

<u>Study Plan</u> 1—Is the Bible Trustworthy? 2—Did God Really Create the World? 3—If God is good, why does suffering exist? 4—Why is evil so widespread and powerful? 5—Why is Israel so important? 6—Who is God? 7—What is the purpose of the Ten Commandments? 8—What does it mean to “take a step of faith”? 9—How do the Old and New Testaments fit together? 10—Why did Jesus perform miracles? 11—What did Jesus really say? 12—Is death the end (or the beginning)?	
Why did Jesus Perform Miracles? Power over everything, including death...	When God created the physical universe, He also created natural laws (of physics, chemistry, biology, etc) to keep things operating smoothly. Because these natural laws are generally predictable; they allow us to “do science.” But when the Bible talks about “miracles,” it’s not just talking about an unusual and amazing event. A miracle is a “supernatural” event – something that overcomes natural law. When Jesus came to the earth, His ministry was characterized by miracles. Why?
<u>Remember : Two Problems</u> 1. Sin leads to death — Separation from physical life (our body) — Separation from the source of life (God) “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.” Romans 5:12	As we make this transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament, I want to go back and remind you of the two problems that face every person: Sin leads to death (Genesis 2:16,17). Romans 5:12 reminds us that we inherited a sin nature from Adam.
<u>Remember : Two Problems</u> 1. Sin leads to death — Separation from physical life (our body) — Separation from the source of life (God) — Romans 5:12 We all have sin – we all will die — It’s not just what we do, it’s who we are.	Sin is not just what we do, it’s who we are. Because of sin, our life will be separated from our body. And even more importantly, we are separated from God.
<u>Remember : Two Problems</u> 1. Sin leads to death 2. Breaking the law leads to punishment — We are all guilty of breaking all of God’s laws — Even if we don’t feel guilty, we are legally guilty — We cannot balance sin with good works  “I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him were seraphim, ... And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory.” At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!” Isaiah 6:1-5	Breaking the law leads to punishment (Exodus 20:1-20). We are all guilty of breaking all of God’s laws and even if we don’t feel guilty, we are legally guilty in the eyes of the Righteous Judge of every person in the world. <i>Man-made religions</i> teach us that we should balance our sin by doing good works. But if we begin to understand the perfect righteousness of God (Isaiah 6:1-5), we understand that He will not accept some blending of good and evil.
	When we fully grasp this, we should feel like David in Psalms 38:3,4, burdened by guilt and concerned about God’s pending judgment.

Remember : Two Problems 1. Sin leads to death 2. Breaking the law leads to punishment – We are all guilty of breaking all of God's laws – Even if we don't feel guilty, we are legally guilty – We cannot balance sin with good works  – God is very holy (Isaiah 6:1-4) and, "As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." Romans 3:10-12	And when we see the true nature of man (Romans 3:10-12), it becomes clear that man-made solutions will never work (Proverbs 16:25).
Remember : Two Problems 1. Sin leads to death 2. Breaking the law leads to punishment – We are all guilty of breaking all of God's laws – Even if we don't feel guilty, we are legally guilty – We cannot balance sin with good works  – God is very holy (Isaiah 6:1-4) and, – everyone is very guilty (Romans 3:10-12) • Our only hope: God must do something to save us – something amazing and powerful	These two problems represent the “bad news” in the Bible. Regardless of what <u>people may want to believe</u>, these <i>problems will not go away</i> if we ignore them and they <i>cannot be overcome by human effort</i>. Our only hope is this: God must do something to save us, something amazing and powerful. And in our brief study of the Old Testament, we have seen some clues that point us toward God's ultimate solution for these terrible problems.
Proud Leaders and Wrong Expectations • Jesus came exactly as promised through the family line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David. "He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him. He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him." John 1:10-11	After Jesus' was born, He was raised as a by his mother Mary and her husband Joseph. In the Jewish culture, a man had to be at least 30 years old before doing the work of God. So once Jesus turned 30 years old, He began His ministry. And as He began, He called 12 men to be His closest followers. They were not rich, powerful, leaders, scholars, or famous – just twelve ordinary men. We call these 12 men “apostles of Jesus.” The Greek word for apostle means a person who has been “sent out.” The apostles would soon be sent out by Jesus to bring the good news to the world. Sadly, the Jewish leaders who should've been excited to receive Jesus were too busy with their religious traditions to see that He fit all of the prophecies of the promised Messiah. They rejected Jesus because of He did not follow their religious traditions and because they were jealous of His power and popularity.
Proud Leaders and Wrong Expectations • Jesus came exactly as promised through the family line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David. • John 1:10-11 – but the people of Israel did not receive Him. Why not...? – The people of wanted a Savior who would conquer the Romans and make Israel powerful again – The Jewish leaders used their religious system to display their own self-righteousness. – The Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees hated Jesus because He didn't follow their traditions.	But they were especially disappointed with Jesus because He did not do what they expected. They wanted a Messiah who would make Israel a great, glorious nation again. But Jesus had a much bigger objective than to temporarily rule a small middle-eastern country.
Jesus Forgives Sins (Mark 2:1-12) A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk?' 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!" v.1-4: the man's friends bring him to Jesus for healing v.5: Surprise – Jesus forgives his sins v.6-7: "only God can forgive sins!" v.8-12 Jesus is God and has authority to forgive sins "We have never seen anything like this!" "Miracles" prove that the claims of Jesus are true Other "supernatural" actions...	Jesus quickly became well known, drawing crowds wherever He went. As we read the true stories of Jesus' works in the New Testament, we usually see three groups of people present: people who desire Jesus to <u>meet their needs</u>, teachers of the law who are jealous of Him and want to <u>discredit</u> Him, and a group <u>in the middle</u> that aren't really sure what to think. We see these three groups in Mark 2:1-5. This man's friends go to great trouble to have Jesus heal their friend. But He does something different than they expect – He forgives the man's sins.

