

JESUS: The Greatest Life of All

STUDY EIGHT

The Astonishing Power of Jesus

Selected Scriptures from John

Miracles are very unusual. They can never be explained. They are always surprising . . . and they are enough to change your life.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

IMPOSSIBLE! Has this word crossed your lips lately as you peer at an unsolvable problem?

The dictionary defines *impossible* as “incapable of being done, attained, or fulfilled: insuperably difficult.”¹ What is your “insuperably difficult” circumstance? Perhaps it involves a marriage in which you and your spouse hardly speak to each other. Maybe it’s a prodigal who refuses to return. An unrelenting addiction may be your impossibility, an unscalable mountain of debt, or an untreatable medical condition.

Whatever the impossibility, two realities are present: there’s an *impassable* obstacle and an *intolerable* heartache—and no counselor, friend, pastor, or family member can bring the needed relief.

The situation is impossible for any human, but *not* for God. For our Almighty, no difficulty is insuperable. No illness is irremediable. No problem is unsolvable. Jesus declared confidently, “What is impossible for people is possible with God” (Luke 18:27). Inside the seemingly uncrackable shell of your impossibility is an incredible opportunity for God to act. When He does, our lives are never the same.



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Miracles are rare, and we never know when God might perform one. So, pray for miracles with open hands, believing that God can do the impossible but submitting to His sovereign plan.

Use the following space to lay out your impossibility to the Lord. Ask Him for understanding of His Word as you view His miraculous ways through Jesus in this *Searching the Scriptures* study.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES



As God in the flesh, Jesus frequently displayed divine power during His ministry. The book of John records seven miracles that show Jesus' astonishing power over insurmountable obstacles. We'll look at all seven miracles in our Bible-study steps of observation and interpretation.



Observation considers what the passage is saying, noting action words, characters, dialogue, and the flow of thought. It requires slow and thoughtful reading. *Interpretation* seeks to grasp the author's meaning and message. The charts below will help you do both for each of Jesus' seven miracles in the book of John.



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Turning Water into Wine John 2:1–11	
 Observation	 Interpretation
<p>Observe <i>John 2:1–11</i>. What is the context of this miracle, and why did Jesus perform it?</p>	<p>Why did Jesus perform His first miracle at a wedding, and what did the wine symbolize?</p>

Healing the Official’s Son John 4:46–54	
 Observation	 Interpretation
<p>Observe <i>John 4:46–54</i>. What key word repeats three times, which was also in <i>2:11</i>?</p>	<p>What point did Jesus make by healing the boy from a distance?</p>

The Lord’s power is absolutely unlimited. Jesus said, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18 KJV). —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



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Healing the Lame Man by the Pool of Bethesda
John 5:1–9



Observation

Observe *John 5:1–9*. Contrast the duration of the man’s infirmity and Jesus’ healing.



Interpretation

Why did Jesus ask His question? What is the main message of this miracle?

Feeding the Five Thousand
John 6:1–14



Observation

Observe *John 6:1–14*. What objections did the disciples make? Where was their focus?



Interpretation



What point did John make about the identity of Jesus?



Our Lord’s promise is totally unconditional. Miracles occur and promises are fulfilled by our God who sovereignly says, “Now.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



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Walking on the Water John 6:15–21	
 Observation	 Interpretation
Observe <i>John 6:15–21</i> . Read <i>6:20</i> in several versions. How did Jesus identify Himself?	What message was John giving about Jesus’ divine nature and power?



Healing the Man Born Blind John 9:1–7	
 Observation	 Interpretation
Observe <i>John 9:1–7</i> . What statement did Jesus make about Himself?	What does this passage teach about undue, and seemingly random, suffering?

The man faced a great opportunity brilliantly disguised as an impossible situation. Jesus said, “Go wash.” The man did, and he could see. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



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Raising Lazarus John 11:17–45	
 Observation	 Interpretation
Observe <i>John 11:17–45</i> . What central phrases stand out?	What truth about Himself did Jesus illustrate by raising Lazarus?

Jesus’ miracles in the gospel of John, like beacons, forever shine the light of hope. *What is impossible for humans is possible with God.* What relevance does this truth have for you today? Let’s find out.

 **Application: The Opportunities in Our Impossibilities**

The seven miracles of Jesus recorded by John illustrate God’s power to overcome any obstacle.

1. *Power over quality—water into wine.* God is the God of transformation.
2. *Power over distance—a son healed.* God’s spoken Word knows no limits.
3. *Power over time—the lame walked.* God’s touch brings hope to a lifetime of pain.
4. *Power over quantity—thousands fed.* God turns our little into what we need.
5. *Power over nature—waves stilled.* God’s quiet hush stills the raging chaos of this world.
6. *Power over misfortune—disabilities redeemed.* God’s grace restores what once was lost.
7. *Power over death—the dead rise.* God’s glory shines through, bringing life from death.



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Is your impossibility an issue of dishonor you can't shake, distance you can't travel, time you can't make up, quantity you can't meet, nature you can't change, misfortune you can't reverse, even death you can't avoid? Which obstacle from this list towers over you and stands entrenched in your path?

Why don't you take a moment to pray Jeremiah's prayer in [Jeremiah 32:17](#) regarding your impossibility? Finish the phrase, "O sovereign Lord, nothing is too hard for You regarding _____," and write down your personal impossibility. Then commit to surrendering that impossibility to the Lord.

If John were sitting with you today, the wise old apostle would urge you to not give up hope but to keep trusting the Savior. Miracles are surprising, unexplainable, and as rare as a flawless pearl. But they do occur. We can't say when God will sovereignly say, "Now," and transform our impossibilities. What we can do is have faith in His power, trust in His goodness, and rest in His will.



A FINAL PRAYER

*Father, my faith rests solidly on the foundation of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. I know Christ will return and make all things new. That hope rises over any obstacle I may encounter. I walk straight through any insuperable difficulty believing with my whole heart, mind, and soul that You are with me. **Nothing is too difficult for You!** I walk today in Your power and rest in Your will. In Jesus' name, amen.*

ENDNOTE

1. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 2014), see "impossible."

