

# The Essential 100

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## A Bible overview plan for 2011-2012

The Essential 100 (E100) is a systematic approach that guides readers through the big picture of the Bible. It is a carefully selected list of short Bible passages—50 from the Old Testament and 50 from the New Testament. Each testament is broken up into ten, five-week series. We will move from Old to New Testaments every five weeks. My goal is to teach three of the five lessons in every series.

The E100 in Sunday school: We will REAP (read, explain, apply, and personalize) one passage each week and finish a series every five weeks. Each lesson will include a key verse for memorization. At the end of two years, we will have covered the essential 100 passages in the Bible.

Additional information: To learn more about The E100 program and to obtain additional resources, visit [e100challenge.com](http://e100challenge.com). Our Sunday school website is [stuartheights.org/sundayschool](http://stuartheights.org/sundayschool).

## The Schedule: The Miracles of Jesus

This is our third five-week series in the New Testament. So far, we have looked at The Early Years of Jesus and The Teachings of Jesus. Now we shift to The Miracles of Jesus.

Date	Lesson	Key Verse(s)	Passage	Speaker
July 3	Feeding the Five Thousand	Luke 9:16-17	Luke 9:1-36	Jim Fleming
July 10	Walking on Water	Matthew 14:31-33	Matthew 14:22-36	Jim Fleming
July 17	Healing a Blind Man	John 9:6-7	John 9:1-41	Jim Fleming
July 24	Healing a Demon-Possessed Man	Mark 5:18-20	Mark 5:1-20	Terry Bolden
July 31	Raising Lazarus from the Dead	John 11:43-44	John 11:1-57	Jim Fleming

## Series Preview

Before we get into the first passage for this series, it is helpful to answer a basic question about Jesus and miracles: Why did Jesus perform miracles? The answer is **John 20:30-31: And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.** Jesus did miracles to help us believe in Him so that we could have **life**. He did miracles for us.

There were several secondary benefits of Jesus' miracles: (1) some people directly benefited from them, (2) His miracles showed His compassion, (3) His miracles helped to bolster His disciples' faith, and (4) His miracles provided Him with an audience to hear His message.

However, the primary reason for Jesus' miracles was so that we could experience the life that He brought. He did miracles for us.

With that basic question answered, let us now turn to the first text for this series: **Luke 9:1-36.**

# The Miracles of Jesus: Feeding the Five Thousand

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## Review

Jesus came to restore a relationship between God and man that was created in **Genesis 1** and ruined in **Genesis 3**. When we listen to Jesus' teachings, remember that He came to restore relationships to their proper place. Jesus, however, was on a very specific timetable and was not in a hurry. Sometimes, Jesus even told those around Him *not* to tell others about what they saw. This gave the witnesses time to process what they saw.

Key thought: Reflection is a significant input to a long obedience in the same direction of sharing Christ

## Preview: 3-D Miracles

**Luke 9:1-36** fits easily into three parts: the sending out, the feeding of the 5,000+, and the change. In all three parts, miracles occur. Jesus distributes miracle-power to the disciples in the sending, He demonstrates miracle-power in the feeding, and He displays a miracle in the change. It is all about Jesus.

## Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Luke 9:1-36 (Author = Luke)

### Sending Out the Twelve

**1 Then He called His twelve disciples** [followers of a rabbi] **together and gave them power** [*dunamis* (explosive dynamite-like power)] **and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases** [notice that demons and diseases are two different things]. **2 He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal** [*iaomai*, to cure, heal, to make whole] **the sick.** **3 And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs** [walking stick] **nor bag** [wallet] **nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece.** [David Guzik: There was a rule among the rabbis of the day that you could not enter the temple area with a staff, shoes, or a moneybag, because you wanted to avoid even the appearance of being engaged in any other business than the service of the Lord]

**4 "Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. 5 And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them** [EasyEnglish: Jews always shook the dust off their feet when they returned from Gentile territory]."

**6 So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel** [to bring **good** news, to announce glad tidings] **and healing everywhere.**

### Herod Seeks to See Jesus

**7 Now Herod the tetrarch** [not Herod the Great who killed Jewish boys, but his son, Herod Antipas—the one responsible for John the Baptist's death] **heard of all that was done by Him; and he was perplexed** [to be entirely at loss—think of the last time you did not know which way to turn while driving], **because it was said by some that John** [John the Baptist] **had risen from the dead, 8 and by some that Elijah had appeared** [not risen from the dead, because he did not die], **and by others that one of the old prophets had risen again. 9 Herod said, "John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?" So he sought** [imperfect active (repetitive action) to seek in order to find] **to see Him.**

### Feeding the Five Thousand

**10 And the apostles** [no longer disciples, but apostles because they were sent with **authority**], **when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida** [a small fishing village that was the home of Andrew, Peter, Philip, and John]. **11 But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him** [Jesus was **popular** with the people]; **and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God** [maybe He gave them one of His standard sermons like the Sermon on the Plain], **and healed those who had need of healing** [notice the difference between Christ's healing and the apostles' healing: the apostles had to get their power from Jesus; Jesus got His power from **Himself**; **Adam Clarke: Observe here five grand effects of Divine grace. 1. The people are drawn to follow him. 2. He kindly receives them. 3. He instructs them in the things of God. 4. He heals all their diseases. 5. He feeds their bodies and their souls. . . . Reader! Jesus is the same to the present moment. Follow him, and he will receive, instruct, heal, feed, and save thy soul unto eternal life.**]. **12 When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here."**

**13 But He said to them, "You give [an imperative] them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people." 14 For there were about five thousand men** [probably 20,000 total people]. **Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups [rows] of fifty." 15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.**

