

CREATION TO CHRIST OUTLINE

C&YA 2023-24 (fall & spring)

16-week curriculum

The following is an outline developed by Anna Ryan to help guide Bible study leaders this fall as we use Discovery Bible Method in our small groups. We will be using a Creation to Christ Bible curriculum to focus our study of Christ and gospel-centered themes. Each week you will use the same traditional DBM approach: study in preparation, group prayer, group read, establish theme, dissect the passage, personal application, and prayer.

This is not a handout for your small group – it is only a study plan for the school year and should be utilized as a guide to your personal preparation.

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INTRODUCTION

When Jesus is being introduced in the gospel of John, there is a phrase that is repeated twice:

*John 1:38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? 39 He saith unto them, **Come and see**. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. ...*

*John 1:46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, **Come and see**.*

The invitation from Jesus to man is to “Come and see,” and the invitation from man to another man is to “Come and see.” In the world today, there are a lot of pastors, teachers, and speakers from all different sorts of religious backgrounds. If you are seeking truth, it can be a very noisy and confusing environment.

That is why it is good to see for ourselves what the Bible says, specifically what it says about Jesus Christ. It is a command of scripture to “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21), and that same command applies to doctrine. You are invited to prove God’s Word, to come and see what it says about Jesus, and to make an informed decision on whether or not to trust Him as Lord.

The Bible is a big book, but everything about it points back to Jesus Christ as King. There are a couple of passages in particular that illustrate this theme clearly, and those are the passages we’ll be looking at in detail. As we go along, the invitation is that you ask questions—both of the Bible, and of yourself.

Come and see what God’s Word says, and come and see how it can apply to you personally.

Section 1: Creation & the Fall

In this first study we will see how God created the universe, Earth, nature, animals, and humans, and we will also see how that creation became corrupted.

Key Words: *creation, blessed, life, cursed, death*

Passages: *Week 1: God Creates..... Genesis 1:1-25*
Week 2: God Relates..... Genesis 2:4-24
Week 3: Mankind Sins..... Genesis 3:1-24

Key Questions: in

- *Why did God create us?*
- *Why is there evil in the world?*
- *What impact does this have on how I live my life personally?*

WEEK 1: God Creates

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *What do you know about creation according to the Bible?*
- *What do you know or believe about God's character?*

Let's read Genesis 1 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to what we can observe about God's character in this passage.

Genesis 1:1-25 (chunk this passage)

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness [was] upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that [it was] good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. 6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which [were] under the firmament from the waters which [were] above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. 9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry [land] appear: and it was so. 10 And God called the dry [land] Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that [it was] good. 11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, [and] the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed [is] in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, [and] herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed [was] in itself, after his kind: and God saw that [it was] good. 13 And the evening and the morning were the third day. 14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: [he made] the stars also. 17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that [it was] good. 19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. 20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl [that] may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that [it was] good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. 23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. 24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping

thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. 25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that [it was] good.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the creation account with your group, divide it into chunks that help the reader understand what was happening day-by-day in the creation.

What are some attributes of God’s character that we find in this passage?

He is a God of order (v. 4)	He is not a God of chaos
He is a God of morality (v. 31)	He is not a God of relativity
He is a God of life (v. 20)	He is not a God of death
He is a God of intentionality (v. 28)	He is not a God of indifference
He is a God of generosity (v. 29-30)	He is not a God of stinginess
He is a God of power (“and it was so”)	He is not a God of weakness
He is a God of relationship (v. 26, 28)	He is not a God of separation

- *How do these attributes compare to what you believe about God?*
- *Which one of these is the hardest for you to believe, and why do you think that is?*
- *Which one of these do you think is the most important?*

Other Key Passages:

- ***Why did God create us? Revelation 4:11***
God created everything—including you and me—simply for His pleasure.
- ***Why doesn't everyone just believe in the God of the Bible? Romans 1:20-25***
Creation proves the existence of a Creator, and everyone knows this truth, but many choose to reject it. Mankind has chosen to worship creation instead of God.
- ***How does Jesus connect to all of this? John 1:1-3, 10-14, 17***
Jesus was not just present at Creation, He was active in it.
See also: Hebrews 1:2-3; Colossians 1:15-17; Ephesians 3:9

From these passages we see a progression: God created us for His pleasure, but we rejected that purpose by worshipping His creation instead of Him. Now all of creation is in a fallen state because of sin, which we will talk about later.

Jesus came that we might be able to become “new creatures.”
2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 2:10; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10

Here we see things come full circle. Jesus and what He came to do precisely fulfills God’s heart we discovered earlier—a heart of generosity, life, and, most importantly, relationship.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 2: God Relates

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *What do you think a healthy relationship looks like?*
- *How would you describe your personal relationship with God right now?*

Let's read Genesis 2:7-25 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to how God relates to mankind in this passage.

Genesis 2:7-25 (chunk this passage)

7 And the LORD God formed man [of] the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. 8 And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. 10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. 11 The name of the first [is] Pison: that [is] it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where [there is] gold; 12 And the gold of that land [is] good: there [is] bdellium and the onyx stone. 13 And the name of the second river [is] Gihon: the same [is] it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. 14 And the name of the third river [is] Hiddekel: that [is] it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river [is] Euphrates. 15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. 18 And the LORD God said, [It is] not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. 19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought [them] unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that [was] the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This [is] now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the account of God’s relationship with man and divide it into chunks that help the reader understand the details of God’s care towards man.

What are some of the ways that God relates to man?

God was intimately involved in man’s creation (v. 7).
God made a home for man (v. 8).
God gave man not just resources for survival, but good and pleasant things (v. 9).
God gave man a purpose (v. 15).
God gave man freedom (v. 16).
God gave man a command and a warning (v. 17).
God gave man a companion (v. 18, 22).

- *What are some ways that you see God’s care and provision in your life?*
- *Would you say that your perspective of God leans more towards the side of Him being caring and loving, or Him being distant and indifferent?*
- *How would you define your purpose here?*
- *What do you think God’s purpose is for your life?*

Other Key Passages:

- ***What makes mankind different from the rest of creation? Genesis 2:7; Ecclesiastes 3:21***

Taking a closer look at Genesis 2:7, we can see that:

God formed him — rather than just speaking him into existence.

God breathed into his nostrils — rather than just granting him life.

God made him a living soul — rather than just a living creature.

Though God formed other animals and gave them breath, man is the only one that God specifically breathed “into his nostrils.” Additionally, out of all creatures, mankind is the only one created in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-27). Mankind is also the only living creation with a conscience (Romans 2:15).

- ***Why did God give mankind the opportunity to sin? John 14:15; 1 John 5:3***

Remember from earlier that God’s character is loving. Looking at how love is defined in other places in the Bible lets us know that we get to love God back by keeping His commands. God gave man a clear opportunity to choose whether to disobey or to love him back.

God relates to us by giving us the free will to choose to love Him.

- ***How does Jesus connect to all of this? 1 Corinthians 15:45-49; Ephesians 5:25, 29-30***

In Genesis 2 we see how Adam is a type, or picture, of Jesus Christ. Adam was put in a deep sleep (which is a biblical picture of death) in order for God to form for him a bride. Similarly, Jesus died for us and rose again that we might become the church, also known as the “bride of Christ” (Revelation 21:2).

In this passage we see that God relates to man in a special way by giving him free will to choose to obey and to love Him back.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 3: Mankind Sins

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *How would you define sin?*
- *Would you say that you have a sin problem?*
- *How do you think God views and deals with sin?*

Let's read Genesis 3:1-24 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to the decisions mankind makes and how God deals with them.

Genesis 3:1-24 (chunk this passage)

1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make [one] wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they [were] naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where [art] thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I [was] naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou [wast] naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest [to be] with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What [is] this [that] thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. 14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou [art] cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire [shall be] to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed [is] the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat [of] it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt

thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou [art], and unto dust shalt thou return. 20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the account of the fall of man and divide it into chunks to help the reader better understand the sequence that led to sin and how God deals with man.

