

THE PROBLEM OF JESUS

STUDY GUIDE

Jesus presents us all with a challenge.

Either Jesus was a crazy teacher, or he is actually everything he said he was – God in the flesh, our savior, and redeemer – and that radically changes our lives.

Either Jesus blasphemously claimed to be God, or he is the son of God and we are called to worship him with all that we are.

Either Jesus died and we don't know why people remember the death of a man from small town Galilee, or Jesus died and his death saved the world from the power of sin.

Either hundreds of people risked their lives to claim that Jesus rose again knowing they made it up, or they truly saw a dead man resurrected and that means something for our lives.

Jesus presents us with a problem: If Jesus truly is who he says he is, then he makes a real impact on our lives and we must be confronted by this. There is no middle way.

I believe this material could change your life. We believe God can handle our tough questions and our faith is made stronger because of them. But when these questions are answered, we are met with a challenge – we can't just ignore what we've learned. We're called to live it.

This series will equip you to understand your faith and empower you to make a decision about Jesus. Jesus transforms our lives and, because of this, we are never the same.

I hope you'll fully engage with the problem of Jesus.

Ethan Magness
Senior Minister

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Ethan Magness. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping loop at the bottom.

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HOW TO APPROACH THE PROBLEM OF JESUS

Daily Devotions

To fully engage with the problem of Jesus, we need to go to God every day by investing in prayer and the Word of God. Set aside some time each day to quiet your spirit, read your Bible, and reflect on Jesus.

Sermons

Our weekly worship service will explore each topic in an in-depth way. Each sermon will include material that won't get covered in other parts of this series. Be sure to attend weekly services in-person or online so you can fully engage with the problem of Jesus. Use the note pages in the back of this booklet to keep track of what you've learned.

Supplemental Events

We're asking big questions in this series, and we want to give these questions the time they warrant. Join us for four supplemental events where Senior Minister Ethan Magness will teach us more about each topic and engage with you on any questions you may have. Check out the schedule for the events and submit your questions at fcc-jc.org/problem.

Group Study

It's so important that we wrestle with this material with one another. These groups will be a safe space for you to engage with the problem of Jesus and what Jesus means for your life.

In each study, you'll find the following components:

Prepare

Each section opens with a question to help you connect your life and experiences to the topic for the week. Use this time to get to know one another as you prepare to go deeper together.

Listen: Video Teaching

The opening questions are followed by a short video segment designed to briefly introduce the theme for the lesson. All videos can be accessed at www.fcc-jc.org/problem.

Reflect

Each video is followed by questions for reflection. Don't feel bound to answer each one. The goal is to give each person a chance to engage with the material in the video, and to prepare for further study.

Study

This is the foundation of each lesson. Having gathered our attention to the topic, we turn to scripture to shape our thoughts and spur us to action. Each reading is followed by questions to help your group understand the text.

Respond

The problem of Jesus is that we **MUST** respond. We either respond by tossing out everything Jesus said or by following him with our whole lives. The fact is we all make a choice in how we'll respond. Use this time to be intentional about this choice. We'll take time to listen to God and discern our next steps. Don't let this group time pass by without figuring out what action God is calling you to take.

This step will always include prayer - we want to go to God prayerfully every time we respond, trusting that God will direct our steps.

MARKS OF A HEALTHY GROUP

Hospitality:

We welcome all people to these groups. Wherever you are on your faith journey, we're glad you're here! Be sure to treat each other with hospitality. Invite new friends into your group and encourage the participation of everyone.

Compassion:

God works in all of us in different ways. Some people have worked out certain parts of their faith while others are wrestling with questions. Be patient when someone brings up a question you would never ask. Love one another by giving everyone the space to share.



Courage:

We believe God can handle our biggest, most daunting questions. So, we're not afraid to ask God the hard questions. It takes courage to voice your questions and to voice your next steps. Be willing to step out of your comfort zone during the discussion. You never know how God might work through what you bring to the group.

Confidentiality:

Make your group a safe place to share by respecting the privacy of those in your group. Give others the freedom to share confidential topics and conversations in your group.

Courtesy:

Conversations should include everyone, not just one or two of the most forceful talkers. Avoid interrupting one another or dismissing the opinions of those who disagree.