**16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed** [imperfect active again—he kept on blessing it—the word means to praise, celebrate with praises, to invoke blessings, to consecrate a thing with solemn prayers (to ask God's blessing on a thing, to pray God to bless it to one's use)—this fact shows up in all four of the Gospels because Jesus prayed differently] **and broke them** [aorist tense—it only happened one time—Jesus gave thanks **continually** and broke the food **once**], **and gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude. 17 So they all ate and were filled** [filled, satisfied; **David Guzik: What we have in ourselves to give others is insignificant, but when we put it in Jesus' hands, He can do great things with our gifts and talents to touch the lives of others**], **and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments** [broken pieces, remnants] **were taken up by them.**

### Peter Confesses Jesus as the Christ

**18 And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" 19 So they answered and said, "John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again." 20 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God." [From disciples to apostles to believers]**

### Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

**21 And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one** [You did not see that coming, did you?], **22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day." [It was not yet time for this message]**

### Take Up the Cross and Follow Him

**23 Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself [to **forget** one's self, lose sight of one's self and one's own interests], and take up his cross daily, and follow Me [because disciples follow—they do not lead]. **24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it [David Guzik: You don't lose a seed when you plant it, though it seems dead and buried. In truth, you set it free to be what it was always intended to be.].** **25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? **26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.******

### Jesus Transfigured on the Mount

**27 But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God.”**

**28 Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John, and James [the inner circle] and went up on the mountain to pray. **29 As He prayed, the appearance [outside] of His face was altered [literally, **other**], and His robe became white [brilliant from whiteness] and [notice the **and** is added] glistening [to flash out like lightning, to shine, be radiant—think, **sparkler**]. **30 And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, **31 who appeared in glory and spoke [Jamieson, Fausset, Brown: Moses represented “the law,” Elijah “the prophets,” and both together the whole testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures] of His decease [exodus: to exit, depart, departure from life, decease] which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. **32 But Peter and those with him were heavy [burdened, weighed down, depressed] with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory [the curtain of **flesh** was pulled back to display the glory of God] and the two men who stood with Him. **33 Then it happened, as they were parting from Him, that Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” [Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: Peter proposes that they celebrate [the feast of tabernacles] up here instead of going to Jerusalem]—not knowing what he said.************

**34 While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud. **35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!” **36 When the voice had ceased, Jesus was found alone. But they kept quiet, and told no one in those days any of the things they had seen.**** [This was a lot to process, they needed time, and that was OK]**

### Apply (What is the point?)

1. The best way to expand God's Kingdom is to **give** it away
2. Contemplation/meditation/reflection/consideration/deliberation is a good thing
3. God will **provide** (provision for the journey, food for the rest, and protection in the afterlife)

### Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Give away life (whether it be bread, the Gospel, or by showing the glory of God in your life)
2. Spend time reflecting on what God has done for you
3. **Enjoy** the journey with God (I so often forget because I get in such a hurry)

# The Miracles of Jesus: Walking on Water

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## Preview: Waverunners

Some think that becoming a Christian exempts them from life's problems. Unfortunately, that is not true. However, no matter how bad things get, God never abandons His own. Last week we saw that Jesus provided provision for the journey, food for times of rest, and protection in the afterlife. This week we see that Jesus provided companionship in the storm and comfort from the sickness. The amazing thing (to me) is not that Jesus saved the disciples—it is that He did it personally.

Key thought: Jesus is faithful even when we are not, so stay focused on **Jesus** and His Word

## Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Matthew 14:22-36 (Author = Matthew)

### Jesus Walks on the Sea

**22 Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat** [Last week we looked at the feeding of the five thousand and this week's miracle takes place immediately after that (the **same** day, in fact). Jesus' disciples had just witnessed Him provide for their physical hunger and were probably still carrying the baskets of food that would have served as visible reminders of Jesus' provision. Now they are going to get to witness Him providing companionship and calm in a time of storm.] **and go before Him to the other side, while He [Jesus] sent the multitudes away** [remember that Jesus knows what is going to happen, so He is setting the stage for the events in this chapter]. **23 And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray** [again demonstrating to us how important a relationship with the Father is]. **Now when evening** [specific word for **6** pm – **9** pm] **came, He was alone there. 24 But the boat was now** [I think at 6 – 9 pm] **in the middle of the sea** [this sea is about 10-12 miles wide at its widest point], **tossed** [harassed, distressed] **by the waves, for the wind was contrary** [against, opposite, hostile, antagonistic, an opponent].

**25 Now in the fourth watch of the night** [specific word for **3** am – **6** am—implying that the disciples were alone in the storm for a while] **Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw Him** [again (just like last week) we see the focus on them being eyewitnesses] **walking on the sea,**

[We are going to take an aside to **Job 9:1-24** to see Job's take on who could walk on water:

