

Message Guide

Transformations

Living Truth Ministries

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Message Guide

This Message Guide may be a little different from those that you have used before.

The purpose of these Notes is not an in-depth study of the scriptures used, but rather to assist you or your Study Group as you reflect on the message given by Charles Price.

We present questions in order to stimulate thoughts and discussion. Sometimes we will give you the answer ... sometimes not. At other times we will present a statement or a theme for your consideration.

As you allow the Holy Spirit to guide the direction of your study we pray the flexibility of this Message Guide will help you as you delve more deeply into Charles' message, and that you will unearth more lessons from the Lord than may not have been immediately obvious.

Transformations
Part 1
Changing Water Into Wine
John 2:1 - 11

Message Guide & Questions

1. What is the particular way that John describes the miracles of Jesus, and what is their purpose?

2. What is the potential danger associated with these 'signs'? How does the feeding of the 5000 (John 6) and the healing of the man born blind (John 9) demonstrate this danger?

3. From John 20:30 – 31 what 3 things do the signs point us to? What is the object of all this?

4. Charles says that “Jesus specializes in working in _____ settings, with _____ people, and _____ things, but resulting in _____ consequences and results. Read 1 Corinthians 1:26 - 29

5. What is the significance of the fact that the first miracle of Jesus involved something as ordinary as water.

6. Mary, the mother of Jesus, said something that is often missed but is very important. What did she say?

7. When Jesus is about to do _____ He begins by giving a _____ . On whose timetable do these things happen? And for what purpose?

8. Every act of God is precipitated by _____ . When should this take place? To what extent should it take place? How should it take place? What should cause us to delay?

9. What did this first miracle reveal? In what did they put their faith? Read and consider John 2:11

Transformations
Part 2
'Three Stages of Faith'
John 4:46-54

Message Guide & Questions

In our previous study Charles established that the miracles of Jesus are 'signs', - pointers that we might a] KNOW who He is – the Christ; b] experience what He GIVES – LIFE; c] and know what TO DO – Believe. We will now look into the 'Three Stages of Faith'.

1. What are the Three Stages of Faith which Charles describes as very common and on which we need to move?

2. In verse 47 we read that the royal official "went to Jesus and begged Him to come and heal his son." What was significant of this?

3. What are the 3 aspects of this 'Seeking Faith' as displayed by the royal official and what is the significance of each?

4. Why is it that when the official got to Jesus he received what sounds at first like a rebuff or a rebuke,?

5. If we are to take Jesus at His WORD name three things that we often DON'T immediately get, the absence of which can cause us to doubt.

6. Although the official was looking for a sign, Jesus did not give him one; instead the official was given a command 'you may go' [v.50] and a promise 'Your son will live'. What actions did the official have to take to receive the Lord's promise?

7. Read verses 50 – 53 and consider what it was that Jesus wanted to accomplish.

8. Is there any indicator that helps us to know if we have reached this 'Resting Faith'?

9. Not only did the official believe, but also his family. What took place to caused them to believe?

10. How does this apply to you in your situation?

**When you let your *seeking faith* become *resting faith*,
the Holy Spirit will bear witness with your spirit,
and it will become a *knowing faith*.
Do you have a resting faith?
Is the Word of God sufficient for you?
Live on the assumption that it is true!
Where God has spoken, believe it, and live by it!**

Charles Price

Transformations
Part 3
“Healing at the Pool of Bethesda”
John 5:1 - 9

Message Guide & Questions

1. What is the question that is crucial to this whole story?

2. What three ailments describe the conditions of the disabled people who went to the Pool of Bethesda? Which of the 3 encompasses just about everything?

3. What does the word ‘Bethesda’ mean? And what was the significance of the pool at this place?

4. Verse 3 tells us that there was ‘a great number of disabled people’ there. Why do you suppose Jesus singled out this one man?

5. When asking the sick man “Do you want to be healed?” Jesus knew that _____ can lead to _____ which can then lead to _____ and a feeling of _____.

6. In our previous study in this series we learned that these miraculous signs are ‘pointers’ that we might experience the LIFE that He gives.

Consider the following –

- a. Why do some people feel it is better to **stay uncommitted to Christ?**
- b. Why do some people **stay a defeated, distant Christians?**
- c. Why do some feel it is better to **not be broken before God?**
- d. Why do some feel it is better to **not surrender to the Lordship of Christ?**

7. The crucial question is; “**Do you WANT to be healed?**” Are you willing to be made whole? What is the significance of verse 7?

8. In verse 8 the command given by Jesus to “get up and walk” would at first have seemed ludicrous. If the man could walk why had he lain there for 38 years?
What was the point of telling him to do what he and everyone else knew he couldn’t do?

9. When the man obeyed the command he was instantly healed. In picking up his mat and walking, what did he do?

**Are you in need of a work of God in your life?
Have you ever received Him?
Are you growing in your spiritual life?
Are you paralyzed emotionally/spiritually?
Are you blaming others for your condition?**

Transformations
Part 4
Feeding The Five Thousand
John 6:1 - 13

Message Guide & Questions

1. In the feeding of the 5000 the contrast between the _____ and the _____ was enormous. Consider this in our own lives.

2. What took place between the time Jesus healed the man at the Pool of Bethesda and the Feeding of the 5000?

3. Read John 15:5. What is Jesus reminding us here?

4. In the Feeding of the 5000 Jesus is testing the disciples. They had heard the theory; now they were presented with an opportunity to see it work in practice. How did the disciples react? Read and consider v.5 – 8.

