

# Session 3: What Did Jesus Say and Do?

## **SESSION GOALS**

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

**Main Idea:** Jesus is a teacher, miracle worker, and deliverer who, because he is God, can transform our lives from the inside out.

**Head Change:** To know that, through his life and teaching, Jesus shows us what God and his kingdom are like.

**Heart Change:** To feel motivated to receive Jesus as our substitute and entrust our lives to him.

**Life Change:** To confess our need for Jesus and trust him to teach, heal, and deliver us.

## **SESSION'S QUESTION AND ANSWER**

*What did Jesus say and do?*  
In his life on earth, Jesus taught the ways and character of the Father, performed miracles as a glimpse of the restoration to come, and delivered people from spiritual bondage.

## **REVIEW LAST SESSION**

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**What three roles did Jesus play during his time on earth?**

Show Session 3: *What Did Jesus Say and Do?* (12 minutes).

**DISCUSS**

The most common title given to Jesus in the Bible, as J.D. pointed out, is "Christ"—which is not his last name but his title. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah; the one people believed "would rescue them from their enemies, deliver them from oppression, and restore God’s kingdom to earth." J.D. said that’s exactly what Jesus came to do, "he just did not go about it in all the ways they were expecting." **Based on what you’ve learned so far in this series, in what ways was Jesus different from people’s expectations? How is he different from your expectations of him?**

A key thing to remember about Jesus is that he came to conquer the curse of death and deliver us from the oppression of sin by becoming our representative, or "substitute," and then rising from the dead. Read 1 Peter 2:21–24. **In what ways is it good news that Jesus dealt with sin and death by becoming our substitute? How does that good news inform the way you live your life?**

To understand Jesus’s role as our substitute, J.D. said we must see him through the lens of three other roles he played during his time on earth, each related to him being our substitute: teacher, miracle worker, and deliverer.

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*For an exercise to help you comprehend and remember the role*

*Jesus played in his life on earth, see Practice 3 in the Deeper Walk section at the end of this session.*

J.D. used a couple of phrases to communicate Jesus’s role as a teacher. He said Jesus “taught the truth about God” and “made the Father known” (John 1:18)—he “exegeted” all the ways of the Father for us or “explained him to us in a way we could understand.” Read Luke 15:11–32.

**What common perceptions of God the Father is Jesus addressing in this parable? How does Jesus’s parable help to correct those perceptions?**

One example J.D. gave was how Jesus shows us that God is not a distant, uncaring judge like many thought (and still think), but a loving Father who “desperately wants his wandering children to come home.” **Why do you think so many of us view God as a distant and uncaring judge? Is that how you’ve viewed God? What do you do to remind yourself that God is a loving Father?**

*To help form your thoughts about what God the Father is like, see Practice 1 in the Deeper Walk section at the end of this session.*

J.D. mentioned that one of the worst effects of the fall is how sin distorts our view of God—“our minds are filled with dark thoughts about God, we doubt his goodness and love, and pull away from him rather than run toward him.” But Jesus,

Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines for student input.

in what he said and how he lived, teaches us the truth about God. **Are you more prone to run from God when doubts arise or run toward him? For what reasons?**

*To help prevent and/or correct a distorted view of God, see Practice 4 in the Deeper Walk section at the end of this session.*

The second role Jesus played in his time on earth was a miracle worker. The miracles he performed were obvious displays of power. But as J.D. pointed out, "they were actually much more than that . . . His miracles revealed the redemptive purpose of his power, namely his ability to remove the curse of sin and restore creation to what his Father had intended it to be all along." **What are the major differences between seeing Jesus's miracles as raw displays of power versus redemptive displays of power? In what ways is it good news that Jesus uses his miracle-working power for redemptive purposes?**