	The legal teachers are angered by the claim of Jesus, and in their anger, they speak something true (Mark 2:6,7). They were correct when they said that God is the only one who can forgive sins. Their problem was this: they didn't really know who Jesus was. But in Mark 2:8-12, He demonstrates power and authority that no one had ever seen. Jesus did supernatural things to show that He was the Creator of the universe – the One who created natural law and can overrule it. Note This: Jesus didn't do miracles to impress people – He did them to <u>prove His identity</u> and the <u>truthfulness of His teaching</u>. Here are some more examples:
Power over nature (Mark 4:35-41) 35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. 40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" 41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" Verses 35-36: a group of boats crossing the lake Verses 37-38: the fishermen are afraid of the storm outside of the boat Verse 39: Jesus speaks to the wind and waves Verses 40-41: the disciples are now afraid of the One inside the boat	Mark 4:35-41 – power over nature. This time, Jesus is in the boat with experienced fishermen. There were also other boats around (eyewitnesses). Some people falsely assume that the miracles of Jesus were only successful because of the power of positive thinking of people involved. But that idea obviously doesn't fit when Jesus stops a storm and the waves. Note This: At first, they are afraid of the terrible <u>storm outside</u> of the boat, but afterwards, they are terrified by <u>the One inside</u> of the boat, asking "Who is this?"
Power over demons (Mark 5:1-17) 1 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. 2 When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with impure spirits came from the tombs to meet him. 3 This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. 4 For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. 5 Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. 11 A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. 12 The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." 13 He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. 14 Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. 15 When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. 16 Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. 17 Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. Verses 1-5: a man filled with powerful demons Verses 11-13: Jesus sends 2000 demons out of the man and into some pigs Verses 14-15: the people are now afraid of a power greater than the demons Verses 16-17: instead of receiving Jesus, the people ask Him to leave	Mark 5:1-18 – power over demons. The spiritual powers of darkness inside of this man were too great for anyone to control (v.1-5). But in the presence of Jesus, he ran and confessed the truth about the greater power: "Jesus, Son of the Most High God" (v.6,7). Jesus commands the demons to depart, setting the man free and creating fear in the people (v.11-17). In the face of such power, some seek separation while one seeks to stay with Jesus (v.18). This also demonstrates that demons are not all-knowing: although Jesus knew the pigs would rush down the hill and die, the demons couldn't have predicted it. Note This: Something important about this particular story: Jesus went all the way across the Sea of Galilee to save one demon-possessed man. This is an important reminder about the love of Jesus.
Power to rebuild a body (Luke 5:12-14) 12 While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." 13 Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" And immediately the leprosy left him. 14 Then Jesus ordered him, "Don't tell anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." • Verse 12: "covered in leprosy" (瘰癧) (destroyed nerves and decayed flesh) • Verse 13: Jesus reaches out and touches him: – New flesh is created immediately – Nervous system is rebuilt – Life is restored (personally and community) • Verse 14: as clear evidence of the truth, go and show himself to the priest (the one who judges lepers)	Luke 5:12-14 – power to create new flesh. Leprosy was one of the most feared of all diseases, forcing people into isolation. When a man "covered in leprosy" (Hansen's disease) approaches Jesus, He does the unthinkable: "reached out His hand and touched the man," instantly restoring his flesh, his nervous system, and his life. Note This: The Old Testament laws indicated that if a person touched something (or someone) who was "unclean," the uncleanness contaminated the person. But with Jesus, His cleanness flowed the other way, making the unclean man clean and righteous.

