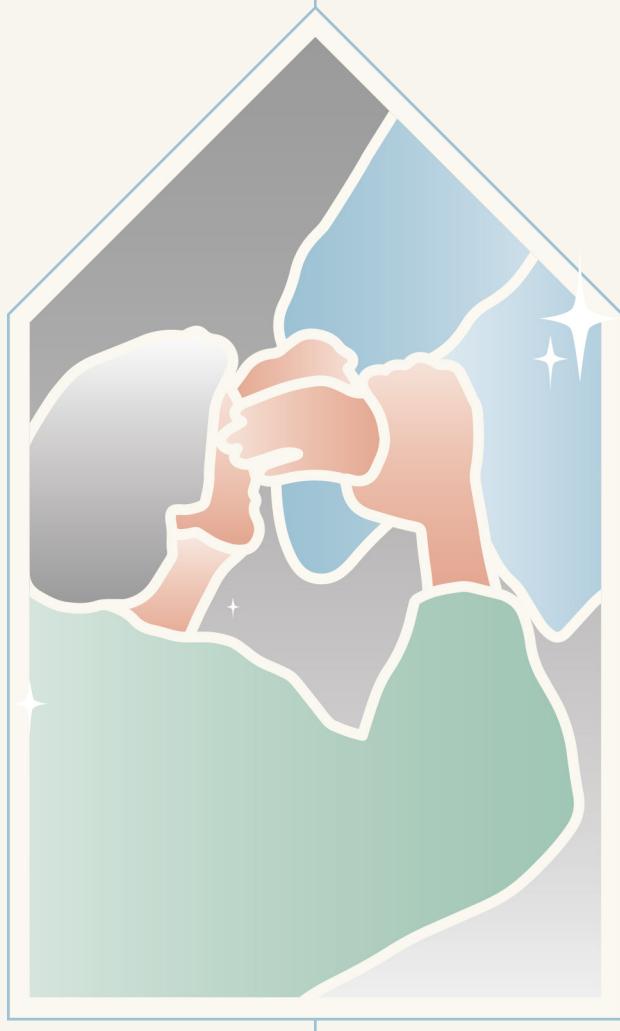
PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

7

Healing the Blind

This week we have two different examples of Jesus giving sight to blind men. The men needed Jesus to come and heal their physical blindness, but they also needed Him to begin a work in healing their deeper spiritual blindness. Blindness is often seen as a symbol for a loss of sight beyond the physical. It is seen as a lack of knowledge, understanding, or even faith. Even if we have had our eyes open to our need for Jesus as our Savior, we only see in part for now (1 Corinthians 13:12). We need faith, like the blind men had, to trust that God knows us fully now and will one day reveal to us fully. We can step out in faith, even though we don't see the full picture yet, and follow Jesus, for faith is not based on what we see now (2 Corinthians 5:7).



Mark 8:22-26, 10:46-52

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Read the passage below and record your observations in the margin as you read.

MARK 8:22-26

22 And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought a man who was blind to Jesus and begged Him to touch him. 23 Taking the man who was blind by the hand, He brought him out of the village; and after spitting in his eyes and laying His hands on him, He asked him, “Do you see anything?” 24 And he looked up and said, “I see people, for I see them like trees, walking around.” 25 Then again He laid His hands on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and began to see everything clearly. 26 And He sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”

MARK 10:46-52

46 Then they came to Jericho. And later, as He was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a large crowd, a beggar who was blind named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road. 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 48 Many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

49 And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him here." So they called the man who was blind,

saying to him, "Take courage, stand up! He is calling for you." 50 And throwing off his

cloak, he jumped up and came to Jesus. 51 And replying to him, Jesus said, “What do

you want Me to do for you?" And the man who was blind said to Him, "Rabboni, I want

to regain my sight!" 52 And Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." And

immediately he regained his sight and began following Him on the road.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. Circle any key words.
 2. What is the mood or tone of these two narratives
 3. What are some of the primary themes in these pa

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. In 8:26, Jesus tells the man not to tell anybody what has happened. Why do you think He does this?
 2. Read 2 Samuel 7:8-16 and Psalm 89:19-37. What is the significance of Bartimaeus' cry "Son of David, have mercy on me!"?
 3. Do you think Jesus already knew Bartimaeus' need? If so, why does Jesus ask Bartimaeus to articulate what he wants?

4. What is significant about Bartimaeus' response to his healing (8:52)? How does he actively demonstrate his faith in Christ?

5. What is the spiritual significance of Jesus healing the blind? (see Isaiah 35:5-6; 29:18; Psalm 146:8)

IMAGINE THE SCENE

Take a few minutes and try to picture yourself at the scene of this miracle. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Who do you identify with the most or the least? Notice Jesus' demeanor and attitude. Pay attention to what He says and does.

Write down a few of your thoughts, feelings and insights:

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. In what areas of your life has Jesus healed you of spiritual blindness?

2. Write down a short account of when the light of the gospel broke through the darkness in your life.

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

MEMORIZE

Spend time meditating and memorizing a verse about Jesus on page 9.

ENGAGE TOOL

SHARE THE GOSPEL: 3 CIRCLES

As we pray, ask questions and listen to people with a heart of compassion, the Holy Spirit may lead us into sharing with someone how they can turn from trusting in themselves to trusting in Jesus. This simple tool using a diagram of three circles is really helpful to share the good news of the gospel with people.

Turn to page 122-123 and practice sharing the gospel this week. Pray for opportunities to share with non believing friends. See a demonstration video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. Spend a few minutes catching up with each other. Share something you are celebrating or something that disappointed you during the last week.
2. Goals: how did you do on your goals this week?
3. Were you able to share your story with friends or neighbors?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

What is the main goal of our group?

Pray for your time together.

Read the Introduction to this week's lesson on page 78

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Read Mark 8:22-26 and Mark 10:46-52. Share some of your observations.
2. What is the mood or tone of these passages?