5. Here is a hypothetical question for you.
'If Jesus had called upon an atheist in the crowd, and asked the same question, what would the atheist have said?' And what does that tell us about Philip and Andrew?

6. Charles explains that many Christians treat Jesus as if He were a 'silent partner' in their lives . Compare the role of a 'silent partner' in a business to the way some Christians allow God to work in their lives.

7. Why did Jesus ask the searching question of Philip?

8. The boy is often overlooked in this story. All he had to give was his own lunch. Remember 1 Timothy 4:12. Now consider the actions of this young boy.

9. Once Jesus had the boy's lunch, what simple, but revolutionary thing did Jesus do?

10. Charles teaches us that:
"Please' is the pleading language of a beggar – displaying uncertainty" whereas 'Thank You' is the language of faith – confident in God."
When we learn to say 'Thank You' in every situation, what two things are we expressing?

Transformations
Part 5
“Jesus Walking on the Water”
John 6:16 - 21

Message Guide & Questions

In this study from Charles’ message we will look more closely at 4 simple things:

- a. Where the disciples were.
- b. Why they were there.
- c. What they saw.
- d. How they responded

1. As a reminder; John calls the miracles of Jesus _____ that are _____ to what?

2. From verses 17 & 18 consider where they were and in what circumstances.

3. We know why the disciples were where they were – they were trying to get home to their families and for a good nights sleep. And then read John 6:18 and Matthew 14:24
What 3 simple things does Charles suggests about Jesus and Storms?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

4. Should Christians expect to be immune to the storms of life because of their faith in Jesus Christ? Why?

5. Does Jesus deliberately caused some storms and then send His disciples through it? Why would He do such a thing?

6. Can you name another instance were the Bible tells us that God sent a storm? What was the purpose on this occasion?

7. Since the disciples were not where they were by accident or coincidence, why were they in this storm?

8. Having established that it was the middle of the night, in the middle of the lake, and the middle of a storm; what happened next that caused the disciples to think they were also in the middle of a nightmare!

9. Consider what was the source of the disciples fear, and what did Jesus do both actually and figuratively?

10. What did the disciples do? John and Mark leave out this remarkable part of the story, so read and consider Matthew 14:28 – 32.

11. What was the reaction of Jesus when Peter took his eyes off Him, and looked at the problem surrounding him? Again refer to Matthew 14:28 - 31

12. What was Jesus really doing by allowing the disciples to go through this storm? Read and consider closely Mark 6:51 – 52.

Closing Comments from Charles

[Paraphrased]

The disciples had experienced so much, yet their hearts were hard. It is possible to be a Christian for many years, yet still have a heart that has been hardened by old ways, old terms, adopting human practices; a heart that responds to problems no different than your unsaved neighbors – never letting God in!

What is threatening to be over your head?
Do you really believe it is under the feet of Jesus?
Are you willing to take the risk – to step out in obedience and trust?

Hardened hearts will respond in fear – like the disciples!
Hearts that are softened towards the Lord will respond in trust,
no matter what the circumstances!

Transformations
Part 6
The Healing of the Man Born Blind
John 9:1 - 7

Message Guide & Questions

In this study we will address 3 big issues.

- a. The **Philosophical** Issue - What was the **Reason** for this man's blindness?
- b. The huge **Theological** Issue - What was the **Response** to his blindness?
- c. The huge **Practical** Issue - Concerning the **Release** from his blindness.

1. There are several issues raised by this story. What issue was raised by -
 - a. The Disciples? _____
 - b. The Pharisees? _____

2. Was the reaction of the disciples reasonable? Do we imply the same things today?

3. What was the basis of the reaction of the Pharisees?

4. What is the very difficult question that arises in verse 3 – 4?

5. Many people have trouble with these verses, but Campbell Morgan, a respected expositor, has suggested an alternative, but legitimate, punctuation that changes the meaning.

Compare this:

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no-one can work."

With this:

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus. "But this happened, so, that the work of God might be displayed in this life, as long as it is day we must do the work of Him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work."

What do you think?

6. The disciples were looking backward – trying to determine who was to be blamed for the illness, but what was Jesus trying to do?

7. Finally, on the Practical level, consider the manner in which Jesus affected this miracle.
- a. He spat on the ground - not a very nice thing to do.
 - b. He made mud out of dirt and his spittle – not a very hygienic thing to do.
 - c. He put this in the blind man’s eyes – surely an action more likely to make a person blind rather than to heal.
 - d. Then He instructed the man to go down to the Pool of Siloam and wash it off – the steps down to this pool were old and rickety, the man was blind AND he had mud in his eyes this was not a safe thing to do!

Why did Jesus do this, and what do we learn from this?

Final Comments

Too often we want to put God in a box, but He will not allow that.
There is no action nor system required of us
other than to trust Him in simple child-like faith
such as the blind man did in this story!