**1 Then Job answered and said** [to his friends]:

**2 "Truly I know it is so, But how can a man be righteous before God?"**

**3 If one wished to contend with Him, He could not answer Him one time out of a thousand.**

**4 God is wise in heart and mighty in strength. Who has hardened himself against Him and prospered?**

**5 He removes the mountains, and they do not know When He overturns them in His anger;**

**6 He shakes the earth out of its place, And its pillars tremble;**

**7 He commands the sun, and it does not rise; He seals off the stars;**

**8 He alone spreads out the heavens, And treads on the waves of the sea;**

**9 He made the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades, And the chambers of the south;**

**10 He does great things past finding out, Yes, wonders without number.**

**11 If He goes by me, I do not see *Him*; If He moves past, I do not perceive Him;**

**12 If He takes away, who can hinder Him? Who can say to Him, 'What are You doing?'**

**13 God will not withdraw His anger, The allies of the proud lie prostrate beneath Him.**

**14 "How then can I answer Him, *And* choose my words to *reason* with Him?"**

**15 For though I were righteous, I could not answer Him; I would beg mercy of my Judge.**

**16 If I called and He answered me, I would not believe that He was listening to my voice.**

**17 For He crushes me with a tempest, And multiplies my wounds without cause.**

**18 He will not allow me to catch my breath, But fills me with bitterness.**

**19 *If it is a matter* of strength, indeed *He is* strong; And if of justice, who will appoint my day *in court*?"**

**20 Though I were righteous, my own mouth would condemn me; Though I *were* blameless, it would prove me perverse.**

**21 "I am blameless, yet I do not know myself; I despise my life.**

**22 *It is* all one *thing*; Therefore I say, 'He destroys the blameless and the wicked.'**

**23 If the scourge slays suddenly, He laughs at the plight of the innocent.**

**24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked. He covers the faces of its judges. If it is not *He*, who else could it be? [Job says the only one that can walk on water is **God**! Now, back to **Matthew 14:26b**]**

**they** [the disciples] **were troubled** [agitated, troubled (because the movement of the parts of a thing are going back and forth), inward commotion, removed of calmness of mind, disturbed, disquieted, restless, stirred up, anxious, distressed, perplexed], **saying, "It is a ghost** [*phantasma*: appearance, an apparition, specter]!" **And they cried out for fear** [fear, dread, terror, that which strikes terror].

**27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer** [an imperative: to be of good cheer, to be of good courage (this phrase reminds me of advice you would give to the cowardly lion from *The Wizard of Oz*)]! **It is I** [literally, **I am**]; **do not be afraid** [an imperative: don't be scared, don't be afraid, don't be alarmed, don't be startled, don't be amazed, don't fear]."

**28 And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command** [command, order] **me to come to You on the water."** [Adam Clarke: A weak faith is always wishing for signs and miracles. . . . He [Jesus] is to be credited on his *own word*, because he is the TRUTH]

**29 So He** [Jesus] **said, "Come** [an imperative]." **And when Peter had come down out of the boat** [John Ortberg: *If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat*], **he walked on the water to**

**go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous** [strong, mighty, strong, violent, forcibly uttered, firm—Peter took his **eyes** off Jesus (mowing example)], **he was afraid** [agitated, troubled (because the movement of the parts of a thing are going back and forth), inward commotion, removed of calmness of mind, disturbed, disquieted, restless, stirred up, anxious, distressed, perplexed]; **and beginning to sink** [Adam Clarke: *It was by faith in the power of Christ he was upheld. . . It was not the violence of the winds, nor the raging of the waves, which endangered his life, but his littleness of faith*] **he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”** [An imperative: to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction, save from suffering, save from perishing. Bruce: *It is one thing to see a storm from the deck of a stout ship, another to see it in the midst of the waves*]

**31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught** [to take in addition, to lay hold of, take possession of, overtake, attain, attain to, to lay hold of or to seize upon anything with the hands, to take hold of, lay hold of] **him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why** [who, which, what] **did you doubt** [doubt, waiver, the root word means, **twice** (i.e., pulled two ways)]?” **32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased** [to grow weary or **tired**, to cease from violence, cease raging (i.e., the wind got tired from fighting the Lord of all Creation)].

**33 Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped** [to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence] **Him, saying, “Truly** [truly, of a truth, in reality, most certainly] **You are the Son of God.”**

### Many Touch Him and Are Made Well

**34 When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. 35 And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region** [increased faith causes increased **activity** for the One you have faith in (i.e., the disciples got busy)], **brought to Him all who were sick** [miserable, to be ill], **36 and begged Him that they might only touch the hem** [the extremity or prominent part of a thing, edge, skirt, margin; the fringe of a garment; in the New Testament a little appendage hanging down from the edge of the mantle or cloak, made of twisted wool; a tassel, tuft] **of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well** [to preserve through danger, to bring safely through (to save, i.e. cure one who is sick, bring him through); to save, keep from perishing; to save out of danger, rescue. Coffman: *He needed no staff, as did Moses; he needed no mantle, as Elijah; he required no instrument except himself. His word alone cast out demons, stilled the tempest, changed the water into wine, and raised the dead!*].

Challenge: Problems are our opportunities to get out the boat and follow Jesus.

### Apply (What is the point?)

1. The **storm** is when we show our allegiance
2. God will **provide** (companionship in the storm and comfort in the sickness)

### Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Build up a pattern of obedience before the storm so that **when** storms come, my habit is focusing on Jesus and His Word
2. **Enjoy** the journey with God (I so often forget because I get in such a hurry)

# The Miracles of Jesus: Healing a Blind Man

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Last week this message was preached by Gary and Brian in our Sunday morning services. Since many of us heard that message, I am going to spend a lot of time today answering questions that were posed about that text. Feel free to interrupt me today while I am teaching to ask questions.

## Preview: I See What You Mean

After hearing about the miraculous healing of a blind man ([John 9:6-7](#)), the disciples tried to over-analyze the blind man's predicament ([John 9:1-2](#)). However, in the midst of all the arguing, the blind man had the clearest insight of all. He started with a basic understanding of the facts ([John 9:11, 25](#)) and formed an opinion about Jesus ([John 9:17](#)) but finally made a decision to believe ([John 9:38](#)), in spite of the consequences ([John 9:34](#)). That is a good description of how to become a Christian.