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. In what areas of your life has Jesus healed you of spiritual blindness?
2. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Sharing the Gospel: 3 Circles (p. 122-123)**

Read over and discuss the 3 Circles Gospel tool.

Practice sharing it in groups of 2-3.

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.

8

The Resurrection

The resurrection of Jesus is not only the climax of Mark's Gospel; it is the ultimate miracle of all miracles! By His resurrection from the dead, Jesus authenticated His claim of being the divine Son of God, not simply a human messiah. By this point in our study, we have seen that Jesus is more than powerful enough to save Himself from death and pain at the cross, but He didn't. Why?

Jesus' resurrection is the culmination of His mission on earth; to defeat evil and death, and to rescue people from eternal separation from God. He could have directed His power and authority to judge and condemn sinners who rejected God, but instead He directed His power and authority to love and sacrifice His life for sinners who were His enemies, in order that they may believe in Him and become children of God (Romans 5:6, 8; John 1:12). Behold, the miracle of all miracles... our King Jesus is alive!



Mark 14:1-16:8

LOOK IT OVER

OBSERVATION

Read all of Mark 14-16.

Closely observe the passage below and record your observations in the margin as you read.

MARK 16:1-8

1 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might come and anoint Him. 2 And very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 They were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone from the entrance of the tomb for us?” 4 And looking up, they noticed that the stone had been rolled away; for it was extremely large. 5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe; and they were amazed. 6 But he said to them, “Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; see, here is the place where they laid Him. 7 But go, tell His disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you.’” 8 And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

REMINDER

In the Survey section entitled “The Gospel’s Abrupt Ending” (p. 17), we talked about why 16:9-20 is probably not original to the Gospel of Mark. We can still read it and benefit from it. However, we can also turn to the other three gospels for more detailed accounts about what Jesus did after His resurrection. If you have some time this week, read Matthew 28, Luke 24, and John 20-21 to learn more.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. Looking back to the whole section (Mark 14-16), list the various individuals or groups of people that Jesus encountered during His last days.

2. Describe each one's attitude and actions toward Jesus.

THINK IT THROUGH

INTERPRETATION

1. John the Baptist identified Jesus as “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29-31). Why is it significant that Jesus’ final week coincided with the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread?

Hint: Passover commemorated the Israelites’ redemption from slavery in Egypt through the Exodus (Exodus 12:1-13:16).

2. How do these events outlined in Mark 14 reinforce Jesus’ purpose and identity as the rescuing Messiah?

Jesus’ Anointing (14:3-9)

The Last Supper (14:22-25)

3. In what ways is the question of Jesus’ identity highlighted in His trial before Pilate and His crucifixion (15:1-5; 16-32)? Why is this significant?

4. Why is it important to the story of the resurrection that Mark mentions the women's presence at Jesus' crucifixion (15:40), burial (15:47) and empty tomb (16:1-2)?

5. Why is the miracle of Jesus' bodily resurrection the foundation of our Christian faith? (See 1 Corinthians 15:1-22)

IMAGINE THE SCENE

Read the accounts of the resurrection in Matthew, Luke and John.

Take a few minutes and try to picture yourself at the scene of this miracle. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Who do you identify with the most or the least? Notice Jesus' demeanor and attitude. Pay attention to what He says and does.

Write down a few of your thoughts, feelings and insights:

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

3 STEPS TO APPLY -> REFLECT, LIST PRINCIPLES, MAKE A PLAN

1. Jesus' followers struggled to understand who He really was in light of their expectations of a conquering Messiah. In what ways have you struggled to understand who Jesus really is? How has Jesus shown you that He is the true King?

2. All of the other miracles of Jesus recorded in the book of Mark happened to people long ago. Read Romans 6:3-7. How has the miracle of Jesus' resurrection changed you?

3. Prayerfully determine the main biblical truth or principle that God revealed to you during your study. A few questions to ask are: Is there a promise for me to claim? Is there a truth for me to believe? Is there a command for me to obey?

4. What specifically will you do this week to begin applying this principle in your daily life? Determine how this truth or principle impacts the relationships in your life where you live, work, and play.

MEMORIZE

Spend time meditating and memorizing a verse about Jesus on page 9.

ENGAGE TOOL

SHARING THE GOSPEL - 3 CIRCLES

Take time to review this gospel tool again this week.

Turn to page 122-123 and ask a friend to listen as you practice sharing the gospel. Pray for opportunities to share with non believing friends. See a demonstration video at grace-bible.org/disciplemaker.

Create a personal goal, expressing how you will actively apply biblical truth in your life.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CONNECT

CARE/SHARE: (choose from these)

1. What are you thankful for this week?
2. What are you asking God for currently?
3. Goals: how did you do on your goals this week? Were you able to share the gospel with any friends or neighbors?

WHY ARE WE HERE?

If a friend asked you why you study the Bible in a group, what would you say?

Pray for your time together.

Read the Introduction to this week's lesson on page 88.

GROW

DISCUSS OBSERVATION: (choose from these)

1. Review the events in Mark 14-16.
2. Read Mark 16:1-8. Share some of your observations.

DISCUSS INTERPRETATION:

Discuss 2-3 questions.

ENGAGE

DISCUSS APPLICATION: (choose from these)

1. In what ways have you struggled to understand who Jesus really is? How has Jesus shown you that He is the true King?
2. All of the other miracles of Jesus recorded in the book of Mark happened to people long ago. Read Romans 6:3-7. How has the miracle of Jesus' resurrection changed you?
3. What truth did God reveal to you this week and how do you plan to apply it?

ENGAGE TOOL: **Share the Gospel: 3 Circles (p. 122-123)**

Read over and discuss the 3 Circles Gospel tool.