Whatever situation you are in; however difficult the circumstances –
Don’t try to explain them!
Resist looking for reasons!
Don’t look backwards – look forwards!
Seek for the work of God to be displayed in your life!
And let God be as original as He desires to be!

Transformations
Part 7
Raising of Lazarus from the Dead John 11:17 – 44

Message Guide & Questions

1. To what are the physical miracles of Jesus designed to point?

2. What is the essential message or theme of the Gospel?

3. What does it mean to become a Christian and what term did Jesus use to describe this process?

4. What is our natural condition and what caused us to be like that?

5. What has our physical body become?

6. Compare the Symptoms of Physical Death and Spiritual death.

7. Compare the difference between Martha's reaction when Jesus finally arrived. (John 11:21) and her reaction when Jesus assured her "Your brother will rise again." (John 11:23)

8. What is the significance of the response of Jesus in verse 25?

9. How do the "I AM"'s of Jesus speak to people's needs today?

10. What are some possible reasons people might give for not allowing the Lord to 'roll away the stone' and reveal their life. Vs. 38 & 39

11. Read verse 40. In this context what does 'believing' mean?

12. In scripture, every act of God is precipitated by something WE have to do; what is that?

13. When Lazarus was called forth from the tomb by Jesus, he had two options. What are they? Compare these with our options when Christ Jesus calls us.

14. What 3 things were necessary for Lazarus to be 'born again'?

15. Although Lazarus came forth from the tomb, what were the 3 things he still could not do and why?

16. Some people have been raised to life, but are still in grave clothes. Consider what trappings are holding back people from fully experiencing Christ?

**Are you dead but desperately want to live?
Are you alive but still bound in defeat, wanting to be released?
Or are you alive and have been loosed?
The choice is yours.**

Transformations
Part 8
The Miraculous Catch of Fish
John 21:1 – 14

Message Guide & Questions

1. In writing his gospel, what did John call these miracles and why are these particular ones recorded?

2. What is the 'object' of all this?

3. Why is this miracle different from the others?

4. This miracle occurred between the resurrection and the ascension. Why do you think these disciples may have decided to go fishing at this time? John 21:3

5. Do we sometimes do the same as the disciples did? Why? What is the good news?

6. Even though the scripture tells us the disciples were "not far from shore" [v.8], they did not immediately recognize Jesus. Why do you suppose that was?

7. Name some other occasions where unbelief hampered the work of God.

8. When Jesus asked the fishermen disciples if they had caught any fish, what did this question expose? Why did Jesus want to expose this?

9. When we are hurting and discouraged and feeling we have failed, what must we do? What door would this open to us?



10. What is the significance of there being 153 fish caught?

11. What is the significance of the strange comment by the disciples in v.12b. "None of the disciple dared ask him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the Lord."

12. Jesus challenged Peter 3 times with the question "Do you love me?", and Peter answered each time with "Yes, Lord you know that I love you." What is the significance of the two different word used for 'love' by Jesus and then Peter?

13. Peter was being honest. Perhaps his response was affected by his own sense of failure; after all, he had denied Jesus 3 times. But how did Jesus respond to Peter's answer?

"Jesus sends ordinary fallen people, as long as they are honest and don't pretend things that are not true, as long as they are not just saying the right things because it's the right thing to say, but they are being honest." (Charles Price)

How well do you know Jesus?
Will you go on getting to know Him more?
Will you love Him with an agape love?
Will you serve Him well and faithfully?

Leader's Message Guide

This Leader's Guide is prepared to help the Study Group Leader to keep the discussions moving along. Maybe your people will come up with different answers, or perhaps they will need a little prompting from you.

Remember, you want to encourage your people to fully participate. This is not a 'teaching session' by the Group Leader, but rather a discussion group. This may at first seem like a contradiction, but you will need for the Lord to give you wisdom to keep the discussions 'on track' whilst also allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your path.

Consider this in light of the fact that so many Christians work on the erroneous principle of 'You tell God what you would like **Him** to do – and He will do it!' This is so wrong! If you want to see God work you must reverse that to ...“Whatsoever He says unto you DO IT!”

7. When Jesus Christ is about to do **something extraordinary**, He begins by giving a **command**.
Jesus was operating only on His Father's timetable so that He would be glorified. He did not act to meet a need [although that may be the by-product],
8. Every act of God is precipitated by **an act of obedience**. Our obedience should take place immediately, it should be to the full, it should be with joy and trust and absolutely nothing should delay it. The process of preparation is obedience; let God set the timetable, then HE will do the work.

Remember this:

**When you Obey Him, you must Trust Him!
Obedience and Dependence must not be separated!**

**It is important to note that the servants were not responsible for producing the wine.
They were only responsible for filling the jars with water.**

9. This first miracle of Jesus revealed His Glory and, as a result, the disciples put their faith in Him. Did they simply put their faith in His ability to make wine? No- he never did that again. They put their faith in HIM, not in His doing something!