Key thought: Religious **arrogance** is blinding

## Read & Explain (What does it mean?): John 9 (Author = John)

### A Man Born Blind Receives Sight

**1 Now as Jesus passed by** [[John 8](#) talks about the fact that Jesus had just left the temple, so we can assume He is still relatively close to the temple], **He saw** [the text does not say that the disciples saw the man] **a man who was blind from birth** [the disabled would camp out next to the temple to beg for money]. **2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"** [To a degree, the disciples are correct theologically—Adam's sin did cause all men to be spiritually impaired and physically limited (death, sickness, etc.)—but this question shows their callousness (hopefully the blind man could not **hear** this question)]

**3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works** [business, employment—Jesus' business was to reveal God] **of God should be revealed in him.** [**Am I willing to be physically impaired so that the glory of God can be evident in my life?** ([2 Corinthians 12:7-10](#))] **4 I must** [the word for necessary] **work** [labor, work, make gains by doing business, work out, exercise, perform, produce, work for, earn by working, acquire] **the works** [business, employment] **of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming** [**What does this, 'night,' refer to?** The time when Christ would no longer be on earth—probably only six months away here] **when no one can work** [labor, work, make gains by doing business, work out, exercise, perform, produce, work for, earn by working, acquire—Jesus is saying that He is the only one that can accomplish what He was sent to do—we can't work our way to heaven, but **Jesus** can work our way to heaven]. **5 As long as I am** [BOOM!] **in the world, I am** [BOOM!] **the light of the world."** [I love the bold, audacious, secure, and gloriously confident statements of Jesus. Jesus even uses an analogy of light that is relevant to the story (we use light to see). **Coffman: The world cannot do without Jesus**]

**6 When He had said these things, He spat** [Greek = *ptuo* (pronounced, ptoo'-o)] **on the ground and made clay** [**Albert Whiting: Adam was made from dirt and was blind. Jesus healed the man by using**

dirt so he could see, not only physically but also spiritually. God does not mind getting His hands dirty] **with the saliva** [Barnes' New Testament Notes: The Jews regarded *spittle* as medicinal to the eyes when diseased]; **and He anointed** [spread on] **the eyes** [perhaps this is referring to the eyelids, but we cannot be sure since there is no Greek word in the New Testament for eyelids] **of the blind man with the clay.** [Jesus got **personally** involved; David Guzik: In this miracle, Jesus took all the initiative. The blind man did not come to Jesus and ask to be healed, Jesus came to Him. . . . Not many people would appreciate having mud made with spit rubbed in their eyes. Some would look at how Jesus did this miracle and object, saying that it was offensive, inadequate, or even harmful to rub mud made with spit in a man's eyes. In the same way, some feel that the gospel is *offensive*. . . In the same way, some feel that the gospel is *inadequate*. . . In the same way, some feel that the gospel is *harmful*, that the free offer of grace in Jesus will cause people to sin.] **7 And He said to him, "Go** [an imperative], **wash** [an imperative] **in the pool of Siloam** [Where was this pool? Just southeast of Jerusalem (probably less than half a mile from where they were standing—**Terry** can show you).]" **(which is translated, Sent). So he went** [obedience #1] **and washed** [obedience #2], **and came back seeing** [most people interpret this as the blind man coming back to Jesus, but he actually went back home—as indicated in **John 9:8**]. [Giving sight to the blind is a work of God alone (**Psalm 146:8**) and is a sign of the Messiah (**Isaiah 35:5**).]

**8 Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" 9 Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." 10 Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"**

**11 He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight."** [This is a perfect example of a testimony. Telling the stories of how we came to meet Jesus and how our lives are different as a result. It does not have to contain a miracle, but it has to be our story.]

**12 Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."** [So Jesus is not around for what happens next—and, this man has never seen Jesus with his own eyes, so the blind man would not recognize Jesus even if he saw Jesus]

### The Pharisees Excommunicate the Healed Man

**13 They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees** [enemies of Jesus and Jesus' cause who were focused on outward piety and not inward obedience—pay attention to how hard the Pharisees try to make their application of Scripture correct and exclude Jesus (they serve as a great warning to us all not to fall in love with our own applications of Scripture)]. **14 Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. 15 Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."**

**16 Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath** [They were missing the Creator because of misinterpretation of the Creator's rules—the Old Testament does **not** prohibit what Jesus did—their manmade extensions of the Old Testament Sabbath rules did, though. Barnes' New Testament Notes: Men often assume their own interpretations of the Scriptures to be infallible, and then judge and condemn all others by those interpretations.]"

**Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner** [in the Bible (as strange as it may sound to us), there is a difference between one who sins and a sinner—a sinner is someone who has made an art of sin] **do such signs?”** [They should have remembered their Old Testament because the Messiah was the One who could do such things as this] **And there was a division among them.** [Jesus always causes division]

**17 They said to the blind man again, “What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”** [He was, “the Man called Jesus” and now, “He is a prophet”]

**18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight** [their minds were made up and they were not interested in being confused with the facts], **until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. 19 And they asked them, saying, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”** [The man formerly blind had already answered this question, but arrogance usually rules—even in religious circles]

**20 His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 21 but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself** [If we ever get a chance to testify about Jesus, we should do it! They had an opportunity to testify of Christ and they passed. **Did the blind man’s parents become believers?** It does not appear that they were headed that direction].” **22 His parents said these things because they feared the Jews** [they should have been excited to testify about Jesus because He healed their son and their son could now support himself instead of begging for a living], **for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue** [What does put out of the synagogue mean? **Excommunicated.** The Fourfold Gospel; To be put out of the synagogue was to be put on a level with the heathen, and to be left without a country or a religious fellowship; Barnes’ New Testament Notes: A solemn exclusion for ever from the worship of the synagogue . . . and an exclusion from all intercourse with the people. This was called the *curse*, and so thoroughly excluded the person from all communion whatever with his countrymen, that they were not allowed to sell to him anything, even the necessaries of life.]. **23 Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”** [Were his parents kicked out of the synagogue? **No**—they played it safe]

**24 So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, “Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner.”** [God save us from such arrogant ignorance. The ironic thing is that the formerly blind man *had* been giving God the glory—the Pharisees just did not recognize Jesus as God.]