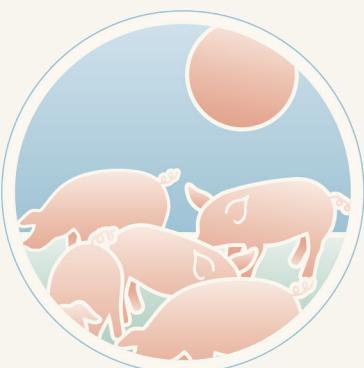
Practice sharing it in groups of 2-3.

GOALS

What will we do differently this week in light of all that we have learned and discussed?

PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other and for specific friends on your Every Neighbor Maps.



PUT IT BACK TOGETHER

MEMORIZE

Review the verses you have memorized during this study.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of mankind. **John 1:1-4**

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **John 1:14**

No one has seen God at any time; God the only Son, who is in the arms of the Father, He has explained Him. **John 1:18**

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation: for by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. **Colossians 1:15-17**

For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over every ruler and authority. **Colossians 2:9-10**

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. **Hebrews 1:3**

Looking only at Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **Hebrews 12:2**

Before we get to the synthesis, one word of encouragement ... please realize how much you have grown as a student of God's Word through your study of Mark! Each week, you've learned how to better observe, interpret, and apply the stories of Scripture. Those same three steps will serve you well as you continue to study God's story throughout the Bible. Continue to practice and refine these skills so that you become, "a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the Word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Review and summarize what God taught you in each of Jesus' miracles. These could be theological truths, life lessons, insights, or timeless principles.

Lesson 1 - Healing the Leper

Lesson 2 - Healing the Paralytic

Lesson 3 - Calming the Waves

Lesson 4 - Healing the Man with Unclean Spirit

Lesson 5 - Healing Jairus' Daughter and the Sick Woman

Lesson 6 - Feeding the 5000

Lesson 7 - Healing the Blind Men

Lesson 8 - The Resurrection

MAKE IT REAL

APPLICATION

1. What has our study of the Miracles of Jesus added to your understanding of who He is?

2. What aspects of Christ's nature and character do you still struggle to understand?

3. What specific steps will you take to know and follow Jesus more closely in the days and weeks to come?

PRAY

Break into small groups of 2-3 people and spend time praying for each other. Ask for the Holy Spirit to empower you to grow in faith and practice through what He revealed to you in this study.

FOR EVEN THE SON OF MAN
DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED,
BUT TO SERVE,
AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE AS A
RANSOM FOR MANY.

MARK 10:45

APPENDIX

106 LEADER HELPS

108 BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

113 ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES

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LEADER HELPS

WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION

The best preparation for leading a Bible study is following Jesus closely yourself.

- Spend time with God daily to keep your relationship with Him fresh and growing! Healthy leadership is ultimately an overflow of your personal relationship with God.
- Spend time in the passage throughout the week.
- Pray regularly with your co-leader for each person in your group.
- Prepare ahead of time and make a plan (see below) for your group time. Discuss with your co-leader.
- As a facilitator of discussion rather than a teacher, you are encouraged to be a co-learner with your group. Your job is not to know “everything.” It is acceptable to leave some questions partially answered or unresolved, trusting for clarity at a later time. Reach out to ministry leaders and pastors at your church for clarification as needed.
- Lead and walk by faith in the Holy Spirit’s work in your life and in the lives of your group members.

LEADING WELL

- Set a regular meeting place and time. Consistency helps avoid obstacles that will keep people from being there and a plan helps people know what to expect.
- Create a welcoming environment! Learn people’s names and make sure everyone is introduced to each other. Possibly have a snack each week, alternating between healthy and “less healthy.” Everyone likes a snack!
- Regularly remind people of the group’s purpose to:

CONNECT Relationally

GROW Biblically

ENGAGE Missionally

- Regularly break up into smaller groups of 2-3, starting from the very first meeting. Smaller groups help people feel known. Keep the groups no bigger than 3. This will pay off in the long run.
- Stress confidentiality about what is shared in the group.
- Try reaching out to different people each week to grab lunch or coffee outside of group time as your schedule allows.

MAKE A PLAN EACH WEEK

Use the Group Discussion Guide (located at the end of each lesson). Divide your time into three relatively equal thirds that focus on **CONNECT, GROW, ENGAGE**.

7:00

Build community in your group using the **CONNECT** suggestions in the Group Discussion Guide. Depending on your group size, you could get into groups of 2-3 (but no more than 3) with a question to discuss for getting to know one another, to check on how application from last week went and for prayer. Sometimes the question could be for fun and other times more serious. For example: “What was a highlight and lowlight of your week?” or “How did you apply last week’s lesson?”

Pray in the small groups. (Prayer at the beginning is a good way to help make it an emphasis.) Suggest something for them to pray for as a group- that is bigger than themselves and the group. Some ideas: For our community and people who do not know Jesus; family members, friends, and classmates who they would like to point to Jesus; a missionary; a country/people group in need of the gospel.

7:30

Gather back as one group and have one person pray for the time. Discuss the passage using the **GROW** section questions in the Group Discussion Guide. Summarize or read aloud the passage together.

8:00

Discuss the **ENGAGE** tool or spiritual practice in the lesson. Reflect on the biblical truth God revealed to you this week. Create a plan of action to apply what you have learned. Gather in small groups (of 2-3) again. Discuss your plan of action and pray for one another.

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

OBSERVE

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is, “What do I see?” This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of our study. Here are four tasks involved in observation which should be performed in the order below. All examples are taken from the book of Galatians.

OBSERVATION TASK 1

Mark up the passage by visually identifying the following specific elements:

Underline all verbs. A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action is taking place (“we will reign with Him”) or that a state or condition exists (“we are faithless”). Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author’s flow of thought.

Circle key words or phrases. These are words or short phrases that are important theologically (like “gospel” in 1:6) or thematically (they set the theme or main idea for the passage, such as “approved” and “works of the law” in 3:2,5,10).