**Enjoy the miracle – but READ THE SIGN!
Pointing us to the sufficiency of Jesus in every situation.**

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Transformations

Part 2

'Three Stages of Faith'

John 4:46-54

1. Seeking Faith, Resting Faith and Knowing [Experiencing] Faith.
2. A. According to John's account, Jesus had only performed one previous miracle, and that did not involve healing. [Turning water into wine]
B. The official did not only have great faith in Jesus, he was also pro-active in that 'he went to Jesus'. This is 'Seeking Faith'.
3. A. **He came with the right motives.**
He was deliberate in seeking after Jesus.
No-one stumbles casually upon Jesus.
It is only those who seek Him, who find Him. Jeremiah 29:13; Matthew 7:7 – 8

We need to understand that ***"when God begins to work in our lives – drawing us to Him by the Holy Spirit - the first thing He does is to give us an awareness of our need, and bring us face to face with impotence."*** (Charles Price)

B He came by the right means.

He went to Jesus himself, personally – not to the disciples

Often we try to get others to go to Jesus for us.

* We ask others to pray for us - we often go to others first ... Friends, Counselor, Pastor, Church, read a book etc. These things have their place – but never as a substitute.

* We send in our prayer requests to other ministries.

[Often encouraged by pastors and TV preachers]

It is possible to "be on every prayer list in every church in the city, but never actually come to Jesus yourself." (Charles Price)

"Intercessory prayer is important and good; we are to 'bear one another's burdens', but we sometimes keep people away from Jesus by doing for them what they themselves must do. Talk to Jesus yourself. No one has better access than you do!" (Charles Price)

C The official looked for the Wrong Methods.

He had certain expectations and so he tried to fit Jesus into that. [v.49]

"When we make evangelism a routine we can get people to go through the routine but [that doesn't necessarily] get them to Christ."

(Charles Price)

Not one person in the New Testament ever prayed to become a Christian. Jesus, Paul, the

apostles, never prayed with anyone to become a Christian. It is good to pray, but who did Jesus ever pray with for that purpose? Nicodemus? The rich young ruler? Lazarus? Peter? Mary Magdalene?

The invitation was always to **do something**.

Follow me! Reach out your hand! Go and wash in Siloam! Repent! Believe!

DO something as evidence of faith! [Romans 1 v.5]

4. This official had **Faith** – which is good; but he was at **Fault** in trying to tell Jesus how He should answer his prayer.
Consider this: True faith is not just believing that God will answer, but also trusting the ‘when’ and ‘how’.
5. Sometimes we don’t get - Evidence
Sometimes we don’t get - Proof
Sometimes we don’t get - Action
If we don’t get these things should God’s WORD be enough?
Read and consider Proverbs 3:5 – 6.
6. The last part of verse 50 tells us that –
 - a. The official had to take Jesus at His word.
 - b. The official had to obeyed the command and go.
7. The issue for Jesus was not that the son was healed, but that the official would come to BELIEVE. The son’s illness was a surface problem, but Jesus wanted to go deeper than that. We need to learn to allow the Lord to take us beneath the surface and into deeper issues that He wants to address.
8. **“You relax; the pressure is off; the issue is settled. This is the stage of faith where you gain peace of mind. The panic is over. You believe without evidence, you believe without proof, you believe without signs and wonders, you believe for one thing alone: the naked word of God, and you stand on it.”**
Standing on [the] rock while all else is sinking sand. *Charles Price*
9. They had seen him RUN to Jesus.
They had seen him BELIEVE in the Word of Jesus.
They had seen the work of Jesus.

Not only did the official believe, **but all his household too!** This kind of ‘experiencing faith’ becomes contagious!
10. For the people around you in your immediate sphere of influence i.e. family, friends, work colleagues; **“When you build a history of God working; when they see your faith in God releasing divine action, it becomes easy for them to believe.”** *Charles Price*

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Transformations

Part 3

'Healing at the Pool of Bethesda'

John 5:1 - 9

1. Do you want to get well? v.6

After being sick for 38 years is it not an insult to ask that question?
Maybe with some people they don't really want to get well; their illnesses define them.

2. Blind, lame and paralyzed.

People can be paralyzed in lots of ways for lots of reasons.

Paralyzed **Physically** - through disease, sickness or injury.

Paralyzed **Emotionally** - through past or present abuse or hurt.

Paralyzed **Spiritually** - through sin, disobedience; lack of trust.

3. The word 'Bethesda' is an Aramaic word meaning "House of Mercy".
It was a place of hope for everyone, and a place of healing for some.

4. Jesus knew that this man had suffered for 38 years. Every time the waters were stirred [which induced healing] someone else got into the pool before him.
This man was not only physically paralyzed, but he had probably given up all hope of ever getting healed.
Jesus instinctively chose the most desperate case of all those who were there.
Sometime we feel that our weakness excludes us from Jesus, but it is the reverse. Our weakness qualifies us for Him.

"We cannot be too bad for Jesus; but we can be too good for Jesus."

(Charles Price)

5. **Helplessness** can lead to **Hopelessness** which can lead to **Laziness** and a feeling of **Uselessness**.

Consider this sequence:

- a. There are no demands on you when you are sick.
- b. Life can be comfortable as people do everything for you.
- c. You have no responsibilities.

If the man was healed he would have responsibilities; he would have to do things for himself; he would have to get a job.