**25 He answered and said, “Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see** [I LOVE this guy—he stays on message].” **26 Then they said to him again, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”** [Arrogance persists in the face of truth] **27 He answered them, “I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples? [Ha ha ha!]” 28 Then they reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are Moses’ disciples. 29 We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from.”**

**30 The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!** [i.e., only God can heal and that makes Him God and you do

not know God] **31 Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. 32 Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind** [there were no Old Testament accounts of the blind receiving their sight—but this was listed as a sign of the coming of the Messiah and the Jews would not accept that]. **33 If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.** [So he knows his theology, too! I would not have anticipated such reasoning and intelligence from a blind beggar—but that is more of a statement about me than beggars. **The Fourfold Gospel: Opposition enlarges the faith and the confession of this man.**”]

**34 They answered and said to him, “You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?”** [Can you hear the arrogance?] **And they cast him out.** [**The People’s New Testament: This miracle was officially investigated by the enemies of Christ, and they were compelled to admit it. The judicial investigation showed that he was born blind, that he was cured, and that Jesus gave him sight.**]

### True Vision and True Blindness

**35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him** [Again, Jesus gets personally involved—isn’t He great?], **He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?”**

**36 He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord,** [He was, “**the Man called Jesus**” and then, “**He is a prophet**” and now, “**Lord**”] **that I may believe in Him?”**

**37 And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.”**

**38 Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.** [Literally, to kiss the hand in token of reverence; to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence. Such a beautiful picture of a man made physically whole who was still spiritually blind until someone explained who Jesus was. It is not enough to do good works and expect men and women to come to Christ. We must explain who Christ is. On a side note, this was probably the first time this man ever got to worship—his blindness would have excluded him from worship in the temple. **The People’s New Testament: He believes with the heart, confesses with the mouth, and shows his faith by his homage. Does the man remain a disciple long-term?** Probably, but we do not know for sure]

**39 And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”** [Translation: If you are looking for the truth, you will find it in Jesus, but if you are closed minded (blind) to the truth, it will blind you further; **Barnes’ New Testament Notes: This is always the effect of truth. Where it does not soften it hardens the heart; where it does not convert, it sinks into deeper blindness and condemnation.**]

**40 Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him** [perhaps these were the Pharisees that were still reconciling healing apart from the divine] **heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?”**

**41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin** [If I admit that I cannot see on my own then I can be forgiven]; **but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.** [They claimed to know the truth, but rejected the Light, and that kept them in the darkness of their sin]

Geneva Study Bible: Christ enlightens all those by the preaching of the Gospel who acknowledge their own darkness, but those who seem to themselves to see clearly enough, those he altogether blinds

Coffman: Those who would receive life and salvation of Christ must come in meekness and humility, confessing their sins, denying themselves, and crying, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." The entrenched pride and conceit of the religious leaders were utterly repugnant to the Lord; and, as long as men were wrapped up in such a cloak of self-righteousness, there was absolutely no hope for them. As long as they cried, "We see!" their sin remained.

### Apply (What is the point?)

1. Lori Drake: The Pharisees **ruined** a really good day for a man who used to be blind!
2. Salvation is **both** a process and an instantaneous act [He was, "the Man called Jesus" and then, "He is a prophet" and then, "Lord" and then He was worshipped]
3. Religious arrogance can cause us to miss heaven
4. The Bible never gets **old**

### Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Don't rain on God's parade
2. Don't rush salvation—give people time to 'get' it (it is simple, but not simplistic)
3. Constantly reevaluate what I believe and rely on the Scripture (and not man's application)
4. Continue to study things after the **teaching** is over

### Summary (David Guzik)

John 9 paints a picture of how Jesus heals blind souls.

- We are all spiritually blind from birth
- Jesus takes the initiative in healing us from blindness
- Jesus does a work of *creation* in us, not reformation
- In this work, Jesus calls us to be obedient to what He commands
- Jesus commands us to be washed in the water of baptism
- We become a mystery to our former associates, not even seeming to be the same person
- We display loyalty to Jesus when we are persecuted, boldly and plainly testifying of His work in our lives and confounding others
- We pass from little knowledge to greater knowledge, and this brings us to greater worship and adoration

Last question: **What was the blind man's name?** We can reread this story trying to find the man's name and we will be amazed at the lengths that John goes to in order to **hide** his name.

- We never know the name of this man born blind. Jesus is the important One; a true disciple is content to remain anonymous if his Lord gets the glory

## The Miracles of Jesus: Healing a Demon-Possessed Man

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### Preview: In the Name of Jesus (Mark 5:1-20, Luke 8:26-39, Matthew 8:28-34)

Let us briefly deal with the seeming disparity of these parallel passages. Some claim these are two different occurrences, but the likelihood of the story of the legion of demons being cast out into pigs and the pigs running down a hill to drown themselves in the Galilee seems highly improbable. We must first understand the purpose and audiences to which these Gospels were written. **Matthew** was written to Jews whereas **Mark** and **Luke** were written to Romans and Greeks, respectively. The two primary objections come from Matthew (different audience); with the first being that it lists a different location.

The country of the Gergesenes was a general and large location east and south of Galilee. It was filled with small towns and villages inhabited predominately by Jews. Given the prejudices of the Jews and Gentiles, this is important when trying to reach each different ethnic group, so Matthew uses the Jewish term for the area. Mark and Luke refer to it as the country of the Gadarenes, a Gentile name. Gadara was the largest and most prosperous cities of the Decapolis (meaning ten cities) named by the Romans. Gadara itself was several miles east of the Jordan about two-thirds of the way down from Galilee to the Dead Sea. It is not really close to Galilee, but many Greeks and Romans would understand the area by mentioning the country of the Gadarenes.