How does man deal with sin?

Man tries to cover up sin (v. 7).
Man tries to hide from God (v. 8).
Man tries to cast blame (v. 12-13).

How does God deal with sin?

God calls man into a conversation (v. 9).
God brings man to acknowledge the sin (v. 13).
God gives man the consequences of sin (v. 16-19).
God gives grace (v. 21).

- *What observations can you make about how man deals with sin?*
- *Do you see these tendencies in your own life?*
- *How do you think God views your personal sin?*
- *How does sin affect how you relate to God?*

Other Key Passages:

- ***What is sin, and do I have it in my life?*** *Daniel 9:5-6; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8, 2:16*
Sin is any act of disobedience to God's Word, and everyone has sinned. Sin is caused by:
 - The lust of the flesh: The temptation to satisfy the desires of your body.
 - The lust of the eyes: The temptation to become covetous.
 - The pride of life: The temptation to be lifted up in pride.

We see all of these at work in Eve's thought process in Genesis 3:6. Though this thought process may even seem reasonable, it led to sin because it was faithless and rejected God's Word.

- ***What is grace, and how does God extend it?*** *Romans 5:15; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 2:11, 3:7*
Grace is unmerited favor. God extends grace to us today through the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Grace is what brings us salvation and justifies us before God so that we can have eternal life. And because grace is unmerited, that means there is nothing we can do to earn it. We can never be good enough people or do enough good things to deserve God's grace.
- ***How does Jesus connect to all of this?*** *Genesis 3:15; John 1:29; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 2:14-15*
Jesus is the prophesied seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15. He came down to earth to take away our sin, and He did this by *becoming* sin so that we might be made righteous. By dying and rising again, He got victory over Satan, sin, and death. It's through this victory that we can walk in freedom, hope, and newness of life.

In this passage we see that, even under the perfect conditions, mankind chose to reject God's Word by choosing to sin. Sin separates us from God and cuts us off from the blessing and purpose He has for us.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

REFLECTION & SUMMARY

Throughout these first three weeks—and especially towards the end—there are a couple of big-picture questions to be bringing up. Remind your group that the passages discussed are important information, but they're more than just that—they're truth, and that means that we should learn this information and then *act* on it.

Questions to Consider:

- *Do you believe that the God of the Bible created everything, including you? If not, what are some beliefs or questions that are keeping you from believing that?*
- *Do you believe that the God of the Bible created you with a purpose and wants a relationship with you?*
- *Do you want a relationship with Him?*
- *Do you believe that you are a sinner? If not, why not?*
- *What did you learn about Jesus from these passages? What do you personally believe about Him?*

Section 2: Israelites & the Law

In this second study we will see how God worked through His chosen people, the Israelites, to bring them closer into relationship with Himself.

Key Words: *blood, sacrifice, atone, forgiven*

Passages: *Week 4: God's Deliverance..... Exodus 12*
 Week 5: God's Commands..... Exodus 20
 Week 6: The Sin Offering.....Leviticus 4

Key Questions:

- *What does God define as sin?*
- *How can I be cleansed from my sin?*

WEEK 4: God's Deliverance

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *How do you personally handle sin problems in your life?*
- *How does God deal with sin?*

Let's read Exodus 12 together. If we need more context for what's happening, we can read Exodus 1-3. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to how God deals with and judges sin.

Exodus 12:2-32 (chunk this passage)

2 This month [shall be] unto you the beginning of months: it [shall be] the first month of the year to you. 3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth [day] of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of [their] fathers, a lamb for an house: 4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take [it] according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take [it] out from the sheep, or from the goats: 6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike [it] on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. 8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it. 9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast [with] fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. 10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. 11 And thus shall ye eat it; [with] your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it [is] the LORD'S passover. 12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I [am] the LORD. 13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye [are]: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy [you], when I smite the land of Egypt. 14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. 15 Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. 16 And in the first day [there shall be] an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save [that] which every man must eat, that only may be done of you. 17 And ye shall observe [the feast of] unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. 18 In the first [month], on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and

twentieth day of the month at even. 19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. 20 Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread. 21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. 22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip [it] in the blood that [is] in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that [is] in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. 23 For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite [you]. 24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. 25 And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. 26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? 27 That ye shall say, It [is] the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. 28 And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. 29 And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that [was] in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. 30 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for [there was] not a house where [there was] not one dead. 31 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, [and] get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. 32 Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the Exodus account with your group, and divide it into chunks that help the reader understand the context, the different memorials God was instituting, and the purpose of them.

What are some attributes of the Passover lamb, and what parallels to Jesus can we observe?

Without blemish (v. 5)	Without blemish and spot (1 Peter 1:19)
Male (v. 5)	A son (Isaiah 9:6)
From the sheep or goats (v. 5)	From God's pasture (Psalm 79:13)
Kept for a while (v. 6)	On earth for 30 years (Luke 3:23)
Killed (v. 6)	The Prince of life who was killed (Acts 3:15)
Blood on the doorposts (v. 7)	Blood purged our conscience (Hebrews 9:14)
Eaten (v. 8)	Spiritually eaten (John 6:54-55)
Eaten by a prepared people (v. 11)	Eaten by a missional people (John 15:16)

Worth noting: From Colossians 2:16-17 we know that institutions like the Passover Feast served an immediate purpose to the Israelites at the time, but they were also a "shadow of things to come," usually in picturing Jesus Christ and His sacrifice.

- *What was the purpose of the Passover lamb?*
- *What was the purpose of Jesus' sacrifice?*
- *Do you see your personal need for God's grace?*

Other Key Passages:

- **Why was God judging Egypt, and why was He judging so severely?** *Psalm 11:7; Exodus 2:23-25, 6:6; Job 34:12*

Biblically we know that love and judgment operate together (Philippians 1:9). God's judgment in Exodus 12 was because He loves righteousness, His Word, His people. Additionally, He had given the Egyptians many opportunities to let the Israelites go, but they had rejected those chances (Romans 2:4-6).

God is righteous, and His judgment of sin always comes after mankind has had the opportunity to hear truth and repent (Romans 1:21).

- **How is grace present in this story?** *Ephesians 1:7; Exodus 12:13; Romans 3:24-25*
The Israelites didn't have to do anything for deliverance except *be* under the blood of the lamb. Similarly, God "set forth" Jesus as payment for our sin, and all we have to do is accept Him "through faith in his blood" (Romans 3:24-25). Though the Israelites and Egyptians were all sinners deserving of judgment, grace was offered through the blood of the lamb for those who had the faith to accept it.

- **How does Jesus connect to all of this?** *John 1:29; Isaiah 53:7; 1 Corinthians 5:7*
Jesus, our Passover lamb, covers us and delivers us from God's judgment of sin. If the Israelites were in a house that was covered by the Passover lamb's blood, they were saved from the judgment. Similarly, if we are in the book of life through the blood of the Prince of life (Acts 3:15), we will be saved from judgment (Revelation 20:12, 15).

In this passage we see that being covered by the blood of the lamb was the only way to be delivered from God's judgment.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 5: God's Commands

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *What are God's standards of righteousness?*
- *Would you say that you personally meet those standards?*
- *How can you have a right relationship with God?*

Let's read Exodus 20 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to the nature of our relationship with God.

Exodus 20:1-26 (chunk this passage)

1 And God spake all these words, saying, 2 I [am] the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness [of any thing] that [is] in heaven above, or that [is] in the earth beneath, or that [is] in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God [am] a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth [generation] of them that hate me; 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day [is] the sabbath of the LORD thy God: [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that [is] within thy gates: 11 For [in] six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them [is], and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. 12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 13 Thou shalt not kill. 14 Thou shalt not commit adultery. 15 Thou shalt not steal. 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. 17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that [is] thy neighbour's. 18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw [it], they removed, and stood afar off. 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. 20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. 21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God [was]. 22 And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. 23 Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. 24 An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. 25 And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone:

for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. 26 Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the account of the Ten Commandments with your group, and divide it into chunks that help the reader understand the details of God’s law and how it was administered to the people.