So, Jesus asked "Do you **want** to be healed?" as opposed to asking "Do you **need** to be healed?"

6. a. Maybe some people feel it is better to **stay uncommitted to Christ** because
They won't have to change things in their lifestyle.

- b. Maybe some would like to **stay a defeated, distant Christian** because there's
No risk of being sent to the mission field.
- c. Maybe some feel it is better to **not be broken before God** because
They can then keep hold of your anger, resentment, bitterness.
- d. Maybe some feel it is better to **not surrender to the Lordship of Christ** because
They can keep your money to yourself, and not ask God what He might do with it.

7. The man is blaming someone else for his not being healed.

Do you sometimes say – if somebody else would change, if they would behave differently, if they would apologize to me, if they would get out of the way, then I would be okay.

It is not about someone else; it is about YOU!

8. Every act of Jesus in our lives is precipitated by a response of obedience to Him
“Here is a vital principle: The Lord does not give a command that we can naturally fulfill! He never gives us a command that He Himself is not required to make possible. We obey, not in independence, but in dependence.” (Charles Price)
9. He surrendered his will to the Lord, and turned his back on the past. He burned his bridges behind him.
“When the will of man is brought into harmony with the will of God, things happen.” (Charles Price)
“One secret of continuity and power is that we burn our bridges behind us. We cut ourselves off from the things that held us in bondage.” (Charles Price)

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Transformations

Part 4

Feeding The Five Thousand

John 6:1 - 13

1. In this incident the contrast between the demand and the supply was enormous, but Jesus was equal to it!
2. A dialogue that took place in which the Jews challenged Jesus because they were angry that He had healed someone on the Sabbath. The response of Jesus was surprising. Read v.17 – 19
“The gist of His statement is this: Uncomfortable as this is to you, I am not in this to make a point, or to break your laws. In fact, I have no agenda of my own. I do only those things that please the Father.” *Charles Price*

Jesus passed the responsibility of His actions away from Himself and onto His Father. He related the situation to His Father. It was the Father [not Himself] in Him who was doing the work.

“This is the key for Christian living. We are to relate everything to God, to Jesus Christ.” *Charles Price*

3. As Jesus Himself could do nothing without the Father, so we can do nothing without Him!
“As He lived in union with His Father, we are to live in union with Him! If we haven't grasped that our Christian life will be a life of frustration.”
Charles Price
4. Philip checked the finances and discovered they did not have enough money to buy all the food necessary. He even calculated that 8 months wages would still not be enough. Andrew stated that they had access to 5 loaves and two fish – but that would not meet the need either.
Consider whether this was a reasonable thing to say, or whether it was not **in light of what Jesus had just been teaching them.**
5. The atheist would have responded exactly the same as Philip and Andrew. What did this say about Philip and Andrew?
They were professing disciples, but practicing atheists.

Despite what Jesus had taught them they –

- a. Related the situation only to *themselves* – not to the Father.
- b. Reckoned only on *their* natural resources – not on the resources of the Father.
- c. They were counting only on *their own* ability – not that of the Father.

In fact, they totally ignored the Father. God did not enter their calculations. They had learned NOTHING.

The missing ingredient in Andrew's assessment of the situation was the missing ingredient in Philip's assessment of the situation: **God**

6. A 'silent partner' in a business lends his name and money, but has no part in running the business.
"We give God the glory [we are sufficiently instructed in scriptures to know that], but we do not expect Him to really take any part in our lives. We reduce everything to workable, manageable, human enterprise."
Charles Price
7. It was not to get advice from Philip – in v. 6 we see that Jesus already knew what He was going to do.
It was not to find out anything about Philip – Jesus already knew everything about him.
It was to expose Philip to himself – that he was bankrupt without God.
Because Jesus totally trusts in the Father He [Jesus] is **panic proof in the face of any difficulty.**
"This is one of the characteristics of living in Christ – to be panic proof. By relating everything to the Father, as Jesus did, and as we are told to do, we experience the 'peace of God that passes all understanding.'" Charles Price Read Philippians 4 v. 6
8. The young boy did not have much to give, but he did not hesitate to give it; even though it was all he had.
"How many of us do very little and see very little because we feel we do not have much to offer? Just give Jesus what you have got." Charles Price
"...one very vital thing about the boy was that, because Jesus was all important to him [child-like faith], the vastness of the need and the poverty of his supply was not important to him." Charles Price
9. He simply GAVE THANKS.
In doing this He reckoned on the sufficiency of the Father.
GIVING THANKS is the key to the Christian life.
Read and consider the following scriptures: John 6 v.23; I Thessalonians 5 v.18; Ephesians 5 v.20; Colossians 1 v.12; Colossians 3 v.17; Philippians 4 v.4 – 6; Psalm 136 v.1; Psalm 106 v.47; Romans 1 v.21
Consider this also:
 - a. Jesus never once said 'please' [as a supplication] to His Father – only Thank You!
 - b. Paul never once said 'please' in his prayers – only Thank You!
 - c. The Psalmists never say 'please' to God – only Thank You! [over 35 times]
10.
 - a. **Your complete and utter dependency on God!**
 - b. **His complete and utter sufficiency for the task!**