The second, and to many a larger stumbling block, is that Matthew writes that there are two men inhabited by demons. Several thoughts here greatly delude this objection. If there were two demon-possessed men, is stating there is one inaccurate? If I say there is a man in the room when there are actually seven, am I lying or am I wrong? Of course not! Mark and Luke say there is **a man**, not *only* one man. There could very well have been two men with one man being more prominent or outspoken than the other. This is often the case where you find two or more involved in some form of wickedness or depravity—there is usually a dominate person. There is also the possibility of one Jewish demoniac and one more dominant Gentile. Matthew would want to include the Jewish man because of his audience, whereas Mark and Luke would focus on the Gentile man for their audience (maybe because Jesus' miracles among Gentiles were so few). Whatever the specifics, these arguments allow plausible explanations for the marrying of these passages.

The area of our miracle today is northeast Galilee. There is a large graveyard in this area (evident even two thousand years later) used by the Gadara region and the topography is best suited for the event that will occur. This makes this a short ride from the Capernaum area where Jesus spent the majority of His time, did the majority of His miracles, and had just left ministering. The story follows Jesus' working in northern Galilee, after speaking many parables, doing miracles, and sending the multitudes away. Jesus and His disciples enter the boat, where Jesus goes to sleep and a vicious storm immediately envelopes the boat. You probably remember the story: the disciples (many were experienced fisherman) are terrified, awaken Jesus who calms the sea and the winds, and the disciples are dumbfounded by this display of power and authority. It is interesting to note that there is not any recorded word from the disciples from the time of this display of power, through the miracle of the demoniacs, until they all return across the sea.

My take on this: From the time of leaving northern Galilee, a spiritual battle ensues. We know the miracle of the demoniac is a serious spiritual battle. During Jesus' time on Earth, I believe Satan watched Him closely looking for every opportunity to stop Jesus or cause Him to fail His purpose (though the Devil clearly did not know what it was). In my opinion, the storm was a satanic broadside. Prior passages indicate Jesus was exhausted and **Mark 4** states other small ships followed His. Satan may very well have thought, "He is heading toward my territory." Why might he think that? How about the tombs, the large presence of demons, and the lack of devoted followers of Jehovah (Jewish pig farmers?) Satan might have seen this as an opportunity to deter the Son of God, kill some of His followers, or at least stop the Holy One from "invading" his territory.

## Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Mark 5:1-20 (Author = Mark)

### A Demon-Possessed Man Healed

**1 Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. 2 And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3 who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, 4 because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. 5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.**

The demoniac was ready and immediately jumps into the fray. **Mark 5:6** says when he saw Jesus from far away, he ran towards Him. Jesus barely gets out of the boat (**immediately**) and the demons step up for the attack. The man lived in the tombs (and these still exist today), a place of decay and corruption, far away from any positive or opposing influence. **Mark 5:5** shows activity of the individuals and says the man was, "**crying out**." Why? He was tormented, miserable, and unable to find his way back to a peaceable life. The **cutting himself** could have also been from the demons. He may have been miserable enough to want out of this life, but the demons would not let him. Alternatively, the demons could have so hated what he represented that they wanted to alter/mar his visage. What did he represent? **Genesis 1:27** says we are created in the very **image of God**. **1 Corinthians 11:7** says we are also **the glory of God**.

**6 When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. 7 And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me."**

**8 For He said to him, "Come out of the man, unclean spirit!"**

Timeline (and all of this probably happened in a matter of just a few minutes—at most):

- The **frantic** run
- The **firm** command
- The **failed** feint
- The **foolish** counter-attack
- The **forced** surrender
- The **fearful** plea

In Western culture, we read and write using timelines, but the Eastern culture of communicating deemphasizes the timeline. The purpose and message are much more important. This is why the timeline of the Bible is often so hard to follow for us. I believe **Mark 5:6b-8** fall into a timeline in a reverse or mixed up order from the printing. We know **he ran** from verse six occurs first, because of verse two where he met Jesus **immediately** after He got out of the boat. After the man runs up Jesus says, **“Come out!”** This happens next from the past tense of **Mark 5:8** placing it before **Mark 5:7**. The response of the demons is, **“What have I to do with You?”** This is a Jewish response used at least eight times in scripture meaning “No.” or “I don’t want to.” or “Do I have to?”

Also, in Middle Eastern thought (especially at the time of Christ), it was believed that in a disagreement, fight, or verbal joust, that using the other person’s name gave you additional power over that individual. Therefore, following their attempted refusal the demons use the name of Jesus. That is when (I believe) the end of **Mark 5:6 (worshipped Him)** actually occurs. **Philippians 2:10** tells us that **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**. The word worship in **Mark 5:6** literally means to fall on your knees and touch the ground with your forehead. This is not out of love that they worshipped Him, but out of necessity. Without saying a word, the power of Jesus name overwhelms the demons, they bow, and then they plead, **“do not torment me.”** Notice it is not the man but the demons speaking, and they fear Jesus and His judgment. They know their bleak future (see **Matthew 25:41**) and refer to it as torment.

Personal thought: If the demons know their future and feared it, why is it that we know the future of those around us, yet we do not fear it? The knowledge of the future fate of those all around us ought to move us to tears and action and this thought should not just be pushed aside and forgotten.

**9 Then He asked him, “What is your name?” And he answered, saying, “My name is Legion; for we are many.”**

- The **faltering** rebellion

The demons have not given up the fight, for as Jesus asks their name (He knows!), they give a number instead. The word legion was a numerical term that differed over the life of the Roman Empire, but at the time of Jesus, it represented 6,826. Remember knowing and using another’s name in a contest was considered a power play, so the demons (bowing before Jesus with heads to the ground) refuse their name. Seems foolish, but we never know when we are licked either.