J.D. pointed to examples like Jesus curing leprosy, healing blindness, calming storms, and raising the dead. These are obviously miraculous. But J.D. argued that these miracles aren't "a suspension of the natural order" but "a return to the natural order." They restore to us the world as Jesus intended it. Read Mark 1:39-42; 4:35-39; 5:21-24, 35-42; 10:46-52. **Which of these miracles stands out to you most, and why? What is your response to J.D.'s assertion that Jesus's miracles aren't a suspension of the natural order but a return**

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**to it? How does that idea shape your understanding of the kingdom of God?**

J.D. raised a common obstacle to believing in God: “Why would a loving God create a world like this,” with such brokenness, suffering, and evil? His answer was simple: God didn’t create the world with pain or blindness or disease or death—“those things all came through the corruption of sin.” **Have you ever asked this question (or a form of it)? What circumstances led you to ask that question? How did you answer it at the time? How do you react to J.D.’s answer?**

At their core, the miracles of Jesus show us that God will one day make everything as it should be—no broken bodies, no broken hearts, no broken relationships. Even nature itself will be healed entirely. **To what degree does this understanding of Jesus’s miracles give you hope for the future? How can you live by that hope today?**

The last of Jesus’s roles that J.D. highlighted in this session is that he was a deliverer—he cast out demons and “set spiritual captives free” throughout his ministry. Yet demonic influence and oppression can be a hard concept for us to grasp. We may even assume there’s no such thing, despite what we read in the New Testament. Read Luke 4:31–37. **Do you think people can still be influenced or oppressed by the demonic today? Why do you answer the way you do?**

J.D. said that sinful temptations, emotional disturbances, and even physical problems and ailments can be intensified by demonic influence. While not all physical or emotional

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problems are demonic—some just come from living in a fallen world—sin has a knack for opening up our lives to demonic influence. **In what ways has your life been affected negatively by sin? How serious are you about overcoming the sin in your life? What are you doing now to eliminate the sin in your life?**

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J.D. described evil’s influence in the world as a “threefold cord:” the world, the flesh, and the devil. As he mentioned, these three influences “work together” to bend us toward the will of our enemy, Satan. If we don’t abide in Jesus—or regularly commune with him—it can be “like we’re leaving [a] door unlocked . . . [allowing] the demonic [to] come in and bring destruction to that part of our lives.” **Are there any areas of your life you’re reluctant to hand over to Jesus? If so, why? What would it look like for you to “lean hard on Jesus” and “lock the door” against demonic influence?**

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Most conversations dealing with the demonic can be somewhat ambiguous—“What is demonic influence, really?” and “What might it look like practically?” are some of the questions that often come up. So, J.D. gave one example of a demonic attack: “A [destructive] thought that forces its way into your thinking . . . that you can’t seem to shake” or, “a thought with a will behind it.” **When have you experienced “a thought with a will behind it”? If you’re willing to share, what was the thought? How did you notice it, and how did it impact you? What can we do to dispel destructive thoughts when we encounter them?**

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Read Ephesians 6:10–12. This passage tells us clearly that “we wrestle against way more than just flesh and blood,” as J.D. phrased it. The New

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Testament’s consensus is that the Christian life is partially a struggle against evil forces. And that means we need a deliverer, Jesus Christ, who has the power to free us, whether now or in eternity. **What evil influences do you need deliverance from today? In what ways could your life change by having Jesus drive away those evil influences? What can you do to cling to Jesus even while you wait for him to deliver you?**

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*For a written prayer to help you plead with God for deliverance, see Practice 2 in the Deeper Walk section at the end of this session.*

Jesus came to show us what the Father is like and to inaugurate the coming of his kingdom by giving glimpses of the world’s eventual return to “normal” (through miracles) and retaking dominion of what’s already rightfully his (deliverance). That’s what he did while he was on the earth, and it’s what he continues to do today through his Spirit. The question for us is, will we trust Jesus and confess that we need him? **What could it look like for you to acknowledge that you need Jesus and trust him to be your teacher, miracle worker, and deliverer? In which of these three roles do you need Jesus most right now?**

**LAST WORD**

You can tell a lot about a person by the things they say and do—who and what they value, their goals, and even who they are at their core. When considering who Jesus is and why he matters,



his words and actions speak volumes. He teaches us what God is like, often correcting our preconceived ideas. He shows us what God intends to do in the world by beginning that work himself through miracles and freeing those captive to demonic influence.

