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MONDAY

JOHN 20:1-4

[1] Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. [2] So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." [3] So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. [4] Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

Imagine you are one of the disciples who has followed Jesus for three years. You have left your vocation, your family, your hometown—you have literally left everything to follow Jesus. Three years into your journey with Jesus things take a turn for the worst. Your Messiah, the one you have been following, has been killed and literally all hope has been lost. Sitting with the other disciples, wondering how this could happen and how to begin picking up the pieces of shattered expectations, Mary Magdalene walks into the room and proclaims, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb..."

Notice Peter and John's (the one whom the Lord loved) response to this news: they run to the tomb for hope has come again. For these disciples, no better news could have come from Mary—the tomb is empty, our Messiah is alive! And even though we have the full story at our fingertips, can we approach holy week with this same excitement? Can we run to the empty tomb knowing that our Savior has risen from the grave and therefore given us great hope in this world? Can we run with zeal, passion and vigor into the presence of Jesus? Church, this week let us celebrate the death of Christ and let us run headlong into the glorious hope which the resurrection of Christ brings.

TUESDAY

JOHN 20:24-29

Sometimes in church circles we give Thomas a hard time for doubting in the resurrection of Jesus. But can you blame him? Dead men do not come back to life! Sometimes we are far too harsh on the biblical characters for their lack of faith (hidden in that assumption is that our faith is great!). What can we glean from Jesus' interaction with Thomas' doubts? Jesus engages Thomas where he is, acknowledges his doubt and reveals himself as the risen Messiah.

Perhaps many of us even doubt today whether or not Jesus has truly been raised from the dead; others of us doubt his love and care towards us; others of us doubt his sovereign reign over all things. Whatever it is, we all bring our own expectations and doubts to Jesus. This week could we lay these doubts at the feet of Jesus and believe that He will not only meet us where we are, but perhaps even reveal Himself as the risen Messiah in the midst of our doubts? Could we pray boldly that God would deepen our understanding of His love, shatter our doubts under the weight of his presence, and truly give us a picture of His sovereign rule?

Could this become a prayer for a friend, coworker, neighbor, or family member that does not know the love of God? Could we pray that God would meet them in their current state, acknowledge their doubt about God, and truly reveal Himself as the risen Messiah? Take time this week to intentionally pray for a certain individual, that God would reveal Himself as the loving and sovereign King who has come to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

WEDNESDAY

JOHN 20:11-18

Have you ever stopped to consider the insanity of the claim of Christianity? A man raised from the dead? A man, once crucified by Roman soldiers, now appears healthy and full of strength three days later? His body literally shut down—His heart stopped beating, His lungs ceased to fill with air, His blood stopped pulsing through His veins, and now stands as a fully functioning human being to others? The claim is absolutely absurd, unless it is true!

The early church placed a heavy emphasis on the resurrection of Christ and for good reasons. The resurrection proves not only Jesus' deity, but that He truly conquers our most feared enemy: death itself. No power, no kingdom, no force can thwart the sovereign rule of Jesus' reign. The resurrection is the objective proof of Jesus' defeat of the kingdom of darkness as He ushers in a new kingdom—the kingdom of God! This is why Paul says if the resurrection has not happened, we are to be men most pitied. But if the resurrection has truly happened, we should be men and women of the utmost hope and courage, knowing that Jesus sovereignly governs and sustains not only our lives, but also the entire cosmos. Believer, rest in the sovereign rule of Jesus as He governs and sustains all things.

THURSDAY

How did the story of Jesus' resurrection spread globally through the efforts of a small band of untrained, uneducated men? Through the power of the Gospel, and the Holy Spirit, and the testimony of the disciples transformed lives. In fact, one of the defining ways the Gospel permeated the pagan Roman Empire was the character and ethic by which the early church lived. Many were drawn to the Christian religion because of the church's love for one another, their care for the outcasts, and their unwavering commitment to Christ in the face of opposition.

Although a tad cliché, it nevertheless remains true: the resurrection changes everything. The disciples were once ridden with fears and doubts, and the resurrection of Christ gave them confidence and boldness to proclaim Jesus, even to their deaths. These men, after seeing Jesus rise from the grave, have been radically transformed in both their conduct as well as their mission. As such, these men lived ethically for Christ and missionally for Christ—so that every tribe, tongue and nation might know the great love with which Christ has loved us. In other words, the resurrection of Christ naturally gives birth to resurrected lives in us—lives marked by the ethics of the Kingdom of God.