**10 Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country.**

**11 Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains. 12 So all the demons begged Him, saying, “Send us to the swine, that we may enter them.” 13 And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea.**

- The **fleeing** alternative

The demons at this point probably realized it is over, but fearing their final place of torment plead for leniency, offer a way out, and plead to Jesus for leniency. **“Now a large herd of swine was feeding there**

**near the mountains.**” What has always astonished me is that Jesus says, “OK,” and grants their wish. Why? There are probably many thoughts to learn here, here are three of many glimpses of Jesus:

1. Jesus is **all-powerful**. Satan and his demons did all the fighting, but Jesus did all the winning. It is as if He put no effort into it. He says two things (**Come out** and **What is your name?**), but look at what they do:
  - a) They throw a storm at Him (trying to kill Him, His disciples, and/or followers) and maybe trying to lead Him on another course (**Mark 4**)
  - b) They run at Him (remember their strength) (**Mark 5:3-6**)
  - c) They try to use the power of His name (**Mark 5:7**)
  - d) They try to refuse His command (**Mark 5:7**)
  - e) They refuse to answer His question directly (**Mark 5:9**)

Jesus is all-powerful and is always in control. This story eloquently shows that.

2. Jesus is **loving**. The souls of two men are at stake and He is **not willing that any should perish** (**2 Peter 3:9d**). He went out of His way to reach one or two . . . how about me?
3. Jesus is **just**. Who lived in this area? Answer: Jews. What was their profession? Answer: pig-farmers. These were not the devout followers of God. They lived beyond the outskirts of society. They did not go looking for Jesus, but Jesus came to them (the story of us all). Pigs were anathema to the Jews and represented total rebellion to God. I believe that Jesus is pronouncing judgment on this community by sending the demons into the pigs, and the pigs running down the hill to drown. Why? Not totally to condemn them, but to get their attention. **2 Peter 3:9d-e** says He is **not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance**. His justness demands judgment, but His grace abounds (to every one of us)! Jesus came looking for him/them just as He came looking for us.

**14 So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. 15 Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. 16 And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine. 17 Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region.**

**Mark 5:11, 14, 16** say that not only were farmers hanging out nearby, but also they were close enough to see the whole event unfold. Reading this passage raises many questions to me. Why would anyone go near a tormented, wailing, violent, demon-possessed man? This was not just a group of thrill-seekers. They made a living near him and they literally lived nearby. They had grown at the least tolerant, if not comfortable with him close by. This did not bother them, but when their livelihood was affected . . .

Personal thought: I am curious what percentage of the universal church/SHBC/my Sunday school class/my small group are not bothered by or completely tolerate the wickedness around us, but if the wallet is touched, the gloves come off?

Why go and tell others? Simple answer: 2000 pigs. This would have affected many people besides the farmers, like butchers, food resellers, fertilizer users, and food buyers. Things would change like diets and pocketbooks.

**Mark 5:15:** “**Afraid**”: to put to flight by terrifying. There is no indication of fear from the demoniacs before, but now? **Mark 5:15.** Why? I wonder if conviction had not started to set in? If the demoniac can change, what then can my excuse possibly be? I believe they liked things exactly the way they were. They had grown comfortable. Here a man has been reborn/given new life. He can now be a productive member of society, but instead of rejoicing, they ask Jesus to leave.

Personal thought: How many times do we sit in church and hear a message thinking, “I sure hope Billy-Joe-Jim-Bob is listening, because he really needs this message.” How often do we miss the message aimed right at us? Sometimes we may even hear that still small voice say, “What about you?” We get uncomfortable, don’t we? Our tendency, unfortunately, is not to yield, but to argue with the voice or make excuses of why we can’t . . . it is too difficult . . . I am better than \_\_\_\_\_ . . . I am comfortable with my life right where it is now!

I firmly believe these people felt that conviction and rather than yield and do something about it, they asked the conviction (Jesus) to leave.

**18 And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. 19 However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” 20 And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.**

Real and thorough change had taken place in this man’s life and he did what came natural. He desired to cling to Jesus. However, Jesus had an answer to this. It was not go to Bible school and seminary until he have all the answers about life and God. It was not join a church, study the Word, memorize scripture, and practice being the best Christian you can be. **Mark 16:15: And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”** Jesus’ message was, “Go and tell!” What did the man do? He obeyed. He went. He told. Moreover, what happened? People responded (**Mark 5:20**).

### Apply (What is the point?)

1. God did not call us to be **comfortable**
2. There is no one out of the reach of Jesus
3. Jesus still saves the living from among the dead

### Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Everyone has a comfort zone: **Get out** of it! This life is not about you or me. It is about God! He has saved you for a purpose . . . His purpose.
2. Everyone has a similar story: **Share** it! We were all dead and have been made alive. We were all blind, but now we see. We were all lost, but now we have been found. Let someone know.
3. Where do you see a need today: **Do** it! He has called you to do something (**Ephesians 2:10**). What can you do? What will you do?

# The Miracles of Jesus: Raising Lazarus from the Dead

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## Review

This is the last lesson in a series of lessons on the miracles of Jesus. There is a progressively more powerful display of Jesus' supernatural power occurring here that He uses to teach us:

- In feeding the 5,000, Jesus shows His supernatural power to meet our **physical** needs
- In walking on water, Jesus shows His supernatural power over **natural** laws
- In healing a blind man, Jesus shows His supernatural power to **heal**
- In healing a demon-possessed man, Jesus shows His supernatural power over **Satan**
- In raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus shows His supernatural power over **death**

Jesus teaches us many things about Himself through these miracles. The first thing that I observed about Jesus' miracles is that He personally gets involved. However, that is the story of Jesus, isn't it? When God showed up in the Old Testament, people got scared and ran away. Therefore, He showed up in the New Testament in the form of Jesus—God got personally involved.