Closing Comments

**“Are you like Philip and Andrew and the whole team of disciples,
relating life to yourself and your resources?**

**Or are you like the boy who brought the loaves and fishes
to Jesus, the One who was all important to him?**

**The vastness of the need and poverty of his supply was unimportant.
Will you learn to say THANK YOU – and pass it on to Him?**

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Transformations

Part 5

"Jesus Walking on the Water"

John 6:16 - 21

1. **Signs** that are not an end in themselves, but are **pointers** so that we might –
 - a. Know WHO He is- the Christ.
 - b. Might experience WHAT He gives – LIFE.
 - c. Might know HOW to respond – believe.Read John 20 v.30 – 31

2. This is the all-important 'context' without which we cannot fully appreciate what the Lord wants to teach us.
 - a. It was dark.
 - b. It was late.
 - c. They were physically tired. *They were going home after a busy and eventful day that had included the feeding of the 5000.*
 - d. They were alone, without Jesus.
 - e. A strong wind was blowing.
 - f. The waters were very rough.

But this was not an unusual occurrence for these men. Some of the disciples were fisherman by trade; Galilee was their lake; they worked there, so they probably knew the lake like the backs of their hands – **and yet still they were afraid!**

Compare this with our lives today – does this happen to us sometimes also?

3.
 - a. Jesus **Permits** storms.
 - b. Jesus **Provides** storms
 - c. Jesus **Protects** in storms.

4. The answer to that is found in Matthew 5:45. Please read **"Christians are not singled out for exemption from the troubles of life. We get sick, we have accidents, we get hurt, just like everyone else. There are advantages to being a Christian, but being free from troubles is not one of them."** *Charles Price* [paraphrased]

5. To answer that; consider that in John 17:6 it states that Jesus allowed the disciples to go on ahead of him. However, in Matthew 14:22 and Mark 6:45 it says that "Jesus **made** the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him." Was Jesus setting them up? Even if Jesus did not actually create the storm – **He knew it was coming, and He deliberately sent the disciples into it!**

6. Jonah: Read Jonah 1:4.
“This storm was not a coincidence, but the loving hand of God in discipline. He disciplines those he loves – [sometimes] through storms.” *Charles Price*
7. Sometimes the very architect of the storm is God because through it we are going to learn things we would never learn any other way, as these disciples were going to. The Lord disciplines those he loves. Sometimes the storm is the mouthpiece of God! Read also; Job 30:22
8. They saw an apparition walking on the water, and then, to make matters worse, the apparition actually spoke to them! Read Matthew 14:25 – 27.
 Reading it now it can seem almost funny to us, but the disciples were filled with very real fear.
9. The source of their fear was the storm that was so severe that waves were crashing over the boat -
 * They could lose their boat – their livelihood gone.
 * They could lose their very lives.
 By walking on the water **“The thing that was threatening to be over their heads was [now] under the feet of Jesus.”** *Charles Price*

Scripture often uses the analogy of things being ‘under His feet’ to mean he has utterly defeated them. Read 1 Corinthians 15: 25 and Ephesians 1:22

“If Jesus Christ defeated the last enemy when He rose from the dead, it means He has defeated every other enemy which threatens me today!” *Charles Price*

10. It would appear that Peter was the only disciple to observe that the thing **threatening to be over his head was under the feet of Jesus.**
 More importantly, he did not just sit back and watch in admiration, but he realized he **should do something!**
 As Charles says, **“This is the teachable moment, where you either go on and grow, or hold back and stagnate. This is where you take the risk.”**

People may criticize Peter because he took his eyes off Jesus, allowing fear to return and so began to sink; but at least he took the risk and did something by getting out of the boat rather than letting fear overcome his trust in Jesus, or sitting back watching in admiration – making no commitment.

The rest of the disciples never **experienced** anything!

Consider thisCharles asks, **“Is our knowledge of Jesus primarily to create Admiration? Wonder? Worship? Applause? Or is it to lead us to Experience of Him? We can have an extremely passive view of Jesus [as Him being] Great, Powerful and Strong, but actually IRRELEVANT [in our lives]”**

11. Jesus rebuked Peter for his lack of faith, not his lack of ability.
 The whole principle of Christian living is here.
 ‘Without Me you can do nothing’ ‘With God ALL things are possible.’

12. Most of us do not connect the 'Feeding of the 5000' with 'Jesus Walking on the Water', but here we see that Jesus was testing the disciples again because they had not learned the lesson of the latter miracle [Feeding the 5000]
Why had they not learned? Mark 6:52

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Transformations

Part 6

The Healing of the Man Born Blind

John 9:1 - 7

1.
 - a. The disciples asked, "Who sinned, this man or his parents?" v.2
 - b. The Pharisees asked, "How could Jesus, a sinner, do such miracles?" v.16
2. Some people even today say things like
 - a. I wonder if God is judging me?
 - b. Is my calamity some kind of pay-back from God?
 - c. Is there a 'cause and effect' to my illness/circumstances?

This was a very reasonable question from the disciples as there are instances in the Old Testament where physical afflictions, sickness, accidents and death can be traced to various moral causes.