By his Spirit, Jesus continues this work even now. To enjoy these benefits Jesus offers, we need only to believe in him and receive him as Lord. Make it a daily practice to pray and confess your need for Jesus. Trust that, through his Word, he will teach you about the Father and, by his Spirit, he can work miracles in your life and deliver you from whatever "dark influences" you face.

**SESSION'S QUESTION AND ANSWER**

*What did Jesus say and do?*

In his life on earth, Jesus taught the ways and character of the Father, performed miracles as a glimpse of the restoration to come, and delivered people from spiritual bondage.

**DEEPER WALK**

This section is designed to help you practice different ways to interact with God and reflect on what you've learned in this session. Pick at least one activity to try before the next session.

**Practice 1: Bible Study**

As J.D. pointed out, one of Jesus's roles during his life on earth was that of a teacher. He taught his disciples about the kingdom of God, he

Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines for notes.

taught them how to pray, he taught them to have faith, and he taught them what the Father was like. One of the most unexpected and jarring lessons he taught about the Father comes in one of his most famous parables: the parable of the prodigal son.

We briefly studied this parable in the Discuss section, but let’s spend a few more minutes reading and reflecting on it. Read Luke 15:11–32.

**What stands out to you about the father’s response, both to his younger son and his older son?**

**What words would you use to describe the father in this parable?**

**What is Jesus trying to communicate to us about God the Father, and how should we respond?**

**Practice 2: Prayer**

For many today, we may wonder not only if Jesus *can* heal us or deliver us from our afflictions but if he *will*. Yet Jesus’s words in Mark 9:23 are as true today as they were when he uttered them to a worried father thousands of years ago: “Everything is possible for the one who believes.” If you’re struggling today with some sort of affliction and yearn for God to deliver you from it, consider praying this prayer.

Father,  
Have compassion on me, and help me.  
I have done all I know to do.

I’ve sought to break loose from this affliction myself,  
I’ve sought the help of others,  
I’ve mustered all the belief I have.

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With my elder brother, I say: "I do believe; help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24)!

Command what afflicts me to "Come out of [me] and never enter [me] again" (v. 25).

By your Spirit, I believe—for all things are possible with you. Now, do it, Lord.

I do believe. Help my unbelief.

Through Christ,  
Amen

**Practice 3: Memorization**

In this session, J.D. alluded to a passage in the Gospel of Luke that he said "summarized Jesus's whole ministry." What Jesus said about himself in this passage is worth remembering. In fact, it's crucial that we take his words to heart, for they tell us exactly who Jesus is, and they have the power to carry us through difficult seasons. Make it your ambition over the next several weeks to memorize Luke 4:18–21, where Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1–2 to talk about his ministry.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
Because he has anointed me  
To preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me  
To proclaim release to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set free the oppressed,  
To proclaim the year  
Of the Lord's favor."

He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. And the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. He began by saying to them, 'Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled.'

Horizontal lines for writing notes.

**Practice 4: Community**

One of life’s great joys is having the opportunity to sit around with friends and family members and tell stories together. Happy stories, sad stories, funny stories, moving stories—remembering together and recalling the highs and lows of life in community can be a meaningful and transformative experience.

Put a date on the calendar to gather your Christian friends and/or family members for the sole purpose of telling stories of God’s faithfulness to one another. Consider these questions as you share: How did you come to faith? What difficulties has God used to form you more into the likeness of Christ? What is God doing in your life right now? How has he used the people around you to shape and encourage you?

End your time together by praying and giving thanks for all the ways God has been faithful to his Word and to you as you’ve followed him over the years.

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Why Does Jesus Matter? STUDY GUIDE

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