FRIDAY

JOHN 20:30-31

I love the way that chapter 20 ends after the resurrection. John notes that Jesus has accomplished many signs that have not been recorded. Other accounts note that Jesus walked on the earth for 40 days after His resurrection before ascending into heaven. John mentions an important reason as to why he includes the signs that he did, “so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in his name” (John 20:31). So why is it that the resurrection and the subsequent signs are recorded? So that you may have believe in Christ and have life in His name!

Apart from the glorious resurrection of Christ, we all remain enemies of God. Worse, we remain dead in our trespasses and sins (see Ephesians 2:1-4). But in the Gospel, in the resurrection of Christ, our death-ridden souls are resurrected to life through the miraculous work of Jesus. Let us believe today that Jesus’ work and His glorious resurrection actually can and will produce life in us; that by believing that He is the Christ, He truly saves us and revives us back to life.

SATURDAY

MARK 2:18-22

[20] The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

Referring to himself as the bridegroom, Jesus notes that his disciples do not fast because He is currently with them, but that they will later fast when He leaves. Why is that? In the work of Christ, we see that He has fully accomplished the work of redemption on our behalf. He has taken the punishment that our sin deserved and has given us His righteousness freely as a gift. The work of redemption is complete and Jesus stands as the supreme, sovereign king over all creation even now. So why does Jesus call us to fast after His ascension?

We fast as a physical symbol of our yearning for the consummation of Jesus' work. We fast as a physical symbol of yearning and longing for Christ. The physical pain of hunger reminds us to seek Him in prayer and to cry out for His return. Even though we have experienced the first fruits of our salvation, fasting can make us yearn and long for the fulfillment of that salvation. We fast not because we haven't tasted Christ's presence, rather we fast because we have tasted Christ's presence and we eagerly desire to know Him more through the forsaking of food for a season.

As a church, we would love to fast from food (if you are able) corporately from Saturday evening until we partake of communion Sunday morning. This will give us a chance as a body to pursue Christ through prayer and fasting, crying out for His full and final restoration while also truly tasting and seeing the Lord's finished work in the elements of communion. Would you join us this evening in this fast? Would you hunger and thirst for Christ as you fast? Would you pursue Christ with ardent passion this evening? Would you celebrate the work of Christ in communion Sunday morning?

EASTER SUNDAY

It is customary in many churches to exchange an Easter greeting to celebrate the Lord's resurrection. One person would proclaim, "He is risen!" while the other person would respond, "He is risen indeed!" While we are not sure when the church began to adopt this practice, we know that it has been in circulation for quite some time and is based upon Luke 24:34, "The Lord has risen indeed..." This is not simply a greeting but a declaration of a very important truth: Jesus truly has risen, giving Him victory over sin and death, and therefore, is crowned as the sovereign King over all creation.

Brothers and sisters, as we seek to gather this morning to celebrate Christ's resurrection, let us enter into His presence with gladness. For King Jesus has finished the work, conquered our sin, and has truly given us hope in this life. Let us come into His presence with trembling and fear, for He truly is the sovereign King for whom every knee will bow and every tongue will confess as Lord. Let us come into His presence with reverence and worship, for He alone is the God who can save, rescue and redeem helpless sinners.

He has risen! He has risen, indeed!

MIRACLES: DO THEY STILL HAPPEN?

Do miracles still happen? If so, why? What's crazy about this question is that it results in "strange bed-fellows."

For example, both atheists and Christians who believe that all the miraculous gifts have ceased would probably fall into the same 'bed' and answer "no, miracles do not happen." At the same time, Christians who have great and diverse views on the Bible could land in the same 'bed' and say – "yes, I believe miracles still do happen." So, how do we know who is right? We have to look at the two reasons Jesus said miracles occur:

- 1) Jesus performed miracles to validate that He was God.
- 2) Jesus used these miracles to point to the restoration of all things that will one day take place because of the *greatest* miracle – His resurrection from the dead.

Miracles prove Jesus was God, and prove that God's ultimate goal in coming to this earth was not just to forgive us but to restore us, and all creation, to what He intended us to be. Miracles still happen because they give evidence of God's great power to heal; but even more, they give evidence to God's great power to restore all things in this world that are broken by our sin.

Many have given up on this world, on their families, or even themselves because they see the brokenness as too great. Are you in this place? Do you know someone who is in this place? Bring them with you. Join us as we dive into the miracles of Jesus to see how they reveal His great power and our great need for the power of God to heal and restore the hopeless things of this world and the hopeless things in us.