Power to create matter (John 6:1-15) 1 Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), 2 and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. 3 Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. 4 The Jewish Passover Festival was near. 8 Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, 9 "There is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" 10 Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). 11 Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. 12 When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." 13 So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. 14 After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." 15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself. Verses 1-3 : People have come to watch Jesus Verses 8-9 : a small boy with a small lunch Verses 10-11 : the Creator of fish and bread Verses 12-13 : data from leftovers Verses 14-15 : a massive crowd of witnesses	John 6:1-4 - Power to create matter. In the beginning of this story, we see a great crowd of people coming to Jesus, amazed by His miraculous signs. As they get hungry, Jesus asks one of His disciples “where shall we buy bread” to feed these people? There wasn’t a noodle shop or KFC anywhere nearby, only a small boy with just a little food (vs. 8,9). So Jesus has the people sit down, He breaks the loaves and the fish, and in the sight of everyone present, He creates more bread and more fish (vs. 10,11). The people are amazed and decide to make Jesus their national king. But Jesus did not come to be the ruler of the small Jewish nation. He had a much larger purpose with a different mission. Note This: This miracle is also interesting because it would be impossible to fake. Thousands of people experienced the power of Jesus with all of their senses – a huge amount of evidence that would easily convince a jury in a courtroom.
Power over death (John 11:38-50) 38 Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 39 "Take away the stone," he said. "But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." 40 Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" 41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me." 43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go." 45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. 46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. 47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. "What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many signs. 48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation!" Verses 38-40: a worried sister instructs Jesus Verses 41-44: Jesus commands the dead man back to life Verse 45-46: some people believe while others reject Jesus Verses 47-48: the leaders cannot prove Jesus is a fake, so they only have one other option	(Remember to set this up by telling the back-story from the first part of John 11) John 11:38-46 – power over death. Surrounded by supporters and skeptics, Jesus asks people to unseal the tomb of a dead man (v.38-42). At His call, the dead man comes out, wrapped in grave clothes (v.43-45). At such a clear display of His power, <u>“many of the Jews ... put their faith in Him.”</u> But notice this: even though everyone was given the same evidence, <u>some also chose</u> to reject Jesus for <u>fear of losing their position</u> (v.46-48). Note This: This story is a great example of something we often see in the Bible: <u>two groups of people make opposite decisions</u>, even though presented with the <u>same convincing evidence</u>. Don’t ever think that “a little more information” will help you to believe. Usually, a believing heart is needed to properly see the evidence.
The Power of Jesus - Power to heal - Power over nature - Power over demons - Power to rebuild a body - Power to create matter - Power over death - Power to forgive sin The Power of God	We only looked at a sampling of the miracles of Jesus, but it should quickly become obvious that Jesus is not just a man – He is God in the flesh (Immanuel). Especially when we see that He has the power to forgive sin!
But is it true...? - Jesus had well-known enemies ➢ Bad news – they didn’t listen to Him ➢ Good news – they tried to prove He was a fake, but were not able to do it ➢ This “test” helps us know that Jesus’ miracles were real - Why did He do these things? “Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” John 20:30-31	Children and adults enjoy make-believe stories. These are interesting and fun to read, but when we talk about eternity, <u>we need to have the truth</u>, not make-believe. Something to remember about these stories: Jesus had very powerful enemies, people who tried very hard to discredit his mighty works. If Jesus was a fraud, they would have quickly found out and told the world. But as you read the Bible (and other writings of those days), you will never find words that prove His works to be fraudulent. Why did He do these amazing things? To prove that the words He spoke were true.

But is it true...?

- Jesus had well-known enemies
 - Bad news – they didn't listen to Him
 - Good news – they tried to prove He was a fake, but were not able to do it
 - This "test" helps us know that Jesus' miracles were real
- Why did He do these things?
 - To prove that His words are true
 - We need to see His works AND hear His words...

It is not enough to just look at the **powerful works** of Jesus. We also need to **listen to His words** – why did He come and what message does He have for us.

What was His central message – His purpose for coming to this world?

That's our next lesson...