Consider the following;

Job.	Read Job 4 v.7 – 8 and 22 v.4 – 10.
The sin of Adam	Read Romans 5 v.12 and 1 Corinthians 15 v.21.
The sin of parents	Read Exodus 34 v. 7. Also Exodus 20 v.5; Deut. 5 v.9 and Nehemiah 14 v.18.
Our own personal sin	Read Deuteronomy 28 v. 15 – 19 [Later you could read the rest of this chapter if you wish]

In the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda, Jesus implied that his sin was the cause of his affliction. Read John 5 v.14.

Says Charles, "**Here is an unpleasant reality. The sins of the parents DO visit the children. These are moral not physical. We do not sin in isolation or without effect.**"

3. They did not consider Jesus to be anything more than a mortal man just as they were; so if he [Jesus] was a sinner under the same curse, how could he heal people!
As Charles comments, "**There is some truth in the question the Pharisees asked; so we have to be very careful about how we live our lives. Others become impacted by our sins.**"
4. Consider these comments by Charles;
"It sounds like it is saying, 'This man was not born blind because of any sin of his parents or himself, but in order to give God an opportunity to show what He can do with a blind man.' I have tremendous difficulties with that, It sounds foreign to the character of God that He would deliberately give a man and his family this kind of hardship, suffering and

disability purely to show His power. God may well show Himself powerful in difficult situations, but does He cause them in the first place just so that He can show Himself?

It is true that God may be glorified in all our afflictions and calamities, but for them to have been given us by God for His purposes is problematic to [our understanding of a] a God of love and kindness”.

5. Do you see the difference? Same words, but different punctuation! Campbell Morgan sent this alternative rendering to an eminent Greek scholar who replied: “He would be an exceedingly bold scholar who would undertake to prove the punctuation should be one way or the other on the mere grounds of the Greek itself. It seems as if the question would have finally to be decided on doctrinal grounds, for it is plain that the difference in the punctuation of the verse would change the meaning altogether. If one reading would be more in spirit with the tenor of Christ’s teachings, as seems quite probable, that would be quite naturally preferable”
- a. There is no logical cause for the illness – neither the man, his parents, or God.
 - b. It just happened! It is just a part of life!
 - c. So – because it happened – [and so] that the work of God might be displayed in this life, as long as it is day – we must do the work of him who sent us.

This answers the Philosophical question of ‘What is the reason for the blindness?’ There is no ‘reason’ – it just happened.

It also deals with the Theological Issue if you can accept the change in punctuation.

Ultimately you have to make your own decision on this; but when you apply the alternate punctuation the meaning that emerges is much more in line with the other teachings of Jesus

6. Rather than looking back at the **problem** [as we so often do], Jesus was trying to teach them to instead look forwards in Faith to the **solution**.

Also, what Jesus was trying to get across here is that essentially they were asking the wrong question. They were looking for someone to blame instead of looking for what God can do; and being energetically at work for the One who sent Him. Working while the sun shines, because when night falls the workday is over.

As Charles says: **“There is no virtue in orienting on the past or the problem. We should not be asking questions about that which we can do nothing about, but rather, find out what God is doing in this situation, and do the work of Him who sent us, while it is day,”**

7. Truthfully, we don’t know why Jesus did it in this way. It was probably all unnecessary. He never healed anyone in that way before or since. Probably Jesus wanted to show that it was not by technique.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Transformations

Part 7

Raising of Lazarus from the Dead

John 11:17 – 44

1. The miracles of Jesus that are recorded in the Gospel of John, are given as signs that are pointers – physical events – that point to spiritual realities.
2. The Gospel that Jesus Christ brings is essentially about becoming alive.
3. Becoming a Christian is becoming re-generated, – being made alive again. Jesus used the language “being born again, receiving new life”.
4. Our natural condition is that of death. We are dead – spiritually (Ephesians 2:1) because of the sin of Adam in the Garden of Eden. “In Adam we all die.” (1 Corinthians 15:22)
5. Our physical body has become the tomb of our spiritual death.
6. One of the symptoms of being dead is you have no appetite. Another is that the dead man doesn't learn anything.
Likewise, one of the marks of spiritual death is that you have no appetite, no interest in the things of God. It's possible for somebody to have an appetite for church without having an appetite for God .
There is no desire to learn more about God and they wonder why other people get so enthusiastic.
7. She said, “Jesus, you are too late.” She is relating the power of Jesus to the **Past Tense**.
Hers was a reaction of helplessness & hopelessness
Then she said, ‘I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.’ Now she looks to the **Future Tense**. Some people give the excuse, “I am not ready yet. Let me sort this or that out first.” But they never will.
8. Jesus said, “ ‘I am the resurrection and the life.’” Martha is standing in the presence of the One who only deals in the **Present Tense**.
9.
 - i To those who are Lost He says I AM the Way
 - ii To those who are Confused He says I AM the Truth
 - iii To those who are in Darkness He says I AM the Light
 - iv To those who are Hungry He says I AM the Bread of Life
 - v To those who feel they are on the outside He says I AM the Door

vi To those who need direction & guidance He says I AM the Good Shepherd
vii To those who are Dead He says I AM the Life
Don't look back (the past) and don't forward (the future); look at Me (the present)

