The **K.E.Y. Bible Study** program at Dawson is a systematic Bible study that allows participants to become acquainted with the basic truths of the Bible over a five-year period. Each lesson is self-contained, so, you can join the study at any time during the five years.

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| **Purpose:** | To help Christians:  **K**eep the Faith  Be **E**quipped to Serve  Become **Y**oked in Ministry |

**“Signs and Wonders and What They Mean”**

#### November 13, 2013

**Matthew 8:1-4; Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 1:40-2:12; and Luke 5:12-26**

**Why are these key events in Jesus’ life?**  It is impossible to understand the mission and the message of Jesus without examining some of the miracles He performed. While the modern reader often see the miracles as primarily exhibitions of power, the gospel writers viewed them as signs (or teaching events) that contained the message of Jesus. The events described in this session of K.E.Y. Bible Study are found in three of the gospel accounts. Even though some of the details are not identical, there are not contradictions in the accounts. A historian chooses the details that will help his intended audience understand both what happened and what it means. Matthew, Mark, and Luke have different intended audiences. In this session, we will focus our attention on Luke’s account.

**Background**

* God, as revealed in Jesus, the Christ, is the central character.

**Who**

* A man with leprosy: Various skin disorders were labeled leprosy, and some were more serious than others. All forms of leprosy were isolating because people were not to touch a person with leprosy. The disease carried both a social and religious stigma. The more serious forms of leprosy were disfiguring and repulsive. Both social custom and religious law required people with leprosy to wear ragged clothes and voluntarily keep distance between themselves and others. Some areas required those with the disease to announce their entry into an area by yelling in a loud voice, “unclean, unclean.” Most of the religious leaders taught that leprosy was an illness brought on by sinful conduct and therefore, God’s judgment.
* Four unnamed men who carried another unnamed man to Jesus.
* Religious leaders who accused Jesus of blasphemy. The exchange between the religious teachers and Jesus is the key to understanding the meaning of these passages.

We learn from Mark and Luke that this occurred in the second year of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Matthew wrote a more thematic account of the life of Jesus, and his material is not necessarily in chronological order.

**When**

**Where**

This event occurred somewhere in or near Capernaum.

**What Happened**

**Luke 5:12**

**A** **man with leprosy approached Jesus and asked to be healed.** The term Luke used for leprosy is a first century medical term that usually described the more serious forms of leprosy. By calling out to Jesus, the man with violated social custom. Folks with this disease only announced their presence and were only to speak if spoken to. While giving evidence of his faith, the statement, “Lord, if you are willing,” probably said more about his humility. Faith and humility travel in tandem.

**Luke 5:13**

**Jesus replied, “I am willing.” Jesus touched the man, and he was immediately healed**. In declaring that He was willing, Jesus revealed the character of God. By touching the man, Jesus violated social and religious custom. By touching the man, Jesus himself would have been considered “unclean.” Luke’s account of miracles emphasizes the compassion of Jesus more than Matthew’s account does.

**Luke 5:14**

**Jesus commanded the man not to tell anyone but the priest**. Jesus’ primary identity was not as a healer, and that is why Jesus told him not tell anyone. From Mark 1:45, we learn this man disobeyed. Going to the priest was the common way of validating miracles and for re-entering society. People cured of leprosy were not allowed to interact socially with others unless the priest approved.

**Luke 5:15-16**

**Jesus withdrew to pray, which was apparently a very common action in Jesus’ ministry** (see Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; and 9:28). Retreat was more going to than getting away from.

**Luke 5:17**

**Jesus taught a large crowd that included a number of institutional religious leaders.**

**Luke 5:18**

**Four men brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus.** The power of the Lord was present. The Lord was referred to as Jehovah. While the word “trinity” is not used, we do see the Triune God in action in Luke.

**Luke 5:19**

**Because of the crowd, they could not get their friend near Jesus.** The four men made an opening in the roof and lowered their friend down into the room where Jesus was teaching. Although the opening of the roof appears to be drastic action to us, it was not unusual. During the first century, houses in that region were usually small with one room and a flat roof. Access to the roof was by means of an outside stairway or ladder. The roof itself was usually made of wooden beams with thatch and compacted earth in order block the rain. Sometimes, tiles were laid between the beams and the thatch and earth placed over them. The tiles could be removed without damaging the roof. An exterior stairway would lead up to the top of the roof. They would have removed several layered thatched tiles in order to lower the man.

**Luke 5:20**

**Jesus saw the faith of the four men and forgave their friend of his sins**. The faith of the healed man is not mentioned. The forgiveness is the surprise pivotal point of the story. Frequently, the miracles and parables of Jesus take an unexpected turn.

**Luke 5:21**

**The religious teachers thought Jesus had committed blasphemy**. Here is their reasoning, “…if only God can forgive sin, then this man must be saying he is God.” Their logic was accurate, but they could not accept the truth of their logical conclusion.

**Luke 5:22**

**Jesus’ awareness of what they were thinking was not described as miraculous but as perceptive.**

**Luke 5:23**

**Jesus asked a question:** “Which is easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?” Physical healing was physically verifiable while forgiveness appears to be only subjective. So, the obvious answer to His question was “to say your sins are forgiven.”

**Luke 5:24**

**Jesus told them that He healed the man so they would know that the Son of Man had power to forgive sins.** Jesus called Himself “Son of Man.” However, the miracle gave evidence of the Son of God. The man's healing was an outward sign to reveal to the religious leaders the purpose, power, and person of the Messiah, Son of God and Son of Man.

**Luke 5:25**

**The healed and forgiven man praised God.** The man connected His miracle to God, not just to a rabbinic healer. This would have angered the religious leaders who did want people to identify the ministry of Jesus with God.

**Luke 5:26**

**The masses were amazed**. The word for “amazed” also conveys fear. It appears that physical healing was more impressive to the masses than being forgiven. Still today, the masses of people will be more impressed with physical healing than with forgiveness.

**KNOWBEDO Discipleship Principles**

**KNOW**

Jesus can forgive because He is the Son of God.

**BE**

We can be forgiven through Jesus.

**DO**

We are to praise God for who Jesus is.

**Heartwork**

What did I learn that I did not know?

What do I need to pass on to others?

What questions would I like to have answered that would impact how I live?