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN

OVERVIEW

The Gospel of John is a portrait of Jesus Christ and his saving work. It focuses on the last three years of Jesus' life and especially on his death and resurrection. Its purpose is clear. In John 20:30–31 we read, “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” The book is written to help people believe in Christ and have eternal life. John gives us his eyewitness account to the miracles that Jesus performed to prove that He was God and to point to the restoration of all things that will occur one day. He focuses primarily on seven miracles during Jesus' life, concluding with the greatest miracle that Jesus performed: His resurrection from the dead.

AUTHOR AND DATE

The author of the Gospel is widely agreed to be the apostle John, although his name does not appear in the Gospel. John was a prominent Jew in the early church but he never mentions himself by name in the Gospel. Instead he only refers to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” From the Gospel itself we find evidence that indicates that the author was an Apostle (1:14, 2:11) and one of the 12 disciples whom Jesus called (13:23, 19:26, 20:2). The author was a close and intimate friend to Jesus. Jesus had completely transformed John's life and John shares his story within the pages of the text. This makes the Gospel of John unique with regard to Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Early church tradition strongly and consistently identifies John as the author of this Gospel. The early church father Irenaeus (c. A.D. 130–202) was a disciple of Polycarp (c. A.D. 70–160), who was a disciple of the apostle John, who testified on Polycarp's authority that John

wrote the Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia Minor when he was advanced in age. Because the manuscripts of some church fathers indicate that John was actively writing in his old age and that he was already aware of the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), many date the Gospel around c. A.D. 85-95, about 50 years after he witnessed Jesus' earthly ministry.

BACKGROUND AND SETTING

As previously mentioned, John was probably aware of the synoptic Gospels and so wrote his Gospel in order to make a unique contribution to the record of Jesus' life, as well as to provide complementary information to that of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John supplies a large amount of unique material that had not been recorded in the other Gospels. At the same time it provides additional information that clarifies the events in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. For example, the other Gospels begin with Jesus' ministry in Galilee and imply that Jesus had a ministry prior to that. John supplies the information on Jesus' prior ministry in Judea and Samaria.

John was a Palestinian Jew and a member of Jesus' inner circle during his earthly ministry. John's original audience consisted of both Jews and Gentiles living in the larger Greco-Roman world in Ephesus and beyond toward the close of the first century A.D. John speaks to Jewish readers by demonstrating Jesus was the Jewish Messiah, the fulfillment of many Old Testament themes, and the Son of God who was sent by God the Father to reveal the only true God who provides redemption for humanity. He also frequently explains Jewish customs and Palestinian geography and translates Aramaic terms into Greek, thus showing awareness of non-Jewish readers. He also presents Jesus as the Word become flesh against the backdrop of Greek thought that included Stoicism and early Gnosticism.

PURPOSES AND THEMES

John focuses his Gospel on Jesus as the promised Messiah and Son of God. People may have eternal life by believing in the Messiah, Son of God. John 20:31 says, "...but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." His central theme is what you see posted on signs and waving from the stands during football games: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

The purpose statement found in John 20:30–31 makes it clear that John wrote with an evangelistic intent. However, his depth of teaching shows that he wanted readers not only to come to initial saving faith in Jesus, but also to grow into a rich, well-informed faith. John's central contention is that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah and Son of God, and that by believing in him people may have eternal life. To this end, he marshals the evidence of seven miracles performed by Jesus and a series of witnesses to Jesus including - the Scriptures, John the Baptist, Jesus himself, God the Father, Jesus' works, the Spirit, and John himself. This evidence is important to know because one of Jesus' closest friends was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus was not merely a friend, but John's Lord and Savior. John's life was forever transformed by the Messiah and he had to tell others about it. John wants others to believe and proclaim Jesus Christ is Lord! He also wants to show how that fact will change their lives in incredible ways. It is by believing in Jesus that we find real life, eternal life, a whole new life!

WHAT'S IN THIS STUDY GUIDE?

This study guide is a tool to help both you and your community groups interact with and be transformed by the truths of God's Word. It corresponds to the current sermon series and includes the following:

Passage: The Bible passage printed out in the study guide is the main passage that the Sunday sermon will be based upon and is the passage you will study and discuss in your community group. The Summit believes the following about God's Word:

- It is the holy word of God in which God reveals Himself.
- It reveals our great need for him.
- It reveals who we can become in and through the finished work of Christ.

The more you read over the passage, asking God to reveal Jesus, the more mere words will become His holy voice to you and to us together.

Space to take notes: Many people find it helpful to take notes during the Sunday sermon and space is provided for you to do so.