Highlight repeated words or phrases. Also, include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as “suffer hardship” and “endure suffering”). You’ll also want to highlight things that are repeated from previous passages (such as “son” in 4:23 and 4:30)

Box connecting words. These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses. Here are eight types of common connecting words to look for:

1. Comparison either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include: and, like, as, just as, also, so also, even so (e.g., “like the Gentiles” in 2:14).
2. Contrast points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include: but, rather, yet, however (e.g., “No longer I... but Christ” in 2:20).
3. Purpose indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words include: that, so that, in order that (e.g., “Christ redeemed us... in order that in Christ Jesus...” in 3:13-14).
4. Result is similar to “purpose,” but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words include: that, so that, as a result, with the result that (e.g., “The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.” in 2:13).
5. Cause expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include: because, since, and sometimes for. (e.g., “Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions” in 3:19)
6. Explanation is what follows further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the key word “for.” (e.g., “For prior to the coming of certain men from James” in 2:12).
7. Inference provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words include: therefore, for this reason. (e.g., “Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.” in 3:7)
8. Condition presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can occur. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be hypothetical). Key word is “if.” (e.g., “For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise...” in 3:18)

OBSERVATION TASK 2

List 2-3 primary themes you see in the passage each week.

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on, such as “humility” in 5:16-26. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

OBSERVATION TASK 3

Write two or more observations per verse.

Our observations might identify people, places, or events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences, or even point out something missing that we expected to see.

OBSERVATION TASK 4

Ask your own interpretive questions.

Here are a few examples:

WHO IS...	WHAT IS THE...	WHY DID THE AUTHOR...	HOW...
Paul talking about? accomplishing the action? benefiting from the action?	meaning of this word? significance of this phrase? implication of this statement? relationship between these phrases?	choose this word? include this phrase, statement, or command? not say _____?	was this action accomplished? will this situation occur?

INTERPRET

Our observation of a passage should stir interesting yet challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study: interpretation. Fortunately, we do not have to run to a commentary or study Bible for answers (though these are helpful tools to check our conclusions). Use the following six methods, as needed, to tackle a variety of questions. Also, make sure to familiarize yourself with the three “Principles of Interpretation” that appear in the Appendix at the end of this study.

INTERPRETATION METHODS

Interpretation Method 1 | Use the context.

Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow the author’s flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous lesson, so have it handy as a review. You may need to read ahead in the book for clues.

Interpretation Method 2 | Study cross-references.

Cross references are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such cross references can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting online tool such as netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Greek” on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong’s definition in the opposite window. Then, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, and choose to run a “Word Search” that will provide all Biblical references that use the English term.

Interpretation Method 3 | Look up key words.

While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek provides deeper understanding and is surprisingly easy, thanks to online tools such as net.bible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Greek” on the right side of the screen. Now hovering over any word in English will highlight the corresponding Greek term and reveal its Strong’s definition in the opposite window. For even further study, you can select a word, click the magnifying glass above it, then choose to run a “Word Search,” “Strong’s Search,” or “Word Study.” The first will provide all Biblical references that use the English term. The second will provide all Biblical references that use the Greek term. And the third will provide the full definition and derivatives of the Greek term. What used to take multiple books & many hours now takes one internet browser & a few seconds!

Interpretation Method 4 | Look up background information.

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is *The New Bible Dictionary* by Wood & Marshall. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

Background information can be found by visiting the online reference netbible.org. Simply search for the passage at the top of the screen, and the relevant text will appear. Be sure that “NET2” is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then select the tab for “Notes” on the right side of the screen. Now, anytime you select one of the numbered annotations above particular words or verses, you can immediately see the relevant Biblical or historical context for that term or passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

Interpretation Method 5 | Tackle tough questions step-by-step.

When trying to answer the most challenging questions, follow this four-step process:

1. List all the options. Always start by brainstorming every possible answer to your question.
2. List pros and cons for each option. See all the evidence you can find that either argues for or against a particular option. This evidence comes from your study of key words, the grammar of the sentence, the context of surrounding verses and the book as a whole, cross references to other books, and comparison with your overall understanding of Christian theology.
3. Choose the most likely option. Look at your evidence for each option. Typically, evidence from the immediate context is most important, followed closely by evidence from the book as a whole. Evidence from other books of the Bible, or from Christian theology as a whole, does not carry quite as much weight unless the solution contradicts a clear passage elsewhere or a major tenant of Christian doctrine. In that case, since Scripture never lies and God cannot contradict Himself, you must eliminate that option.
4. Decide on your certainty level. Once you have chosen the best solution, step back for a second and humbly gauge how certain you are of its accuracy (90% = I am very sure this is correct ... 60% = This solution is just a bit more likely than the others!). Finally, talk with others and check commentaries or reference books to see what solutions they have chosen and why.

Interpretation Method 6 | Compare multiple translations.

This packet uses the New American Standard (NASB) translation. You can often find helpful interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. The New King James Version (NKJV), like the NASB, is a fairly word-for-word translation of the Greek text. The New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are excellent phrase-to-phrase

translations of the Greek and thus often easier to read. Another excellent phrase-to-phrase Bible, which includes extensive translation notes, is the New English Translation (NET) available online for free at netbible.org. You can find and compare numerous translations of any Bible passage at www.biblestudytools.com.

INTERPRETATION PRINCIPLES

There are three fundamental principles of interpretation that help us to use our interpretive skills accurately.

Interpretation Principle 1 | Discern the author’s intended meaning.

Your goal is to discern the author’s intended meaning to the original audience. Unfortunately, most people begin their Bible study by asking, “What does this passage mean to me?” While there may be multiple possible applications to my life, there is only one meaning, the author’s intended meaning; and we must first seek this out. This involves three important steps:

1. Always start your study with prayer, asking the same God who composed Scripture through these ancient authors to give you insight to understand His intended meaning.
2. Avoid inserting your 21st century circumstances and theological issues into the text as they can skew understanding.
3. Work diligently to see the text from the point of view of the original readers. To do this: (a) dig into the historical and cultural background using Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and (b) spend a few moments thinking about the original audience’s religious understanding by asking, “What books of the Bible did they have access to? What did they know about God? About Jesus? About salvation? etc.”