## Read & Explain (What does it mean?): John 11 (Author = John)

### The Death of Lazarus

**1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany** [this is not the same Lazarus that appeared in the story of the rich man and Lazarus—Lazarus was a common name at this time], **the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3 Therefore the sisters** [Mary and Martha] **sent to Him** [Jesus], **saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."** [David Guzik: **Where there is a true bond of love, there is no need to request a favor; it is enough to make the need known**]

**4 When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."** [Sounds similar to the blind man's reason for being sick, doesn't it? A lesson to learn that I skipped in the story of the blind man is that your sickness can be for God's glory. Christians get sick and die. This does not prove that Satan and sin win, but rather that Christianity is not the panacea for all earthly illnesses. Jesus will fix all illnesses one day, but that day is not today. We are to trust Him now in whatever state we find ourselves in.]

**5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus** [this statement should not imply that there were people that Jesus did not love because, obviously, Jesus loved everyone, but this family took special care of Jesus while He was on the earth and He loved them]. **6 So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was** [That does not sound like love to me—we are saved to serve, not to sit. **Why is Jesus sitting?** Because the power and glory of God would not be displayed as richly and as magnificently as they will be if He delays. God knows the end of the story and has an infinitely wide-reaching view—never doubt His timing.]. **7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."**

**8** *The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?”*

**9** *Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. **10** But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” **11** These things He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.”*

**12** *Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” **13** However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. [Moreover, before you go throwing stones at the disciples’ slow understanding, please remember we would not have understood either—Jesus was intentionally keeping this revelation from them until they needed to know]*

**14** *Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. **15** And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.”*

**16** *Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.” [Thomas is ready to lay down his own life to die with Jesus—because the disciples thought Jesus would be stoned to death by the Jews at Judea. I love Thomas. Without Thomas, we would not have many answers that we have about Jesus—because Thomas doubted and asked many questions.]*

### **I Am the Resurrection and the Life**

**17** *So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. [Why four days? David Guzik: Jesus did this in light of the Jewish superstition of that day that said a soul stays near the grave for three days, hoping to return to the body. Therefore, it was accepted that after four days there was absolutely no hope of resuscitation.] **18** Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away [on the east side]. **19** And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. [Jews were well known for their profound and prolonged mourning for a dead relative. They would get dressed in all black, put ashes on their heads, and remain in silence or sing mournful songs to mourn the dead. Moreover, almost all of it was highly prescriptive.]*

**20** *Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. **21** Now Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. **22** But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”*

**23** *Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”*

**24** *Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” [Martha is a realist and is quick to make logical sense of everything (kind of like me)]*

**25** *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. **26** And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”*

**27** *She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”*

### Jesus and Death, the Last Enemy

**28** And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, “The Teacher has come and is calling for you.” **29** As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly and came to Him. **30** Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. **31** Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, “She is going to the tomb to weep there.”

**32** Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet [this is where we usually find Mary], saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” [I am not Colombo, but it appears to me that the sisters have been talking with each other about Jesus and where He should have been because they both make the same statement]

**33** Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping [**loud** mourning—visible and passionate mourning for the dead], and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned [literally, **snorted** in anger] in the spirit and was troubled [agitated, irritated]. **34** And He said, “Where have you laid him?”

They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.”

**35** Jesus wept [shed tears—**silent** and under control]. **36** Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!”

**37** And some of them said, “Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?” [Notice how big a deal healing the blind man was to the Jews—they thought if you could heal the blind, that overcoming death would be no big thing!]

### Lazarus Raised from the Dead

**38** Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

**39** Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” [Just a little foreshadowing]

Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been *dead* four days.”

**40** Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?” [One of the more interesting studies in Scripture is looking at all of the places where God repeats Himself—when He does, amazing things usually immediately follow] **41** Then they took away the stone *from the place where the dead man was lying*. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. **42** And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said *this*, that they may believe that You sent Me.” **43** Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” [The old joke is that Jesus had to say Lazarus’ name otherwise everyone that was dead in that area would have come forth] **44** And he who had died came out [BOOM! So the one thing that was left to defeat was now defeated—death. There is no fear in life and there is no fear in death—my Jesus has beaten both. He lived a perfect life and He has the power over death—what have we to fear?] bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.”

## The Plot to Kill Jesus

**45 Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.**

**46 But some of them went away** [this should encourage us to not get discouraged when we tell the story of what God has done in our life and some do not believe—there will always be some who do not believe, but that does not mean that we stop telling the story—because there will always be some who do believe] **to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. 47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. 48 If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”** [Their power and their positions were more important than their preaching (because they should have recognized that Jesus was the messiah and they should have been preaching Him)]

**49 And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, 50 nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.” 51 Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, 52 and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.**

**53 Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death** [which is poor logic since Jesus has already demonstrated that He has power over death]. **54 Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.**

**55 And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. 56 Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, “What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?” 57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.** [This might appear to be a strange place to stop today, but this postscript illustrates that Jesus’ miracles did not win Him friends in high places]

Lazarus’ resurrection did not win him many friends either—later on in [John 12](#), we read that Lazarus was the target of the Jewish leaders and a plot was hatched to **kill** Lazarus as well because too many people believed in Jesus. The lesson is that a changed life (one snatched away from the power of sin) is a powerful argument for the supernatural power of Jesus.

## Apply (What is the point?)

1. Jesus got personally involved
2. **Love** can cause strong emotions
3. **Death** is not the end of the story

## Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Get involved
2. Love **visibly**
3. Tell **His** story