What are the Ten Commandments, and how can we use them to identify sin in our own lives?

No other gods (v. 3)	Serving yourself (Philippians 3:19)
No graven images (v. 4-5)	Covetousness (Colossians 3:5b)
Not taking God’s name in vain (v. 7)	Rebellion to God’s work (1 Timothy 6:1)
Keep the sabbath (v. 8-11)	Isolating from God’s people (Hebrews 10:25)
Honor parents (v. 12)	Cursing or forsaking (Mark 7:10-13)
No killing (v. 13)	Hating (1 John 3:15)
No adultery (v. 14)	Lusting (Matthew 5:28)
No stealing (v. 15)	Taking advantage of people (Proverbs 22:22)
No false witness (v. 16)	Lying (Ephesians 4:25)
No coveting (v. 17)	Fixation on material things (Luke 12:15)

- *Are you guilty of breaking any of these commandments? Which ones?*
- *Would you say that you are a good person? Why do you think that?*
- *Do you think God sees you as righteous? Why or why not?*

Other Key Passages:

- **Why did God give the Israelites the law?** *Exodus 19:3-6; 1 John 5:3; Romans 3:19-20*
God had delivered the Israelites out of Egypt so that they could be free from bondage, but also so that they could be free *to* be with Him (Exodus 19:4b). He wanted to bless them and make them “a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exodus 19:5). The law was what He used to show them their need for Him because it revealed to them their own sin.
- **What does the law mean for us today?** *Galatians 3:21-26; Romans 7:7; Matthew 5:17*
Adherence to the law is not what enables us to get or keep salvation. Rather, it shows us that we are all sinners and can never meet God’s standards of absolute perfection and righteousness (Isaiah 64:6). This shows us that our only hope is in Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the law. Though you might consider yourself a “good person,” the reality is that “good” has never been enough to have a relationship with God. Only Jesus Christ is sufficient for that (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- **How does Jesus connect to all of this?** *John 1:17; Galatians 3:13; Romans 3:21-25*
Though the law, as God’s Word, was perfect, it could not make us perfect because of our rebellion, so God brought in a “better hope”: Jesus (Hebrews 7:19). Even if we have only committed “small sins,” they are still transgressions of God’s commands and make us guilty (James 2:10). Jesus redeemed us from the law so that we might be “able ministers of the new testament” (2 Corinthians 3:6).

In this passage we see that the law—specifically, the Ten Commandments—reveal to us our own sin problems and how we could never be good enough to meet God’s holy standard.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 6: The Sin Offering

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *How does God tell us to deal with our sin problem?*
- *What sacrifice is sufficient to atone for our sins?*

Let's read Leviticus 4 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to God's solution to our sin problem.

Leviticus 4:1-35 (chunk this passage)

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD [concerning things] which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them: 3 If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering. 4 And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the LORD. 5 And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation: 6 And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the vail of the sanctuary. 7 And the priest shall put [some] of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which [is] in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which [is at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 8 And he shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin offering; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that [is] upon the inwards, 9 And the two kidneys, and the fat that [is] upon them, which [is] by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away, 10 As it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt offering. 11 And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung, 12 Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt. 13 And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done [somewhat against] any of the commandments of the LORD [concerning things] which should not be done, and are guilty; 14 When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation. 15 And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD. 16 And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation: 17 And the priest shall dip his finger [in some] of the blood, and sprinkle [it] seven times before the LORD, [even] before the vail. 18 And he shall put [some] of the blood upon the horns of the altar which [is] before the LORD, that [is] in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour

out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which [is at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 19 And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn [it] upon the altar. 20 And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he do with this: and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them. 21 And he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: it [is] a sin offering for the congregation. 22 When a ruler hath sinned, and done [somewhat] through ignorance [against] any of the commandments of the LORD his God [concerning things] which should not be done, and is guilty; 23 Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish: 24 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD: it [is] a sin offering. 25 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering. 26 And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him. 27 And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth [somewhat against] any of the commandments of the LORD [concerning things] which ought not to be done, and be guilty; 28 Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. 29 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. 30 And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. 31 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn [it] upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the LORD; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. 32 And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish. 33 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering. 34 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar: 35 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the account of the Levitical offering with your group and divide it into chunks to help the reader understand the procedure of the sin offering.

What are God's instructions for the sin offering, and what parallels are there to Jesus' offering on the cross?

There are 4 different contexts for sin offerings in Leviticus 4. Let's look specifically at the sin offering for when the whole congregation sins (verses 13-21):

Bullock brought to the tabernacle (v. 14)	Jesus brought to priest's house (Luke 22:54)
Elders responsible (v. 15a)	Jewish leaders responsible (Matt 26:59)
Elders lay hands on bullock (v. 15a)	Elders lay hands on/strike Jesus (Mark 14:65)
Bullock killed (v. 15b)	Jesus crucified (Luke 23:46)
Priest touches blood and sprinkles it (v. 17)	Jesus' blood upon the people (Matthew 27:25)
Sacrifice comes to the veil (v. 17)	The veil torn (Matthew 27:50-51)
Rest of offering taken outside camp (v. 21)	Jesus crucified outside city (Hebrews 13:12)

- *Would you say that you are in need of a sin offering?*
- *How are we supposed to handle our sin today?*

Other Key Passages:

- **Why was a sin offering necessary?** *Hebrews 9:19-26; Leviticus 17:11; Genesis 3:21*
Remember from the earlier sections how sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2). A sin offering is what restores that relationship. From the very beginning, when God made Adam and Eve coats of skins, it was clear that a covering for sin would require death. Specifically, it would require the blood of an innocent sacrifice to be shed.
- **What is our sin offering today?** *Psalms 49:7; 1 Peter 1:2; Isaiah 53:10*
We don't offer up animals today, and we also can't do anything else to atone for our sins. Any works or efforts that we could, no matter how well-intentioned, would still be lacking the blood that God clearly requires to atone for sin. Only Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross is sufficient to not just cover our sin, but to atone for it and purge us from it.
- **How does Jesus connect to all of this?** *Hebrews 9:28; Romans 3:25; Colossians 1:14*
Jesus is the perfect sin offering. His blood that was shed on Calvary is the clear way that God has ordained to reconcile us into relationship with Himself. His sacrifice is for Jews and Gentiles alike (Ephesians 2:13), and it is a finished work. We don't have to add to it or supplement it with our own efforts (Romans 11:6), because he was our sin offering "once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). His offering was also *better* than the animal sin offerings because His sacrifice completely takes away sins (Hebrews 10:1).

In this passage we see that throughout time, God has always made a way for mankind to have a relationship with Him, and that happens specifically through sin offerings.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

REFLECTION & SUMMARY

Throughout these few weeks—and especially towards the end—there are a couple of big-picture questions to be bringing up. Remind your group that the passages discussed are important information, but they're more than just that—they're truth, and that means that we should learn this information and then *act* on it.

Questions to Consider:

- *Do you believe that you have a sin problem?*
- *In what ways do you meet and/or fall short of God's law?*
- *How would you describe your attitude towards sin?*
- *How do you attempt to handle your sin?*
- *Have you ever cried out to Jesus to save you from your sin?*

Section 3: The Deliverer

In this third study we will see how other places in the Old Testament foretell Jesus Christ and His birth, His sacrificial work on the cross, and His future eternal reign.

Key Words: *peace, throne, transgressions, liberty*

Passages: *Week 7: God's Promise..... Isaiah 9:1-7*
 Week 8: God's Atonement.....Isaiah 53
 Week 9: God's Hope..... Isaiah 61
 Additional Messianic Prophecies

Key Questions:

- *What are some specific prophecies in the Old Testament about Jesus?*
- *How do we see those prophecies fulfilled?*
- *What does fulfilled prophecy mean for us today?*

WEEK 7: God's Promise

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *What does it mean to walk in darkness?*
- *What is hope, and where can it be found?*
- *How would you describe the perfect king?*

Let's read Isaiah 9:1-7 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to the qualities of the promised Savior.

