



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Kingdom Signs: Jesus Defeats Demons & Disease

Bible Reading: Luke 5:12 - 26

•**Bible Reading:** Luke 5:12-26 NET

•**SUMMARY:**

One of the surest facts about Jesus' ministry is that He worked real miracles. Jesus unleashed God's power wherever He went—the sick were restored, demons fled, lives were transformed.

Each Gospel records numerous healings and exorcisms. Even His opponents admitted Jesus' power, though they wrongly blamed it on Satan. Every miracle declared

the long-promised Messiah had arrived and God's kingdom was breaking into a broken world. His exorcisms shattered the

grip of darkness and His healings restored broken people to wholeness.

•Skeptics claim Jesus cured no actual diseases, insisting these were mere misdiagnoses or psychosomatic recoveries. But

Luke's accounts of the leper cleansed and the paralytic walking expose the poverty of such claims. Scripture presents a far

more compelling reality: Jesus truly heals. Jesus truly delivers. And that same risen, reigning Lord still pours out His saving

and restoring power on His people today.

I. Jesus the Miracle-Worker

•“The Gospels present Jesus' miracle-working as essential to his identity & mission as prophet & Messiah; the miracles are not an optional extra...but a vital part of each Gospel's...presentation.”—Mark Harris

A.Scholars Agree the Historical Jesus was a Miracle-Worker

•“Virtually everyone in the field today acknowledges that Jesus was considered by his contemporaries to be an exorcist & a worker of miracles.”—Paul Eddy, JK. Beilby

•“For Jesus, we have a plethora of miracle accounts...& this...is almost unanimously held to be authentic... Healings & exorcisms stand alongside Jesus' teachings as his most important activities...”—Greg Rhodea

B.First-Century Critics Concede Jesus was a Miracle-Worker & Exorcist (Mt. 12:24)

•“Rabbinic texts & Celsus...say that Jesus owed his healing power to sorcery, a hostile interpretation...[They] make no attempt...to deny that Jesus really performed wonders.”—Karl Olav Sandnes

C.The Meaning of Jesus’ Miracles

•“Jesus’ miracles were not merely random acts of kindness or magic tricks to prove his power...His miracles showed that his mission was to reverse the curse...”—J. D. Greear

D.God bless Wills Human Wholeness in Restored Relationship

•“The fundamental meaning of Jesus’ mighty deeds of healing & exorcism is this: God wills human wholeness—in its physical, psychological, & social dimensions.”—John Carroll

I.Skeptical Scholars Discount Jesus’ Miraculous Healings

A.It’s All in the Mind—‘Psychosomatic’

•“From today’s perspective Jesus’ cures are related to psychosomatic maladies.” Robert Funk & the Jesus Seminar(1998)

•Skeptics contend“Jesus did not cure disease: he healed illness [symptoms of sickness]; or that the sufferers had psychosomatic disorders, were misdiagnosed, or recovered as a result of a placebo effect.”
—Dominic Walker

B.Pushing back against the Skeptics

•“We don’t know...what kind of disorders...

Jesus healed...The Gospels are...short on detailed clinical description & medical terminology...[so its]unreasonable to posit a psychological cause for a particular ailment”

—Justin Meggit

III.Jesus’ Miracles: Signs of the Inaugurated Kingdom of God

A.Jesus’ Miracles: Signs of the Kingdom’s Arrival (Lk. 11:20)

•“If I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has already overtaken you.” (Lk. 11:20)

•“Jesus performed physical healings...an attestation of the kingdom’s inauguration & of Jesus’ identity.”—Craig Blomberg

B.Signs that God’s Promised Future Arrived (Is. 35:4-6; Lk. 7:22)

1.God’s Promised Future

(Is. 35:4-6)

•“Behold, your God will come...He’

ll come & save you...5Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, & the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, & the tongue of the mute sing for joy” (Is. 35:4-6)

2.Jesus’ Response to John the Baptist (Lk. 7:20-22)

3.God’s Kingdom has Already Arrived, but Not Yet Fully

C.Jesus’ Teaching & Miracles of Equal Importance

•“Luke [is] balancing the teaching & miracles of Jesus [so] that they are of equal importance.”