Discussion Questions: You are invited to process all you've read in God's Word, and heard in the sermon using these questions – either before or during your community group. These questions will allow both you and your community group to see the greatness of God, our sinfulness apart from Christ, and the power of the gospel to bring healing, hope, forgiveness, and more.

The questions are divided as follows:

- **Head:** These questions are fairly straightforward. The answers to these questions are found in the verses themselves. They are meant to help you slow down and observe, consider, and then describe what the passage is saying about God's character, mankind's sinful condition, and God's marvelous and sufficient provision in Christ.

- **Heart:** These questions are open ended and are meant to help you consider your response to the truth of the passage and then to explore the hopes, the battles, the loves, and/or beliefs (right or wrong) of your heart that cause such a response.
- **Hands:** These questions will challenge both you and your group to apply the truths of the passage to your current context and to trust more deeply in the finished work of Christ. They are meant to help move you from anchoring life-change in the message of broken religion (do more, be better, work harder) to anchoring life change in the message of grace (we are forever right with God because of the finished work of Christ).

Prayer: Space is provided for you to respond to God's Word with prayer. This may be in the form of a praise, a confession, or a request ... for yourself or those God has sovereignly placed in your life. As your group prays together, consider how you might allow a phrase or truth from the passage you've just studied together to guide your prayers.

WEEK ONE

JOHN 20 (ESV)

[1] Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. [2] So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." [3] So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. [4] Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. [5] And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. [6] Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, [7] and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. [8] Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; [9] for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. [10] Then the disciples went back to their homes.

[11] But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. [12] And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. [13] They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." [14] Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. [15] Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." [16] Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). [17] Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" [18] Mary Magdalene went and announced to the

disciples, “I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her.

[19] On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” [20] When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. [21] Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” [22] And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. [23] If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”

[24] Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. [25] So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”

[26] Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” [27] Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” [28] Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” [29] Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

[30] Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; [31] but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

SERMON NOTES

HEAD

1. There are four groups of people who experience Jesus' resurrected body in this passage (Mary, Peter and John, the majority of His disciples in a room, and Thomas). How did each of these groups respond differently?
2. What was had to happen for Peter and John to understand? What was the effect on them? (vs. 8-9)
3. What are some characteristics that Jesus exhibits in this chapter?

HEART

1. What was the initial response to the resurrection in this chapter? In what ways was this addressed? In what ways have you experienced Jesus' response to your imperfect pursuit of Him?
2. How did Jesus reveal Himself to Mary? Have you experienced Jesus calling you in the same way? What effect has it had in your life?

3. Why do you think that Jesus says so many times to His disciples, “peace be with you”? Where are you currently experiencing Jesus’ peace right now?

HANDS

1. After revealing Himself to Mary, Jesus commanded her to go tell the disciples that He had been raised to life. After revealing Himself to the disciples He sends them out. What is He calling you to do after revealing Himself to you?

2. Jesus calls us to peace. What doubts do you need to replace with belief to enjoy His peace?

PRAYER

WEEK TWO

JOHN 2:1-11 (ESV)

[1] On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. [2] Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. [3] When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." [4] And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." [5] His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

[6] Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. [7] Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. [8] And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. [9] When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom [10] and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." [11] This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

SERMON NOTES

SERMON NOTES

HEAD

1. How was GOD's character displayed in turning the water into wine?
2. What did you find unusual about the interchange between JESUS and His mother? What was HE communicating to her and to the disciples?
3. Who were the recipients of this miracle?

HEART

1. Why would JESUS begin HIS ministry with such an inconsequential miracle?
2. Do you believe that miracles such as turning water into wine occur today? Why or why not?

WEEK THREE

JOHN 4 :43-54 (ESV)

[43] After the two days he departed for Galilee. [44] (For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.) [45] So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.

[46] So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. [47] When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. [48] So Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." [49] The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." [50] Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. [51] As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. [52] So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." [53] The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." And he himself believed, and all his household. [54] This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

SERMON NOTES

SERMON NOTES

HEAD

1. According to verses 43-45, why was Jesus leaving to go to Galilee? What had happened to Him in His hometown?
2. What does Jesus' response to the official in vs. 48 say about our faith in general? What does it say about Jesus' grace?
3. Because of Jesus' power to heal and His willingness to show this man grace, who came to faith that day?

HEART

1. What was necessary for the man's son to live, the man's faith or Jesus' power and grace? Why? Read Mark 9:23-24. What does the confession of this father make you feel about the strength of your faith? How do these miracles increase your affection toward Jesus?
2. In which areas of your life have you had difficulty putting strong faith in Jesus' power?