Isaiah 9:1-7 (chunk this passage)

1 Nevertheless the dimness [shall] not [be] such as [was] in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict [her by] the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. 2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. 3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, [and] not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, [and] as [men] rejoice when they divide the spoil. 4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. 5 For every battle of the warrior [is] with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but [this] shall be with burning [and] fuel of fire. 6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the prophetic account of Jesus with your group and divide it into chunks that help the reader understand the specific promises God gave Israel.

What are the names of the promised Savior, and how do they apply to Jesus?

Name	Jesus' Fulfillment
"Wonderful"	Acts 2:22 Matthew 15:30-31, 21:15; Mark 6:51; Luke 9:42-43, 11:14 <i>Jesus is wonderful through His works.</i>
"Counsellor"	Colossians 2:2-3 Matthew 13:54; Mark 6:2; Luke 2:40, 52 <i>Jesus is a counsellor through His wisdom.</i>
"The mighty God"	Hebrews 1:8 Matthew 3:11-12, 13:54; Mark 6:2; Luke 19:37-38, 24:19 <i>Jesus is mighty <u>and</u> He is God.</i>
"The everlasting Father"	Hebrews 2:13 John 8:35, 10:30; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 John 5:7 <i>Jesus is God <u>and</u> He is eternal.</i>
"The Prince of Peace"	Acts 10:36 John 14:27; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 1:20 <i>Jesus gives us peace <u>with</u> God and peace <u>from</u> God.</i>

- Do you believe Jesus performed all the miracles described in the Gospels? What do those miracles say about His character and identity?
- Have you gone through times in life where you feel like you need counsel and wisdom? Where did you find it, and was it sufficient?
- If Jesus is God like He claimed to be, what would be the proof of that?
- In what areas of your life do you feel like you're lacking peace?

Other Key Passages:

- ***Why was the promise of the Savior necessary?*** *Matthew 4:16; John 8:12, 12:46; 1 John 1:7; Ephesians 2:12-13*

This promise was necessary because, as mentioned in Isaiah 9:2, people were walking in darkness. Historically, the nation of Israel was in captivity and enduring great suffering as a nation. Devotionally, we all dwell in darkness if we have no relationship with Jesus. In the darkness is only sin, separation, hopelessness, bondage, and isolation. Jesus came so that we could have the “light of life,” not abide in darkness, and have fellowship with Him and with other believers.

- ***What does Jesus’ kingdom look like, and when will we see it?*** *Psalm 72:7-11; Isaiah 11:3-5; Philippians 2:9-11*

The kingdom prophesied in Isaiah 9:7 is one that is yet future. From verse 7 we know that it is eternally increasing, it is of the throne of David, and it is ordered and established with judgment and justice. It is a kingdom with true justice because it is ruled by the Just One (Acts 7:52). Most importantly, Jesus’ kingdom is a place where He finally gets the glory He deserves. This kingdom will finally be established after the church is raptured and after the time of Great Tribulation on earth.

- ***How does this apply to me?*** *Luke 16:27-31*

In previous sections we have seen Jesus primarily through types and pictures. But here we see scripture specifically and unambiguously prophesy about Him. The qualities of Christ that we have already seen fulfilled (His names in Isaiah 9:6) give us all the more reason to believe on the prophecies that are yet to come (His reign in Isaiah 9:7). The Bible’s prophecies and testimonies of Jesus are all the proof we need to believe on Him. Like the story with the rich man in hell, we don’t need miracles and signs to believe. God has given us all the proof we need, and even more than the rich man and his brothers had in the story, since we have the New Testament.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 8: God's Atonement

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *What is an atonement, and why is it necessary?*
- *How would you describe Jesus' suffering?*

Let's read Isaiah 53:1-12 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to the qualities of the promised atonement.

Isaiah 53:1-12 (chunk this passage)

1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? 2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, [there is] no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But he [was] wounded for our transgressions, [he was] bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace [was] upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. 9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither [was any] deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put [him] to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see [his] seed, he shall prolong [his] days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, [and] shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I divide him [a portion] with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the prophetic account of Jesus the atonement with your group and divide it into chunks to help the reader understand what He suffered and why He suffered it.

What are the attributes of atonement described here, and how are they fulfilled in Jesus?

One way to study this passage is by looking at the actions that are being done to Jesus. From these actions we can learn what Jesus suffered and the ways in which He was the perfect atonement. An atonement is a blood offering that makes forgiveness possible through the covering of sin (Leviticus 4:18-20). It may be helpful to compare this section to the section over the Passover lamb.

Jesus was...

despised and rejected of men (v. 3)	Mark 12:10-12; Luke 9:22
wounded and bruised for our sin (v. 5)	Matthew 26:67; John 20:27
oppressed and afflicted (v. 7)	Mark 15:15; Luke 23:18-25; John 19:1
brought as a lamb to the slaughter (v. 7)	Mark 15:3-5; John 19:6-9
taken from prison and from judgment (v. 8)	Mark 15:1; Luke 23:26
cut off out of the land of the living (v. 8)	Matthew 27:50; Luke 23:46
stricken for the people's transgression (v. 8)	John 18:14; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:2
put to grief (v. 10)	Romans 8:32; 1 John 4:9-10
his soul made an offering for sin (v. 10)	Hebrews 10:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:21
numbered with the transgressors (v. 12)	Mark 15:27-28; Luke 23:39-41

- *Have you ever been physically hurt by someone else or suffered injustice? Did you deserve it, and how did it make you feel?*
- *What is a worthy cause to suffer or die for?*
- *Do you believe that you personally are worth dying for?*

Other Key Passages:

- **Why did Jesus have to atone for our sins?** *Galatians 3:21-22; 1 Peter 2:21-25; Hebrews 9:28, 10:4*

The severity of Christ's suffering demonstrates how grievous sin is to God, and it also reminds us that this is what we should have to suffer for our own sins. Keep in mind that the primary attribute of God's character is holiness—He is a thrice holy God (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). Our sin is eternally offensive to an eternally holy God. If it were possible that we could be made righteous through any other way, like the law and the sin offerings, God would have used that way instead of offering up His Son. But it wasn't possible that animals' blood could take away sin, nor was it possible that the law could make us righteous. So God created a "new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20) through Jesus Christ.

- **Where can we see ourselves in this passage?** *Isaiah 64:6; Revelation 3:17; 1 Peter 2:25*

We are the sheep that have gone astray by turning to our own way (Isaiah 53:6). Though we may think that we are good or decent people, our righteousnesses are, in God's sight, just filthy rags. According to these scriptures and many more, we are a filthy, blind, and wandering people. Looking at the plural nouns in Isaiah 53, we see the things that belong to us: griefs, sorrows, transgressions, and iniquities. It is obvious that with us and in us dwells no good thing (Romans 7:18).

- **How does this apply to me?** *John 10:10-15; Luke 15:4-7; Romans 5:6-9*

The good news is that Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and He seeks out wandering sheep. He has a pasture prepared for us, and all we have to do is choose to hear His voice and enter in. This also requires, however, forsaking all other pastures, knowing that they are only owned by strangers, thieves, robbers, and hirelings. Jesus laid down His life for us, the sheep, so that we might enter into His relationship and care. You get to decide to accept that free gift.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 9: God's Hope

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *Why did Jesus come to earth?*
- *How would you define healing and restoration?*

Let's read Isaiah 61:1-11 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to the qualities of the promised hope.

Isaiah 61:1-11 (chunk this passage)

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to [them that are] bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified. 4 And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. 5 And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien [shall be] your plowmen and your vinedressers. 6 But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: [men] shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. 7 For your shame [ye shall have] double; and [for] confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them. 8 For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. 9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they [are] the seed [which] the LORD hath blessed. 10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh [himself] with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth [herself] with her jewels. 11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the prophetic account of hope through Jesus with your group and divide it into chunks to help the reader understand the dimensions of Jesus' past and future work.

What did Jesus come to earth to do?