Interpretation Principle 2 | Assume a “Normal” Use of Language

The Bible was given to us because God desired to communicate with us, not to hide Himself from us. Therefore, we should not be looking for “hidden” meanings as we study. Instead, we should use the “normal” techniques we would use to understand any piece of literature:

1. Study the grammar. Pay attention to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions. Think through any figures of speech. Observe how phrases and clauses are connected into sentences and how sentences are linked together into paragraphs.
2. Remember that chapter divisions came later. When Paul wrote Corinthians or Luke wrote the book of Acts, they wrote single, unified stories without verse or chapter divisions. These books were meant to be read just like you would read a letter or a novel. Always keep the overall story in mind as you study each passage.

Interpretation Principle 3 | Let Scripture Interpret Scripture

This is the third and last principle of interpretation. Because God is unchangingly truthful and always consistent (John 17:17; Hebrews 3:6; James 1:17), we can, and should, expect the same of His Word.

This has two practical applications:

1. Check your conclusions. Always compare your conclusions with the teachings of scripture as a whole. If you find your interpretation of a passage contradicts the clear teaching of scripture elsewhere, you probably need to revise your conclusions.
2. Allow clear passages to illuminate ambiguous passages. Whenever you encounter a passage that is confusing or open to multiple possible interpretations, use clearer passages of scripture to guide you to the correct interpretation.

One last caution: remember that God revealed scripture progressively, not all at once. Therefore, we should not be surprised by differences between how people related to and understood God at different times in the history of scripture. For example, while Abraham needed only believe that God was faithful in order to be justified (Genesis 15:6), in the New Testament era, we must believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to be saved (1 Corinthians 15:1-7).

APPLY

Our Bible study is not over until we apply what we have learned to our everyday lives. And lest we underestimate the value of this last step, remember that in God's eyes it is the person who does not just know His Word, but also obeys His Word that truly loves Him (see John 14:21). So how do we apply a passage to our lives? Application involves the following two tasks:

APPLICATION TASK 1

List potential principles from your passage.

A "principle" is simply a fact or command stated or implied in a particular passage that is practically relevant to our lives. Legitimate principles are not specific to a particular person (e.g., 1 Timothy 5:23 is just for Timothy) nor a particular time (e.g., "do not leave Jerusalem" in Acts 1:4). It is often helpful when listing principles to consider the following questions:

- Is there something to worship or thank God for?
- Is there a promise for me to claim or a truth for me to believe?
- Is there something I am convicted about that I need to change or begin doing?
- Is there something or someone I need to pray for specifically this week?
- Is there any relationship I need to work on?

APPLICATION TASK 2

Choose one principle, and create a plan to apply it to your life this week.

Once you complete your principle list, prayerfully choose the one principle you most need to work on (Do not just choose the easiest to apply!). If you felt deeply convicted about one in particular, that is probably the principle God is leading you to apply. Once you have chosen a specific principle, answer these two questions:

1. What exactly will you do differently this week to apply this principle to your life? Be specific.
2. Whom, other than the Lord, will you ask to help you follow through with this application?

ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES

ONLINE RESOURCES

netbible.org | cross references, word studies

biblestudytools.net | word studies

blueletterbible.org | word studies

planobiblechapel.org/soniclight | commentary

bestcommentaries.com | commentary database

Grace Bible Church does not always agree with the views of these commentaries. These are good tools to help understand hard passages, but the particular theological views reflect the author of the commentary and not those of Grace Bible Church.

DISCIPLESHIP/BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES

Living By the Book by Howard Hendricks and Charles Swindoll

A more in-depth book on how to study the Bible using the tools discussed in this packet.

The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert Coleman

A highly motivational analysis of Jesus' own principles of evangelism and discipleship.

The Lost Art of Disciple Making by Leroy Eims

This practical resource will give you a detailed structure to follow and great content to cover as you begin to disciple a new believer.

A Survey of Bible Doctrine by Charles Ryrie

An easy-to-read, relatively short systematic theology primer that you can walk a new believer through to ground them in the faith.

Rooted by Grace Bible Church, College Station, TX

Nine conversations that establish a new believer with foundational truths and practices to follow Jesus for a lifetime. <https://www.grace-bible.org/resources/bible-study/46/rooted>

NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY

EVENT	APPROXIMATE DATE
Crucifixion of Jesus	April 33
Pentecost (Acts 2)	May 33
Paul's conversion (Acts 9)	Summer 35
Paul in Jerusalem, 1st visit (Acts 9:26-29; Gal. 1:18-20)	35-43
Paul to Antioch (Acts 11:25-26)	Spring 43
Epistle of James written	45
Paul in Jerusalem, relief visit (Acts 11:30; Gal. 2:1-10)	Autumn 47
Paul to Antioch (Acts 12:25-13:1)	Autumn 47 – Spring 48
Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14)	April 48 – September 49
Peter at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-16)	Autumn 49
Galatians written from Antioch	Autumn 49
Paul in Jerusalem, Jerusalem council (Acts 15)	Autumn 49
Paul in Antioch (Acts 15:30-35)	Winter 49/50
Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22)	April 50 – September 52
1 & 2 Thessalonians written	Spring – Summer 51
Paul in Jerusalem and Antioch	End of September 52; Winter 52/53
Paul's third missionary journey (Acts 18:23-21:16)	Spring 53 – May 57
1 & 2 Corinthians written	Spring – Fall 56
Romans written	Winter 56/57
Ephesian elders visit Paul at Miletus (Acts 20)	May 57
Paul in Jerusalem	Eve of Pentecost, May 27, 57
Paul's arrest and trial before Felix (Acts 21:26-24:22)	June 57
Paul's appearance before Felix ^Drusilla (Acts 24:24-26)	June 57
Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea (Acts 24:27)	June 57 – Aug 59
Paul's trial before Festus (Acts 25:7-12) & Agrippa (Acts 26)	July 59; Aug 59
Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:29)	Aug 59 – Feb 60
Paul's first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28:30)	Feb 60 – Mar 62
Luke written	60