Graham Twelftree

D.Jesus’ Miracles and Message (teaching) are Mutually Reinforcing

•Jesus’ “healings & exorcisms were an intrinsic part of his proclamation of the kingdom of God. The mighty deeds &...proclamation must go together ; neither can be understood without the other.”—Craig Evans

IV.Jesus Heals & Cleanses the Leper of his Leprosy (Lk.5:12-15)

A.‘Leprosy’(Gk.lepra)—a chronic skin disease

•‘Leprosy’in Leviticus is generic: it could include many skin ailments, such as psoriasis, urticaria (hives), favus, & leukoderma. What today is called ‘leprosy’ (Hansen’s disease) was unknown in the ANE at the time of Leviticus.”—ESV

•But, “evidence now seems less than conclusive . Numerous scholars...have drawn the opposite conclusion, that terms for ancient skin diseases including [‘leprosy’]

were used in reference to Hansen’s disease among other conditions”—Y.Feder

B.Jesus’ Compassion & Capability—“If you are willing you can...” (Lk. 5:12)

C.Jesus’ Healing Hand

•When “sickness is present without the mention of an evil or unclean spirit, hands-on contact seems to be the best mode to bring healing — ‘Reaching out his hand, Jesus touched him...& immediately the leprosy left him.”— Archie Wright

D.Immediate Cure—“immediately the leprosy left him” (5:14)

V.The Role of Ritual Cleansing—“Go, show yourself to a priest...” (Lk. 5:14)

A.The Process & Official Confirmation

B.Restored to Community

- “It would provide final, conclusive evidence the leper had been made whole: Jesus submits the result [of his healing] to

those who can legally declare the man fit to return to normal life.”—John Reumann

C.Jesus' Order: “Go, show yourself to a priest...offer...as a testimony to them.” (Lk.5:14)

D.Testimony to Jesus as Messiah,Challenging Judaism's Leaders

- “The word ‘them’ is probably a reference to the Jewish leaders. These [Jewish leaders]are the ones primarily responsible for recognizing the Messiah and designating him as such.”—James Brady

E.Resistance from Judaism's 'Gate-keepers

VI.The Skeptics' Jesus—A Healer Who Did Not Cure Diseases!

- J.D.Crossan:“I presume that Jesus, who did not & could not cure the disease [‘leprosy’]or any other one,healed the poor man’s illness [symptoms, isolation?] by refusing to accept the disease’s ritual uncleanness & social ostracization...By healing the illness without curing the disease, Jesus [was] an alternative boundary-keeper.”—John Dominic Crossan

- J.D.Crossan views this as “the healing of a social illness rather than the curing of a physical skin disease.”

- J.J. Pilch wrongly “asserts that ‘in the Bible there is no interest at all in disease, since this concept requires awareness of such things as microscopic viruses & bacteria.”—John

J. Pilch

- J.J. Pilch is mistaken in “claiming that 1st century Mediterranean people only experienced illnesses...[since they lacked the]biomedical knowledge & microscopes...to identify ‘diseases’.”—Pieter Craffer

VII.Jesus Heals a Paralytic—Breaking through Barriers (Luke 5:17-25)

A.An Allegorical Interpretation:

- 1.The Paralytic:“In the Gospel miracle stories, anyone receiving healing...[is]a type of the sinner in need of the gospel,but this typology is even clearer...[for]the paralytic since Jesus explicitly forgives his sins.”—Barry Blackburn

- 2.The 4 Friends:Jesus recognizes their faith

- 3.The Obstacles—the Crowd & the Roof:

- “They face two impediments: the crowd & the roof. In the same way, there were obstacles...that interpose themselves between us & intimacy with the Lord.”—Barry Blackburn

- 4.Extreme Measures

Needed:

- “The paralytic’s friends had to resort to extreme measures, so Christians today should make every effort to avail themselves of the message of Christ.”—Barry Blackburn

- 5.Faith,Forgiveness, & Healing

- 6.“Your sins are forgiven” (Lk. 5:20) Who’s Doing the Forgiving? God or Jesus?

- Is “Jesus...a spokesperson for God declaring His forgiveness...This is not...how the scribes understand Jesus’ words.[They] understand...Jesus was himself authorizing divine forgiveness ...Jesus’ forgiveness is God’s forgiveness.”—Cedric Vine

- 7.“Get up...and walk”

- “The lame man walk [s]away...

Walking served as a demonstration here...[It] doesn’t work if [Jesus’ healing] simply means being ‘restored to a meaningful life’.”—Jan-Olav Henriksen

- 8.Demonstrates Jesus’ Identity & Power to forgive sins:

- “Jesus healed the paralytic & also forgave his sins. Jesus has the authority to do both...The healing of the paralytic...visually demonstrates Jesus’ power to forgive sins.”—Jan

-Olav Henriksen