Preach good tidings unto the meek (v. 1)	Matthew 5:3-5, 11:28-30; Luke 2:10-11
Bind up the brokenhearted (v. 1)	2 Corinthians 1:3-5; John 14:16-18
Proclaim liberty to the captives & bound (v. 1)	2 Corinthians 3:17; John 8:32-36
Proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (v. 2)	2 Corinthians 6:2; Luke 4:16-21
Proclaim the day of vengeance of God (v. 2)	2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 1:7
Comfort all that mourn (v. 2)	John 16:22; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17
Give mourners beauty, oil of joy, and garment of praise (v. 3)	John 16:20; Revelation 21:4

Worth noting: These are works of hope and grace, not condemnation. Jesus came to preach/proclaim, to heal, and to comfort, and all of these extend to you and I today. The immediate doctrinal application of Isaiah 61 is to the Jews, but notice in the last verse of the chapter that *“the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.”* The work that began with the nation of Israel will fall out to all nations being blessed.

- *Have you ever felt brokenhearted in life? Where did you find healing, and was it sufficient?*
- *What are things that you feel in bondage to?*
- *What does true freedom look like to you?*
- *Would you say that joy is a quality that characterizes your life? Do you want it to be?*
- *Where can true healing be found?*

Other Key Passages:

- ***When will all things be restored?*** *Revelation 21:1-5; 2 Peter 3:13*
All things will not be completely restored until God makes all things new in heaven. When Jesus came, He said in Luke 4:16-21 that the first four items on the list were fulfilled. But that means that the last three—proclaiming God’s vengeance, comforting mourners, and giving mourners beauty, oil of joy, and garments of praise—were yet future. God’s vengeance is His judgment as executed through the Great Tribulation and eternal separation from Him in hell. And while God does comfort us and weep with us right now (John 11:35; 2 Corinthians 1:3-5), it is not until heaven that our tears will get wiped away.
- ***Where can we see ourselves in this passage?*** *Galatians 4:3; Romans 6:16-18; Hebrews 2:15*
Most of us fall under the category of the captives and the bound in Isaiah 61:1. The New Testament tells us that, apart from Christ, we are in bondage to the elements of the world, to our sin, and to the fear of death. Jesus came to proclaim liberty so that we would no longer have to be bound and held back from Him and what He has for us.
- ***How does this apply to me?*** *Galatians 4:4-5, 5:1; Romans 8:15*
While Jesus did come to proclaim liberty, freedom is contingent on you following Him into that liberty, which looks like being adopted into His family. Just like a prisoner in a jail cell, if someone unlocks the gate and tells you you’re free to go, you still have to make the personal decision to walk out, otherwise you’re technically still in bondage. Jesus has unlocked the jail cell of the world, our sin, and fear, and not only that, He’s invited you into His family. It’s up to you to choose freedom and adoption.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

REFLECTION & SUMMARY

Throughout these few weeks—and especially towards the end—there are a couple of big-picture questions to be bringing up. Remind your group that the passages discussed are important information, but they're more than just that—they're truth, and that means that we should learn this information and then *act* on it.

Questions to Consider:

- *Do you feel like you are in need of a Prince of Peace and a Comforter?*
- *Do you believe that Jesus suffered and died to bear your personal sin?*
- *Do you believe that the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus? If not, why not?*
- *Do you believe that God is righteous and that His vengeance and judgment are coming?*
- *If so, where will you be—suffering judgment for sin, or being comforted in heaven?*

ADDITIONAL MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

There are countless places in the Old Testament where Jesus the Messiah is prophesied. Here are some additional references for further study.

Genesis 3:15	Psalms 40:6-8	Isaiah 40:3-4
Genesis 12:3	Psalms 41:9	Isaiah 42:1-4
Genesis 49:10	Psalms 45:6-8	Isaiah 50:4-6
Numbers 21:9	Psalms 68:18	Jeremiah 23:5-6
Deuteronomy 18:15	Psalms 69:21	Jeremiah 31:31-33
2 Samuel 7:13	Psalms 72:8	Jeremiah 33:15-18
Job 19:25	Psalms 89:35-37	Daniel 7:13-14
Psalms 2:7-12	Psalms 110:1-4	Daniel 9:24
Psalms 9:7	Isaiah 7:14	Hosea 11:1
Psalms 16:9-11	Isaiah 8:14	Micah 5:2
Psalms 22:1, 8	Isaiah 9:1-2	Zechariah 6:12-13
Psalms 22:15-18	Isaiah 11:10	Zechariah 9:9
Psalms 31:11, 13	Isaiah 22:22	Zechariah 11:12-13
Psalms 38:12-13	Isaiah 25:8	Malachi 4:2

Section 4: Jesus and His Earthly Ministry

In this fourth study we will see how God's Son, Jesus Christ, fulfilled prophecy by coming down to earth and living a perfect, sinless life. We will also see how His nature as fully God and fully man enables Him to be the perfect mediator and friend.

Key Words: *fulfillment, life, truth, man, God*

Passages: *Week 10: Jesus is Born.....Luke 1-2*
 Week 11: Jesus Relates to Us..... Matthew 4, John 11
 Week 12: Jesus Does Miracles..... Mark 4-5

Key Questions:

- *Why did Jesus come to earth?*
- *How does Jesus relate to me?*
- *How can I relate to Jesus?*

WEEK 10: Jesus is Born

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *What do you know about Jesus' birth?*
- *Who do you think Jesus is?*

Let's read Luke 1:26-38 and Luke 2:1-40 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to the details surrounding Jesus' birth.

Luke 1:26-38 and Luke 2:1-40 (chunk these passages)

1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name [was] Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, [thou that art] highly favoured, the Lord [is] with thee: blessed [art] thou among women. 29 And when she saw [him], she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. 36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing shall be impossible. 38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

2:1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2 ([And] this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. 8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this

[shall be] a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen [it], they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 And all they that heard [it] wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered [them] in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. 21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. 22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present [him] to the Lord; 23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. 25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name [was] Simeon; and the same man [was] just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this [child] is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. 36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; 37 And she [was] a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served [God] with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. 39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. 40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the advent account with your group and divide it into chunks that help the reader understand the timeline and nature of Jesus' birth.

In what ways did Jesus' birth fulfill prophecy?

Jesus was born of a woman (1:28)	Prophesied in Genesis 3:15
Jesus was born of a virgin (1:27, 34-35)	Prophesied in Isaiah 7:14
Jesus will inherit the throne of David (1:32)	Prophesied in Jeremiah 33:15-17
Jesus' kingdom will have no end (1:33)	Prophesied in Isaiah 9:7 and Daniel 2:44
Jesus was born in Bethlehem (2:4)	Prophesied in Micah 5:2
Jesus was a light to Jews and Gentiles (2:32)	Prophesied in Isaiah 49:6
Jesus grew up / experienced childhood (2:40)	Prophesied in Isaiah 53:2

Worth noting: These prophecies were given hundreds and even thousands of years before Jesus Christ's birth. They are unambiguous and specific, and because Jesus was being born, he had no control over the circumstances of their fulfillment, therefore pointing to a divine fulfillment.

- *What does the virgin birth say about Jesus' identity?*
- *Why do you think Jesus chose to come to earth as a baby instead of a full-grown man?*
- *In what environment were you born? (hospital, home, etc.)*
- *Why do you think Jesus was born in such a lowly environment? What does that say about His character?*

Other Key Passages:

- **Why was Jesus born of a woman?** *Hebrews 2:9-10, 17-18; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 7:26*

Jesus was born of woman in part to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies concerning His birth. But He was also born of a woman so that He could be a “merciful and faithful high priest” for us, since He is our mediator (1 Timothy 2:5). Because He experienced a human life, even from childhood, He is able to understand us and all our struggles.