WEEK FOUR

JOHN 5:1-17 (ESV)

[1] After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

[2] Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. [3] In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. [5] One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. [6] When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” [7] The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” [8] Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” [9] And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Now that day was the Sabbath. [10] So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.” [11] But he answered them, “The man who healed me, that man said to me, ‘Take up your bed, and walk.’” [12] They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk’?” [13] Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. [14] Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.” [15] The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. [16] And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. [17] But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.”

SERMON NOTES

HEAD

1. How is the disabled man's need described in this passage? How do you think the 38 years in that condition had affected him?
2. As you see Jesus' interaction with the disabled man, how is His character displayed, both before and after the miracle?
3. In what ways does this story reflect both our broken world today and the picture of the world from a John 20:31 viewpoint?

HEART

1. What did Jesus accomplish for this disabled man that you don't think He could ever accomplish for you in 2017? Why do you believe that?
2. If you were an observer in this story, what might or would cause you to keep your distance from Jesus, even though he just performed a miracle?

3. Why might some question the disabled man's worthiness for being healed? How does John 20:31 address that perspective?

HANDS

1. The disabled man's hopelessness is depicted so realistically in this story. How could you give others a glimpse of God's restorative work in a world of hopelessness?

2. If you were sharing this story with a neighbor, what would you find most beautiful about it?

PRAYER

WEEK FIVE

JOHN 6 :1- 15 (ESV)

[1] After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. [2] And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. [3] Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. [4] Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. [5] Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" [6] He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. [7] Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little." [8] One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, [9] "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" [10] Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. [11] Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. [12] And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." [13] So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. [14] When the people saw the sign that he had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"

[15] Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

SERMON NOTES

HEAD

1. The passage begins with the phrase, “after this.” What is the phrase referring to? What does this reveal about Jesus’ activity and His character?
2. Why is the crowd following Jesus? Were their hopes met?
3. For whom does Jesus perform this miracle?

HEART

1. Why was Jesus testing Philip (v. 6)? What was the test? Did Philip pass the test?
2. Why should we be careful not to believe in Jesus on the basis signs or events alone?

3. How do you usually respond to an “impossible” situation – a problem in your life that doesn’t seem to have a solution? What does this miracle reveal about Jesus, and how could this revelation impact the situation?

HANDS

1. In John 6:35 Jesus declares that He is life. What is something outside of Jesus where you are looking for life?

2. How can the power of Jesus displayed in this miracle invite us to find life in Jesus alone?

PRAYER

WEEK SIX

JOHN 6 :16-25 (ESV)

[16] When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, [17] got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. [18] The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. [19] When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. [20] But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." [21] Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

[22] On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. [23] Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. [24] So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

[25] When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?"

SERMON NOTES

SERMON NOTES

HEAD

1. What was the context of this miracle? That is, what had the disciples just witnessed?
2. How does this miracle of walking on water reveal who JESUS is and HIS purpose in coming to earth?
3. What effect did this miracle have on the lives of the disciples?

HEART

1. In what ways does the “unbelievableness” of this miracle reveal the believable nature of God?
2. Why do we sometimes (often times) love the miracle more than the miracle giver?
3. In what ways do miracles help us come to realize that the impossible is possible with JESUS?

WEEK SEVEN

JOHN 9:1-41 (ESV)

[1] As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. [2] And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” [3] Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. [4] We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. [5] As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” [6] Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud [7] and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

[8] The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” [9] Some said, “It is he.” Others said, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” [10] So they said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” [11] He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed and received my sight.” [12] They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

[13] They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. [14] Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. [15] So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” [16] Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them. [17] So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”

[18] The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had

received his sight [19] and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" [20] His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. [21] But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." [22] (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) [23] Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

[24] So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." [25] He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." [26] They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" [27] He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" [28] And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. [29] We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." [30] The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. [31] We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. [32] Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. [33] If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." [34] They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.

[35] Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" [36] He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" [37] Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." [38] He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. [39] Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." [40] Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?" [41] Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains.

SERMON NOTES

HEAD

1. In this passage, what is the purpose of sickness? How does God interact with that blindness?
2. What assumption about sickness was made at that time? What are assumptions about sickness in our current age?

HEART

1. How has your life been affected by the brokenness of this world? Tangibly, how has Jesus brought “healing” to your life? Your motivations? Your desires? Your wounds?
2. Do you believe that God punishes us with sickness or withholds his healing due to our sin? Why? Why not?

HANDS

1. How has living in a world broken by sin caused you to long for Jesus' return? How have you seen Him redeem and restore this broken world?

2. In what ways are you able to enter into the restorative work of God? How are you able to return peace and harmony into a world dictated by chaos?

PRAYER

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