Acts Written	60
Ephesians written	Autumn 60
Colossians and Philemon written	Autumn 61
Philippians written	Spring 62
Paul's release	Spring 62
Mark Written	62
Paul in Ephesus and Colossae	Spring–Autumn 62
Peter in Rome	62
Paul in Macedonia	Summer 62–Winter 62/63
1 Timothy Written	Autumn 62
Paul in Asia Minor	Spring 62–
Peter martyred	Summer 64 (67?)
Paul in Spain and Crete	Spring 64–Spring 66; Summer 66
Titus written	Summer 66
Paul arrested and taken to Rome	Autumn 67
2 Timothy written	Autumn 67
Paul's death	Spring 68
Matthew written	60's
Hebrews written	60's
Destruction of Jerusalem	September 2, 70
Jude written	60's or 70's
John written	80's or 90's
1,2,3 John written	80's or 90's
Revelation written	Early 90's

Adapted from *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, Harold H. Hoehner, Zondervan, 1978.

ENGAGE TOOLS

Because God loves all people, He is constantly working to draw men and women to Himself. He invites believers to partner with Him in this great mission of redemption and restoration. We do this by helping people find and follow Jesus — this is disciple-making. Jesus summarized this calling in Matthew 28:18-20.

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying,

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

On the following pages are some foundational tools, practices, and resources to engage in helping people find and follow Jesus.

Visit grace-bible.org/disciplemaker for more resources.

EVERY NEIGHBOR MAP

Just as Jesus entered into a specific time and place, God has placed each of us into a unique context in which to share His love and to represent Him. Our context includes anyone that we commonly encounter on a regular basis which gives us the ability to have influence in their lives.

Think about the people in your spheres of influence; the people with whom you live, learn, work, and play who are near to you but might be far from God.

Also, think about people that are just beyond your normal spheres. Perhaps there is an acquaintance that you don't know well, or a neighbor who is different from you ethnically or socio-economically, or a community member that the Holy Spirit has put in your path but is more a stranger than friend. Be creative and think outside the box!

Pray Big - diligently pray for these friends to find and follow Jesus.

Map - write down at least three names in each of these spheres.

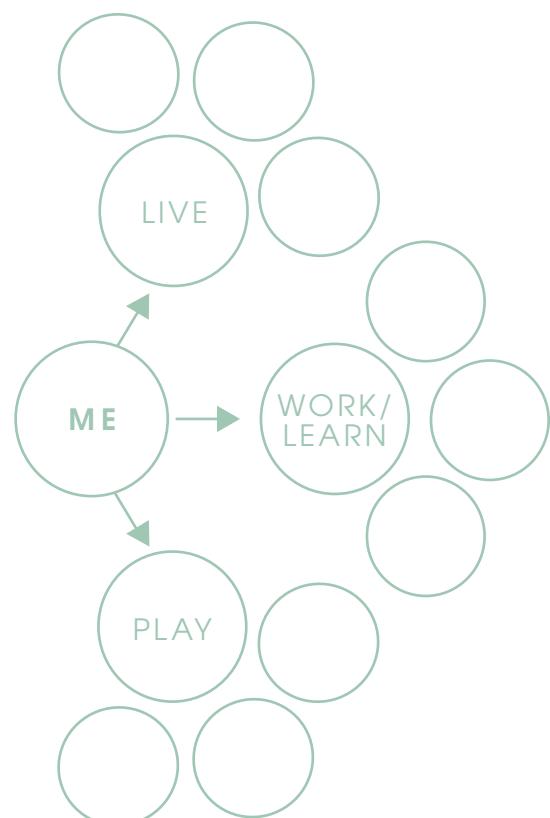
Ask God:

Who might be seeking Him or is asking hard questions about life?

Who needs acts of love and concern shown to them?

How to serve and share the love of Christ with them?

For opportunities to share your story and the gospel.



STARTING A SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

During His life on earth, Jesus told stories using illustrations from everyday life that created an interest in His Kingdom. Jesus made His message accessible to those who would hear. Sadly, we have become conditioned to put on a filter and not speak of Jesus because we imagine that it is awkward, pushy, or politically incorrect. What would it be like to take off this filter and grow in boldness and love as we share stories about who He is and what He is about?

Marking ourselves as a “spiritual” person can help us gauge whether others are interested in God and His message. Some people will “lean in” as you speak about such topics, asking additional questions, sharing their own beliefs, telling about their own journey. Some will not; they will “lean back” and change the topic, become silent, or shut down altogether.

Allow the Holy Spirit to prompt you as you initiate and let Him do the work of speaking to a person’s soul.

Practice talking about two or three of the following “interest creating” topics:

Recently, God/Jesus has been teaching me that...

I am realizing more and more that God has blessed me by...

I used to struggle with (insert fear, stronghold, idolatry) but now I see God wants me to believe...

I decided to follow Jesus because...

I’ve really been learning to pray more lately. Do you have anything in your life that I can commit to pray for?

Think of common topics that come up as you meet people, for example: career, living situation, family history, educational background. Pick one of these and tell how God changed your path in the past, or how He is guiding you in the present.

As you practice talking about these things, try to end with a learning question such as:

Have you ever considered God in this way before?

Do you think God is teaching/blessing/asking you to believe anything right now?

Do you consider yourself on a spiritual journey? What is that like?

What does your tradition say about Jesus?

Your questions are to gauge a response and to allow space for them to interact with your story.

Now, be prayerful and alert as to who God brings across your path!