- **Why didn't Jesus just arrive to earth as King?** *Romans 8:3; Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 John 3:5*
Jesus didn't just come to conquer and rule—if that was His goal, He could have and would have done that. He came to “seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10), and the primary thing that was lost was righteousness that enables a relationship with God. So Jesus' mission was to destroy Satan, who had the power of death, and deliver those who were in bondage

Additionally, a king requires a kingdom, and a kingdom requires subjects. Jesus had the right to reign over the Kingdom of Heaven, the physical kingdom on earth, but He also wanted to rule over a spiritual kingdom: the Kingdom of God. Entry into the kingdom of God requires one to be born again (John 3:3-6), and being born again requires Christ's death and resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:14-17). Jesus came to be King of both kingdoms, and that required Him to first be a servant and a sacrifice.

- **How does all of this apply to me?** *Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 4:15-16*

In light of Jesus' kingship and authority, the appropriate response is a posture of humility and submission. That looks like confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord—not just believing that to be true (James 2:19), but confessing that to be the truth to which you're submitting (Romans 10:9). If you have already done that, then you get to relate to Jesus knowing you can approach Him boldly in prayer because He understands your struggles.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 11: Jesus Relates to Us

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *To you, does Jesus feel close or distant?*
- *Do you ever feel like God doesn't understand or care about you? In what ways?*

Let's read Matthew 4:1-11 and John 11:1-44 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to Jesus's experiences as a man.

Matthew 4:1-11 and John 11:1-44 (chunk these passages)

Matthew 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in [their] hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

John 11:1 Now a certain [man] was sick, [named] Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 (It was [that] Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) 3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. 4 When Jesus heard [that], he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. 5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. 7 Then after that saith he to [his] disciples, Let us go into Judaea again. 8 [His] disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? 9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. 11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. 12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. 13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. 14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. 15 And I am glad for your sakes

that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. 16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. 17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had [lain] in the grave four days already. 18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: 19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. 20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat [still] in the house. 21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give [it] thee. 23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. 24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? 27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. 28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. 29 As soon as she heard [that], she arose quickly, and came unto him. 30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. 31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. 32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, 34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. 35 Jesus wept. 36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! 37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? 38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. 39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been [dead] four days. 40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41 Then they took away the stone [from the place] where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up [his] eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said [it], that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the account of Jesus' experiences as a man with your group and divide it into chunks to help the reader understand what Jesus endured and felt.

What did Jesus experience as a man here on earth, and what does that mean for how He relates to us today?

Matthew 4

Jesus experienced temptation (v. 1)	Jesus is a good strengthener (Phil 4:13)
Jesus experienced hunger (v. 2)	Jesus is a good provider (Phil 4:19)
Jesus experienced loneliness (v. 1-11)	Jesus is a good companion (2 Tim 4:16-17)

John 11

Jesus experienced loving friendships (v. 5)	Jesus is a good friend (John 15:13-15)
Jesus experienced enemies (v. 8)	Jesus is a good encourager (Acts 18:9-10)
Jesus experienced loss (v. 14)	Jesus is a good comforter (2 Cor 1:3-5)

- *Have you ever felt need in your life? How did you address it?*
- *What does a good friend look like to you? What qualities should they have?*
- *In what ways do you often feel misunderstood by other people?*
- *Have you ever grieved someone or something, and what was that process like? How did other people relate to you in that, and was it sufficient?*
- *Do you believe that Jesus is the perfect friend? Why or why not?*

Other Key Passages:

- ***Why did Jesus go through temptation?*** *Hebrews 2:18, 4:15, 12:1-3; 1 Peter 2:21-23*
Jesus went through temptation to prove that He was, indeed, sinless and perfect. He also went through temptation to be an example to us of how to stand against the wiles of the devil (Ephesians 6:10-12). He showed us that it's possible, even in the most extreme of circumstances, to overcome temptation by standing on God's Word (Psalm 119:11). Jesus was tempted in all the same ways that Eve was: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). But unlike Eve, Jesus chose faith in and obedience to God's Word.

- ***Why did Jesus allow and grieve Lazarus' death?*** *Romans 12:15; Psalm 35:13-14; 2 Corinthians 1:5*
It's worth noting that God doesn't owe us an explanation for our pain or loss. What He does give us, though, is the promise that He cares about us and our hearts (1 Peter 5:7; Psalm 147:3). We see that promise exemplified through the person of Jesus. He developed deep, loving friendships with people and allowed Himself to be hurt so that He might know our pain. We can pray to Him knowing that He does not just have power to heal us, He has compassion to weep with us, and sometimes it is that very compassion that actually performs the healing work.

Pain was not and will never be proof that God doesn't exist or that God doesn't care. Pain is proof that sin exists, and it's an invitation into fellowship with the man of sorrows Himself (Isaiah 53).

- ***How does all of this apply to me?*** *Ephesians 2:12-18; Hebrews 10:19-25*
If Jesus still feels far off, then it's possible that your sins are still standing in the way of fellowship with Him. In the midst of temptation, hardship, and pain, "he is our peace" (Ephesians 2:14a), but that can only be true if we lay hold on the gift of God: salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ (Romans 6:23). Once we have laid hold on that gift, we get access to draw nearer to Him.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 12: Jesus Does Miracles

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *Have you ever faced a circumstance in life that feels impossible to overcome?*
- *How would you describe God's power?*

Let's read Mark 4:35-41 and 5 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to Jesus' works as the Son of God.

Mark 4:35-41 and 5 (chunk these passages)

Mark 4:35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. 36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. 37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? 39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

5:1 And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. 2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3 Who had [his] dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: 4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any [man] tame him. 5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. 6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, 7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, [thou] Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. 8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, [thou] unclean spirit. 9 And he asked him, What [is] thy name? And he answered, saying, My name [is] Legion: for we are many. 10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. 11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. 12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. 13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. 14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told [it] in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. 15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. 16 And they that saw [it] told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and [also] concerning the swine. 17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. 18 And when he was come

into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. 19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. 20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all [men] did marvel. 21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea. 22 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, 23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: [I pray thee], come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. 24 And [Jesus] went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. 25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, 26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, 27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. 28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. 29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in [her] body that she was healed of that plague. 30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? 31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? 32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. 33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. 34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. 35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's [house certain] which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? 36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. 37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. 38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. 39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. 40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. 41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. 42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was [of the age] of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. 43 And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the miracles account with your group and divide it into chunks to help the reader understand the variety of miracles Jesus performed.

How can we observe Christ’s deity in these passages, and what does this mean for us?

Where does Jesus’ power extend?	How does this show that He is divine?	What can this look like for us today?
Power over nature <i>(Jesus calms the sea—4:35-41)</i>	Psalm 89:9, 93:3-4; Proverbs 30:4; Jeremiah 5:22	Jesus has power over nature and circumstances. He allows storms to come, and He has the power to make them cease in His timing.
Power over Satan <i>(Jesus heals the possessed man—5:1-20)</i>	Genesis 3:15; 1 John 3:8	Jesus has power over the devil, his forces, and his strongholds. Jesus has the power to set people free from bondage.
Power over human weakness <i>(Jesus heals the sick woman—5:25-34)</i>	Psalm 41:3, 116:3; Isaiah 40:29-31	Jesus has power over the frailty of our bodies and emotions. He allows sickness and injury and has the power to heal us or to sustain us through them.
Power over death <i>(Jesus raises the dead girl—5:21-24, 35-43)</i>	Hosea 13:14; Isaiah 25:8	Jesus has the power to resurrect us. Not even death can separate us from His love.

- *Have you ever been in a position where you felt powerless? How did you handle it?*
- *What does power look like to you?*
- *How is power used and/or abused in today’s world?*
- *Is there anything that seems to be outside of anyone’s control?*
- *Do you believe that Jesus actually performed the miracles described of Him? What implications does that have for His identity?*

Other Key Passages:

- **Why did Jesus do miracles?** *1 Corinthians 1:22; Mark 16:20; Luke 11:20; Acts 2:22*
Jesus performed miracles because they proved His deity. His power over nature, Satan, human weakness, and death itself was something that no human could replicate or mimic. His miracles proved that He was not just a good, moral man or even an intelligent teacher—He was, in fact, the Son of God *and* God in human flesh (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus’ miracles paved the way for people to pay attention and consider the gospel message after His death, resurrection, and ascension.
- **Do miracles still happen today?** *1 Corinthians 13:10; Psalm 19:7-8; 1 Timothy 1:12-15*
The answer is both no and yes. Miracles, like what Jesus and His disciples performed, were used for the specific purpose of validating the gospel message to a primarily Jewish audience before there was a completed word of God. Now that we have a perfect, completed Word, the answer is no—miracles and signs are no longer necessary or used by God because His Word is more than sufficient. He still does miraculous things, but those things happen through prayer.