10.
 - a. Lord, my life stinks.
 - b. Do you have any idea what I've been up to?
 - c. Do you really want to know what my mind is like?
 - d. Do you really want to expose my history?
 - e. Do you know how long I have been bound to these things?
 - f. Do you know how many times I have tried to get rid of these things?
11. Believing is placing your dependence on something (or someone) else.
12. Every act of God in Scripture is precipitated by an act of obedience. In this case the willingness to expose the need. When we are willing to expose the need, it will give access to the Lord Jesus.”
13. He could **respond to** the command of Jesus and come out, or he could **react against** the command and stay in the tomb. The choice we have is to accept the call of God on our lives or reject it.
14.
 - a. **Believing** – Jesus asked Martha “Do you believe this?” She answered, “Yes Lord I believe you are the one.”
 - b. **Acting** – take away the stone - I confess and expose my need and my heart.
 - c. **Obeying** – Lazarus coming out - The action leads to obeying and actually determining to live for Jesus.
15.
 - a. **He could not do anything** because his hands were wrapped.
 - b. **He could not go anywhere** because his feet were wrapped.
 - c. **He could not see anything** because cloth was around his face.
16. The things that belong to the old life. Some possible things might be:
 1. Associating with the wrong people.
 2. Holding on the hidden sins.
 3. Going to the wrong places.
 4. Watching [on TV & movies] the wrong things.
 5. The fear of moving out from your comfort zone and fully trusting God.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Transformations

Part 8

The Miraculous Catch of Fish

John 21:1 – 14

1. John calls these miracles “miraculous SIGNS”. Consider the significance of that, in that “signs are not an end in themselves; signs are pointers to something else” (*Charles Price*). According to John 20:30 & 31, these were recorded:
 - a. That we might know WHO He is – the Christ
 - b. That we might experience what He GIVES - Life
 - c. That we might know what TO DO – Believe in HimConsider the implications of miracles in today's culture.
2. John 20:30b says “... That by believing you may have life in His name.” We receive Life, in all its fullness, to enjoy and in which to live.
3. It did not involve the reversal of the laws of nature, such as walking on water, feeding 5000, raising the dead or healing the sick.
4. Before they had been called by Jesus, fishing had been their profession. Despite having been with Jesus for 3 years – seeing His miracles, hearing Him teach, watching Him die and seeing Him resurrected [this was not the first time He appeared to them after the resurrection] – yet because they had deserted and denied Jesus, they were feeling defeated, discouraged, disappointed and disillusioned ... so they turned their back on their calling and returned to their former life.
5. Personal failure, inability, seeming futility, perhaps a sin that you feel disqualifies you from continuing, confronted again and again with you own weakness.
Do not be discouraged; you are part of a noble club including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Gideon, David and many others.
“When we despair of ourselves – that is often the turning point” *Charles Price*
6. As on other occasions – Luke 24 v.16, John 20 v.14 – they were not expecting to see Jesus. Their unbelief caused them not to see Him even though He was right there amongst them. Do we ever act in that way.
“Unbelief closes our eyes and ears to Jesus” *Charles Price*
“If Jesus is not part of our calculations and not part of our expectancy, you will not see Him – even though He is right there; even though He is doing things.” *Charles Price*
7. Matthew 13 v.58; Romans 11 v.20; Hebrews 3 v.19
Consider these incidents in the light of today's culture.
8. It exposed their failure and their impotence; but not to embarrass, humiliate,

condemn or to rub their noses in their weakness.

When He allows this to happen to us it is to **“replace our weakness with His strength; to replace our poverty with His riches.”** *Charles Price*

9. Acknowledge our failure before God!
“Honesty and acknowledgement of our areas of need is the very doorway through which the Lord Jesus Christ can walk in and meet those needs.” *Charles Price*
“We learn more of Him in brokenness and failure.” *Charles Price*
10. It’s a trick question. There is no significance in the number except that it was a lot of fish – and they were large – compared to the zero catch of the disciples.
When you allow the Lord into your situation the difference will always be significant.
11. Yes – they knew it was the Lord, but now they were discovering something new about Him. We too will often say, “I know the Lord.”
We know He is our Savior, He is Lord, our Wisdom, our Strength, our Redemption, our Life, our Righteousness, our Sanctification but are we continually discovering more, or is our knowledge of Him static?
“Growth in the Christian life is continually learning more about Jesus than we ever knew there was to know about Him.” *Charles Price*
“Some of us live in spiritual poverty because we don’t know Him enough.” *Charles Price*
This is the great adventure of the Christian life; to continually know Him more.
Read also; John 14 v.9; Philippians 3 v.10; 2 Peter 1 v.3
12. Verses 15 – 17. Jesus used the word ‘agape’ which is the highest form of love, it’s the way that God loves us; but Peter used the word ‘phileo’ which is more like an affectionate brotherly love. A lower level of love.
Peter could not bring himself to fully commit. He even could not say ‘I love you more than these’ – he just could not fully commit.
Peter was holding back. Do we do the same? Are there some things in our life that we are still holding on to?
13. Amazingly, Jesus did not condemn Peter, but actually commissioned him into service.
Verses 15b, 16b and 17b. – “Feed My lambs”, “Feed My sheep”