SHARING YOUR STORY

You have a unique story of how you came to know and follow Jesus. Your story is one of the most powerful tools you have for helping other people find and follow Jesus as well. As you begin to let people know that you are following Jesus, simply ask, “Can I share with you the story of my spiritual journey?” Those who are interested in spiritual things are likely to demonstrate their interest in one way or another (asking questions, making a comment) and that often provides an open door to share your story.

HOW TO BEGIN

Write out your thoughts on the following topics and questions. These ideas will help you share the story of your spiritual journey, sometimes called your “testimony.”

MY LIFE BEFORE JESUS

My life revolved around _____, and I found my identity, happiness and security from _____.

Use an example from your personal life here. For instance, did your security come from money, your relationships, etc.?

How did this disappoint me? How was this unfulfilling? How did I come to realize this?

What was I struggling with (if anything) just before I believed in Jesus?

Note: Some people trusted Jesus when they were very young, and don't have clear memories of the time before they knew Him. If that is you, simply share this as part of your story.

HOW I FIRST BELIEVED IN JESUS

This part of your story is where you came to a transition in your life.

When and how did I first hear about Jesus?

What did I learn about the life He offers all who believe in Him?

When and why did my perspective about Jesus begin to change?

Why did I decide to believe in Jesus?

Note: Some of us may be able to point to specific times or circumstances regarding how or when we believed. For others of us, we can only point to a time period or gradual understanding. Both are great. Everyone's story is significant and the biggest point is that you now believe in Jesus.

MY LIFE SINCE I FIRST BELIEVED IN JESUS

How is my life different now? List some specific changes in your character, attitude, and perspective on life.

How am I motivated differently now? What do I live for now?

How do I experience God now?

BRING IT ALL TOGETHER

Think about your answers to the questions above, and ask yourself the following:

Is this a continuous story that makes sense?

Are there any consistent themes in my story?

Can I share my story in 3-4 minutes?

Was I clear about what I believed about Jesus?

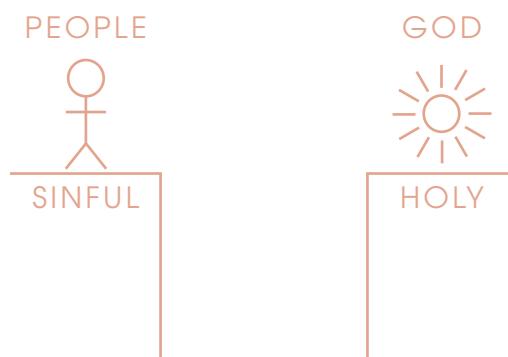
SHARING THE GOSPEL: THE BRIDGE

In the Christian faith, the word “gospel” simply means the “good news” about Jesus - His life, death and resurrection. The message that through belief in Jesus we can enter into a loving relationship with God, experiencing forgiveness and receiving the gift of eternal life, is good news, indeed!

Let's look at a concise and understandable way to communicate the gospel to your friends and family who do not yet know Jesus.



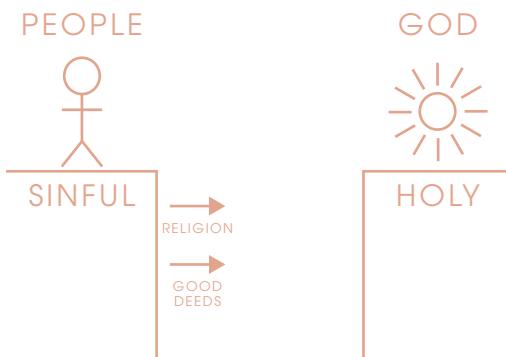
God created people to enjoy a relationship with Him and represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries that protect and allow us to enjoy our relationship with Him and with other people. (Genesis 2:15-16)



Everyone has fallen short of God's standards. The Bible calls that “sin.” Our sin results in our separation from God. Unless our sin is forgiven, we deserve eternal punishment, separated from God forever.

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

“For the wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23a

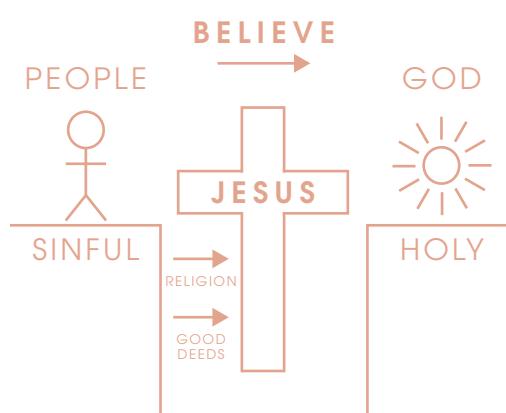
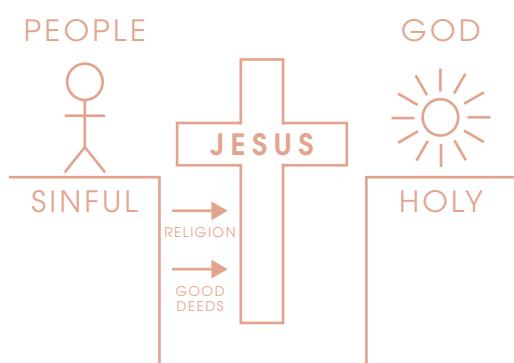


Some try to reach God through religion or by trying to be a good person. But the Bible tells us that there is only one way to God and that is through belief in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'" John 14:6

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and freely give us eternal life. God's only Son Jesus died in our place. He took on Himself the punishment that our sin deserves. Then, Jesus rose from the dead. He conquered sin and death forever.

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8



Everyone who believes in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins receives eternal life. To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God's approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and salvation. Instead, you accept God's free gift of eternal life.

"Very truly I tell you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life." John 5:24

SHARING THE GOSPEL: THREE CIRCLES

In Christianity, the word “gospel” simply means the “good news” about Jesus - His life, death and resurrection. The message that through belief in Jesus we can enter into a loving relationship with God, experiencing forgiveness and receiving the gift of eternal life, is good news, indeed!