But in a spiritual sense, the answer is yes—perhaps the greatest miracle is grace. The grace of God is what does the miraculous work of turning sinners into sons and servants. This is the preeminent miracle that the world needs today.

- **How does all of this apply to me?** *2 Peter 1:16-19; Romans 10:17; 1 John 1:1-4*
Sometimes, usually in seasons of pain, doubt, or loss, we can find ourselves asking God to prove that He is real, often by showing us a sign or miracle. The reality is that He has already done this by giving us a completed, perfect Word. This Word—the Bible—is a “more sure word,” a “light that shineth in a dark place,” the “Word of life.” What we need is faith, and that comes from *hearing the Word of God* (Romans 10:17), not by seeing the signs of God.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

REFLECTION & SUMMARY

Throughout these few weeks—and especially towards the end—there are a couple of big-picture questions to be bringing up. Remind your group that the passages discussed are important information, but they're more than just that—they're truth, and that means that we should learn this information and then *act* on it.

Questions to Consider:

- *Do you believe that Jesus was a real man who walked on earth?*
- *In what ways can you relate to Jesus as a man?*
- *Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God?*
 - *If not, what are some reasons for your doubt?*
 - *If so, what would keep you back from placing your faith on Him today?*

Section 5: Jesus' Death, Burial, and Resurrection

In this fifth study we will see how God's Son, Jesus Christ, paid for our sin on the cross and then got victory over death through His resurrection.

Key Words: *fulfillment, death, resurrection, hope*

Passages: *Week 13: Jesus is Betrayed.....John 18*
 Week 14: Jesus is Crucified..... Luke 23
 Week 15: Jesus is Resurrected..... Luke 24

Key Questions:

- *Why did Jesus have to die?*
- *What does His death mean for me personally?*
- *How does His resurrection affect me?*

WEEK 13: Jesus is Betrayed

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *Have you ever been betrayed before?*
- *Why do you think Jesus allowed Himself to be betrayed?*

Let's read John 18:1-40 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to how mankind treats Jesus.

John 18:1-40 (chunk this passage)

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. 2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. 3 Judas then, having received a band [of men] and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am [he]. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am [he], they went backward, and fell to the ground. 7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. 8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am [he]: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: 9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. 10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? 12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, 13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. 14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. 15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and [so did] another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. 16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. 17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also [one] of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. 18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself. 19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. 20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. 21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. 22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? 23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? 24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto

Caiaphas the high priest. 25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also [one] of his disciples? He denied [it], and said, I am not. 26 One of the servants of the high priest, being [his] kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? 27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew. 28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. 29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? 30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. 31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: 32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. 33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? 34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? 35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? 36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. 38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault [at all]. 39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the betrayal account with your group and divide it into chunks that help the reader understand the different relational pains Jesus suffered.

How was Jesus treated, and what does that say about mankind's nature?

Type of Treatment	Prophecy	Parallels to Us
Betrayal <i>(Judas — v. 2-5)</i>	Psalm 41:9	A <u>selfish</u> response — Judas was motivated by what he could gain to the point that he was willing to use Jesus for profit (John 12:4-6).
Denial <i>(Peter — v. 17, 25-27)</i>	John 13:38	A <u>fearful</u> response — Peter was drawn to Jesus' power but afraid of Jesus' suffering (Matthew 16:21-23).
Rejection <i>(Jews — v. 35, 39-40)</i>	Psalm 118:22-23	A <u>prideful</u> response — the Jews wanted a conquering king, not a humble Savior (Mark 10:45).

Worth noting: Jesus Himself anticipated this treatment—He told His disciples about it (John 16:32), and it was also prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 50:6-9, 53:3).

- *Have you ever experienced betrayal or rejection? Who did that to you, and how did you respond?*
- *Have you ever betrayed or rejected someone else? Why did you do it, and what was their response?*
- *Would you say that you have selfishness, fear, or pride in your heart?*
- *In what ways do those characteristics manifest in your life?*
- *How would you say that you have treated Jesus all your life, especially recently?*

Other Key Passages:

- ***Why did Jesus allow Himself to be betrayed?*** *John 10:17-18; Matthew 26:53-56*
It's worth noting that Jesus did, in fact, *allow* Himself to be betrayed; it did not come as a surprise to Him. That makes it even more significant because He had full knowledge of the coming betrayal but still chose to love Judas, Peter, and the Jews all the same. In allowing Himself to be betrayed, He was also allowing mankind the free will to choose to accept Him or reject Him. He was also fulfilling scripture that had foretold of his betrayal (Psalm 22:6-8, 69:4, 7; Isaiah 53:3).
- ***Why did His people reject their Messiah?*** *Acts 2:23; Romans 3:9-20; 1 Peter 2:6-8*
We rejected the Messiah because, even though we have free will, our natural inclination is to sin and serve ourselves. The people's rejection of Jesus proved that even when given the perfect, clear opportunity to receive the promised King, they still betrayed, denied, and rejected Him. The fact that everybody—even His closest friends—betrayed Him reveals that we are all in desperate need of Savior to deliver us from our guilty, sin-ridden state.
- ***How does all of this apply to me?*** *1 John 3:5, 8, 4:9; John 20:31*
Now you have to decide what you're going to do with Jesus. We know that He came to earth with a threefold, tandem purpose: to take away our sins (1 John 3:5), to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8), and to offer us life (1 John 4:9). Though during His earthly ministry mankind betrayed, denied, and rejected Him, you have the opportunity to choose a fourth option: faith. A right treatment of Jesus looks like confessing that you're a sinner that deserves hell and then calling on Him to take away your sin and give you life, all through faith in Jesus Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 14: Jesus is Crucified

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *Personally, what do you think is worth dying for?*
- *Why do you think Jesus was crucified?*

Let's read Matthew 27:15-56 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to how Jesus suffered for us.

Matthew 27:15-56 (chunk this passage)

15 Now at [that] feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. 16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. 17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? 18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. 19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. 20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. 22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? [They] all say unto him, Let him be crucified. 23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. 24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but [that] rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed [his] hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye [to it]. 25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood [be] on us, and on our children. 26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered [him] to be crucified. 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band [of soldiers]. 28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. 29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put [it] upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. 31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify [him]. 32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. 33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, 34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted [thereof], he would not drink. 35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 36 And sitting down they watched him there; 37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. 39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, 40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest

[it] in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. 41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking [him], with the scribes and elders, said, 42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. 43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. 44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. 45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard [that], said, This [man] calleth for Elias. 48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled [it] with vinegar, and put [it] on a reed, and gave him to drink. 49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. 50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. 51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; 52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. 54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. 55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: 56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the crucifixion account with your group to help the reader understand the different emotional and physical pains that Jesus suffered.

How did Jesus suffer?

Type of Suffering	Prophecy	Description
False Accusation <i>(v. 23-24)</i>	Psalm 94:21, 109:2	Though Jesus was innocent—sinless, in fact—He still endured false accusation and didn't try to defend Himself (Isaiah 53:7; 1 Peter 2:23).
Mockery <i>(v. 27-29, 31, 39-44)</i>	Psalm 22:7-8, 13, 35:16	Jesus also endured the mockery of His creation. Though mankind's breath was in His power (Job 12:10), He allowed them to use that breath to mock Him.
Abuse <i>(v. 30, 35)</i>	Psalm 22:15-18; Isaiah 52:14, 53:5	Just as a sheep led to the altar for the sin offering (Isaiah 53:7), Jesus surrendered His body not just for death, but for abuse. He died not just crucified, but beaten, bruised, bloody, and unrecognizable.
Abandonment <i>(v. 46, 55-56)</i>	Psalm 22:1, 88:14	Jesus endured the suffering of loneliness—being forsaken by God, who could not look upon His Son becoming sin (2 Corinthians 5:21), and also being forsaken by His own disciples.

- *Have you ever been falsely accused? How do you respond to being wronged?*
- *Under what circumstances would someone endure false accusation without defending themselves?*
- *Have you ever been abandoned by people you love when you're in need? What was that like?*
- *What consequences do you think your sin deserves?*
- *Why do you think Jesus endured all of this without defending Himself or fighting back?*

Other Key Passages:

- ***Why did Jesus have to die, and die in that way?*** *Romans 5:6-9; Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:22, 26*
Jesus had to die because it was only by His blood that we could be purged from our sin. Though the sin offerings of the Old Testament were what God had previously used, they could never be sufficient to totally take away sins (Hebrews 10:4). Jesus died once for all so that there didn't need to be any more continual offerings. Christ died specifically on a cross because that was a cursed manner of death (Galatians 3:13). He redeemed us from the curse by *becoming* cursed, and He saved us from our sin by *becoming* sin. He sacrificed His own being to deliver us.
- ***Why did God forsake Jesus?*** *Habakkuk 1:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21*
God forsook Jesus on the cross because God cannot stand to look upon sin, and at that moment, Jesus wasn't just bearing the sins of the world—He had *become* sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). Ultimately, the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and death is eternal separation from God in hell. Those who have not placed their faith on Jesus will spend eternity separated from Him (Revelation 20:15). But Jesus came and suffered in our place so that, simply by believing on Him, we could all be saved.
- ***How does all of this apply to me?*** *Hebrews 6:19, 10:19-22; Ephesians 2:13-18*
It is a smaller detail here, but immediately after Jesus died, the veil of the temple was torn (v. 51). This is significant because the veil was what separated the most holy place, which is where the high priest could approach the mercy seat once a year (Exodus 26:33-34). Previously, mankind couldn't approach God because he had sin (Leviticus 21:23), but the veil was torn to signify that by Christ's blood, everyone could draw nigh because Jesus' righteousness covers the blemishes of sin that would have disqualified us otherwise.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

WEEK 15: Jesus is Resurrected

Background questions you might consider asking before you begin:

- *How do you feel about death? Does it make you fearful or uncertain?*
- *What does the resurrection mean to you?*

Let's read Luke 24 together. As we read, make a note of things that stand out to you—details you find interesting, words you don't understand, questions you have, or anything else that you'd like to talk about. Let's pay special attention to te evidence of Christ's resurrection.

Luke 24 (chunk this passage)

1 Now upon the first [day] of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain [others] with them. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. 3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: 5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down [their] faces to the earth, they said unto them, *Why seek ye the living among the dead?* 6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, 7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. 8 And they remembered his words, 9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. 10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary [the mother] of James, and other [women that were] with them, which told these things unto the apostles. 11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. 12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass. 13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem [about] threescore furlongs. 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed [together] and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. 17 And he said unto them, *What manner of communications [are] these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?* 18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, *Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?* 19 And he said unto them, *What things?* And they said unto him, *Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: 20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. 22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; 23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. 24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found [it] even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. 25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26*

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. 28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. 29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. 30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed [it], and brake, and gave to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. 32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? 33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, 34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. 35 And they told what things [were done] in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. 36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace [be] unto you. 37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. 40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them [his] hands and [his] feet. 41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. 43 And he took [it], and did eat before them. 44 And he said unto them, These [are] the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and [in] the prophets, and [in] the psalms, concerning me. 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And ye are witnesses of these things. 49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. 50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. 51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: 53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Establish a general theme based on what you read:

Walk through the resurrection account with your group and divide it into chunks to help the reader understand the events and evidences of the resurrection.

What proofs do we have of Christ's resurrection?

<p>An empty tomb</p> <p>(v. 2-3, 12)</p>	<p>Specifically, an <i>emptied</i> tomb, because only God could empty a tomb that was sealed with a great stone and guarded by soldiers (Matthew 27:62-66, 28:2).</p> <p>This proof was primarily for the disciples. They could physically go to the tomb and see that it was vacant and that their Savior was no longer dead.</p>
<p>Eyewitness accounts</p> <p>(v. 9-11, 22-24)</p>	<p>Even in courts today, eyewitness testimony is some of the most powerful evidence. For countless people to testify the same thing indicates that there is a story here worth considering.</p> <p>This proof was primarily for the early church (1 Corinthians 15:5-8). Those claiming to have seen Christ were liable to scrutiny and even death. The fact that they testified of the resurrected Jesus proves they were willing to die for this testimony.</p>
<p>Scripture</p> <p>(v. 6-8, 27, 32, 44-47)</p>	<p>As is the case with all of Jesus' earthly ministry, fulfilled scripture is the most irrefutable evidence that Jesus was not just a good man; He is the Son of God. Nu 21:8; Isa 9:6, 49:6-8; Psa 16:9-11; John 2:19 — these are just a few of the scriptures that testify of Jesus.</p> <p>This proof is primarily for us today. In the scriptures we have the stories of the empty tomb and the eyewitness accounts, and we also have the completed Word of God to look back on and compare with itself to see how Jesus is the promised Messiah and resurrected Savior.</p>

- *Has anyone ever told you a story that was hard to believe? What ultimately convinced you of it being true or false?*
- *In today's world, what are acceptable forms of proof that something is true or really happened?*
- *What more evidence would you need outside of that given in scripture to believe that Jesus has risen?*
- *If the resurrection is indeed true, what implications does that have for your life?*

Other Key Passages:

- ***Why was the resurrection necessary?*** *1 Corinthians 15:14-15, 19; Romans 1:4; 1 Peter 1:3*

The resurrection was necessary because it establishes Christ's victory, power, and lordship over death. The spiritual figureheads of other religions died and stayed dead; only Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died and rose again—scripture even says it was “not possible” that He could stay dead (Acts 2:24). Because of His resurrection we get to walk in victory (1 Corinthians 15:55-57) and also in hope, because nothing—not even death—can separate us from Jesus (Romans 8:35-39).

- ***Why didn't Jesus stay on Earth after His resurrection?*** *John 3:13, 16:7-11; Ephesians 4:8-10*

Prior to Jesus' arrest and crucifixion, He told His disciples that it was “expedient” (better) for them that He go away. This is because in His absence, they could be both indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit. Rather than relying on proximity to the powerful One, they could be “endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). He wants everyone to come to saving faith (2 Peter 3:9), and His Word clearly tells us that people don't need to see Him bodily, because faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17).

- ***How does all of this apply to me?*** *John 20:24-31*

There are many other places in scripture that can illustrate the personal application, but this passage in John is the most precise. We all have the choice to be like Thomas—regardless of the empty tomb, the eyewitness testimony, and the proofs of scripture, we can still reject the truth of the resurrection. But the reality is that God has given us all the proof we need to believe on Jesus Christ, His death, and His resurrection—He says so in John 20:31. Now that you have heard the Word, the choice of faith is up to you.

Invite your small group to share their personal applications and then close in prayer.

CONCLUSION

This study started “In the beginning” with Genesis, so it makes sense to skip to the end and see what happens “in the end.”

Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

In the end, there is a king on the throne and a book of the life from which He judges. A question to pose to your small group is this: **Is your name written in the book of life?**

Only the “author of eternal salvation” can write names in the book of life, and Hebrews 5:9 tells us clearly that that author is Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6).

Walk your small group through some key verses regarding salvation, especially Romans Road, and ask them specific questions as to what they believe about these verses.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned , and come short of the glory of God;	Do you believe that you are a sinner?
Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.	Do you believe that the penalty of your sin is death?
Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.	Do you believe that there is nothing you can do to earn or be “good enough” to get or keep salvation?
Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.	Are you ready to place your faith in Jesus Christ today?

If anyone is still wavering or lost, remind them of the urgency of this decision and the riches of God's grace for them.

Romans 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

Psalm 86:5 For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.