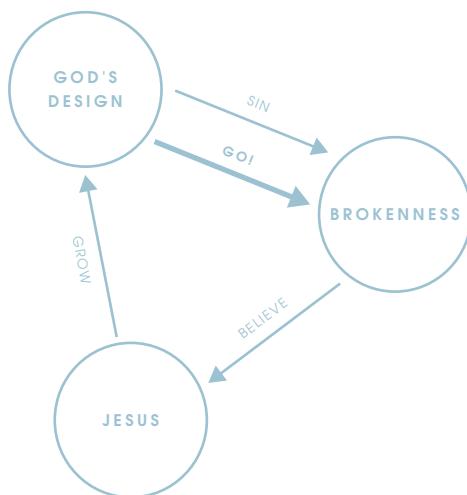
Let's look at a concise and understandable way to communicate the gospel to your friends and family who do not yet know Jesus.

These three circles help us explain the gospel according to the Bible.

Read each section and the scripture verses that follow.

GOD'S DESIGN

Out of God's great love, He created a world that was good. He made people to enjoy a deeply connected relationship with Him and to represent Him through our lives. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31) As a loving Father, He communicated boundaries to protect us and to allow us to fully enjoy our relationships with Him and with other people (Genesis 2:15-17).



BROKENNESS

Yet, when we look around our world, brokenness and evil are evident everywhere - war, famine, disease, corruption. If we are honest, we also see brokenness and evil inside ourselves - deceit, hatred, greed, lust. This is because we have rejected God's design and chosen to follow our own way. Our rejection of God and His ways is what the Bible calls sin. (Romans 3:23) Our sin results in separation from God which the Bible calls death. (Romans 6:23a) Unless our sin is forgiven, we will remain separated from God forever.

JESUS

God does not want to leave us in our sin and brokenness!

God graciously provided a way to forgive our sin and to freely give us eternal life - a life connected to God both now and forever. (Romans 6:23b; John 17:3)

God's only Son Jesus died in our place. He took upon Himself the penalty that we deserve because of our sin. Then, Jesus rose from the dead, and forever defeated the power of sin and death. (Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

BELIEVE

We respond to Jesus by believing in Him for the forgiveness of our sin.

To believe in Jesus means that you no longer try to earn God's approval through what you do, nor do you deny that you need forgiveness and rescue. Instead, you accept God's free gift of eternal life. Belief or faith is simply being convinced or persuaded that something or someone is trustworthy (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Everyone who believes in Jesus is forgiven of their sin and receives eternal life. We can now know God personally and experience the life we were designed to live (John 3:16-17).

Which circle or arrow in the diagram best represents your life right now? Have you put your trust (believed) in Jesus alone to be reconciled to God?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS AND NEXT STEPS:

“Yes.”

Ask: “Tell me about that. When and how did that happen for you?”

Try to discern if the person is trusting in anything other than Christ alone.

Move to Grow and Go

“No, but I want to.”

Affirm their decision to believe and help them to tell God in prayer of their belief in Jesus.

Example: “Thank you God for loving me by sending your Son Jesus to die for me. I believe in His life, death and resurrection to rescue me from my sin and spiritual death. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me the free gift of eternal life.”

Welcome them to the Family of God!

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Move to Grow and Go

“Not Sure” / “Not Yet” / “No.”

Ask: “What is keeping you from trusting in Jesus?”

Try to discern their willingness or unwillingness to believe.

For those willing, help answer their questions if possible.

For those unwilling, offer to pray for them and talk further at another time.

GROW

Everyone who believes in Jesus should then grow in their relationship with God. We grow by knowing God more deeply and living more like Him personally.

We begin to know Him and we become like Him by following His way of living (Ephesians 4:15).

GO

Followers of Jesus have the great calling and opportunity to go into the broken world to share the love of God and the good news of the gospel message (Matthew 28:19-20).

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

Discovery Bible Study is an easy and meaningful way to read the Bible with friends in your life who do not know Jesus. The simple practice consists of reading a section of scripture and answering five basic questions. The goal is to facilitate an encounter between God's truth and your friend's heart. Be praying for God to reveal Himself to your friend through His Word.

Choose a passage of scripture, read it aloud (1-2 times).

Ask someone to retell it in their own words.

Answer these five questions:

1. What does this passage teach about God?
2. What does this passage teach about people or myself?
3. What stands out most in this passage?
4. Since God's word is true, how should I change as a result? What will I do in response to this passage?

Consider the following:

- Is there an example for me to follow?
- Is there a sin for me to avoid?
- Is there a command for me to obey?
- Is there a promise for me to claim?
- Is there a challenge for me to face?

5. With whom am I going to share this passage and what I am learning from the Bible?

Suggested Passages

Read through these 4 Core Passages about Jesus:

- John 3:1-21 (You must be born again)
- Mark 2:1-12 (Jesus has authority to forgive)
- Luke 7:36-50 (Forgive much/Love much)
- Luke 18:7-14 (Self-righteous/irreligious)

Read through the book of John.

Creation to Christ

Read through these passages for bigger picture of the Biblical narrative.

- Genesis 1:1-25
- Genesis 2:4-24
- Genesis 3:1-13
- Genesis 3:14-24
- Genesis 6:5-8
- Genesis 6:9-8:14
- Genesis 8:15-9:17
- Genesis 12:1-8, 15:1-6, 17:1-7
- Genesis 22:1-19
- Exodus 12:1-28
- Exodus 20:1-21
- Leviticus 4:1-35
- Isaiah 53
- Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20
- Matthew 3; John 1:29-34
- Matthew 4:1-11
- John 3:1-21
- John 4:1-26, 39-42
- Luke 5:17-26
- Mark 4:35-41
- Mark 5:1-20
- John 11:1-44
- Matthew 26:17-30
- John 18:1-19:16
- Luke 23:32-56
- Luke 24:1-35
- Luke 24:36-53
- John 3:1-21

G