WEEK 1

THE PROBLEM OF SCRIPTURE

Monday – Matthew 2:1-18

Jesus' entrance into the world created a polarizing response – the magi worshipped, and Herod plotted murder. What kind of responses does Jesus evoke in people today? How are you currently responding to Jesus? In this study, we'll discover that there is no middle way. We will all either worship Jesus – or turn away. By default, if we are not worshipping Jesus, we are turning away. What would it look like for you to worship God this week?

Tuesday – Mark 15

Notice the many people present during the death of Jesus. List below each person and describe how they responded to Jesus. Why do you think the responses are so different? Spend some time praying over this study, and ask God to meet you as you engage with The Problem of Jesus.

Wednesday - Luke 1:1-4; 1 John 1-4

These passages both give us insight into why these scriptures were recorded and passed on in the community. Why did these writers share about Jesus? What evidence do they offer about the story and message of Jesus? Does this affect how you perceive scripture?

Thursday - 2 Timothy 3:14-17

This passage enlightens us on the role of scripture in our lives. How do these verses describe scripture? What purpose does it fill? What does it look like for us to use scripture in this way? Consider your habits and practices with scripture. How might God be calling you to engage with scripture today?

If you need a Bible, stop by FCC to get one so you can engage with scripture more meaningfully today.

Friday - Matthew 7:24-29

Here, we can see Jesus using a parable to illustrate the relationship between listening and doing. Both are important, but Jesus goes one step further. Not only are they both important - they're also inseparable. Verse 24 mentions two things that are like building our house on a rock. What are they? Why is it important that we do both things?

What does it look like to build our lives on the foundation of God's word? What steps can you take to do so today?

GROUP STUDY

As your group gathers for this experience, it may be your first time together. If it is, spend some time with intentional introductions. Share your names, any needed contact information and tell a bit about what brought you to the group.

Prepare

What's your favorite story? It can be a personal story, a movie, book –any type of story! What do you like about it?

Listen

Video Teaching: fcc-jc.org/problem

Reflect

- What is the scandal of Jesus?
- Janet talked about how, in some ways, we hardly treat Jesus like a scandal today. Do you agree?
- What reasons did Janet give for why we can trust that we have what the gospel writers wrote?
- What is the problem of scripture?

Study

Read Luke 1:1-4.

Luke's Gospel features an opening unlike any other, even when compared to the rest of the Gospels. It almost sounds more like the opening to an official address or perhaps a thesis. Yet Luke is very particular about how he starts his work, and wants to make sure that his readers (including us!) don't miss what he's trying to do.

- Why did Luke write this gospel? How did he approach this writing?
- What are some of the words you would use to describe Luke's study as it is described in these verses?
- What questions do you still have about the reliability of scripture? Take a moment to raise any questions you may have, but don't feel pressured to answer one another's questions. This is a safe space to voice them as we go on this journey together.
Go to fcc-jc.org/problem to submit your questions so they can be answered at one of our upcoming events.

WEEK 1 – GROUP STUDY

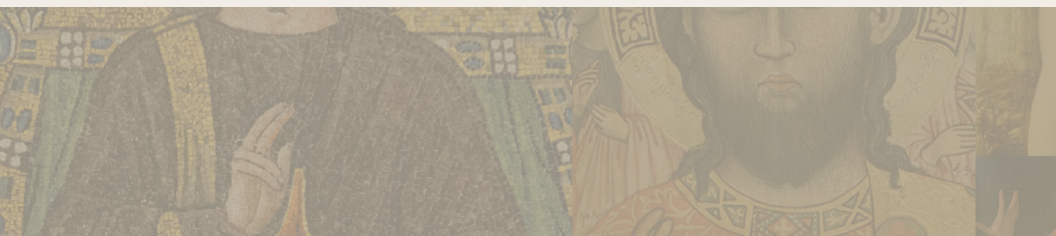
Read Luke 10:25-37.

- Look at verse 25. Why does this expert approach Jesus with this question?
- Now focus on verses 27-29. Identify these things:
 - What is written in the law?
 - What does Jesus instruct him to do with the law?
 - How does the expert respond? Why does the expert respond this way?
- Why does Jesus tell the parable of the Good Samaritan?
- Are you living out the commands of this passage? What would it look like for you to apply this lesson to your life today?

Read James 1:22-25.

These verses in James tell us it's not enough to believe in scripture or admire its beautiful words. We're called to do what it says.

- Are you actively following the Word of God? If not, how can you start today?
- How do you think the Law brings freedom?
- How are people blessed by following the Word of God? Have you experienced this before?



Respond

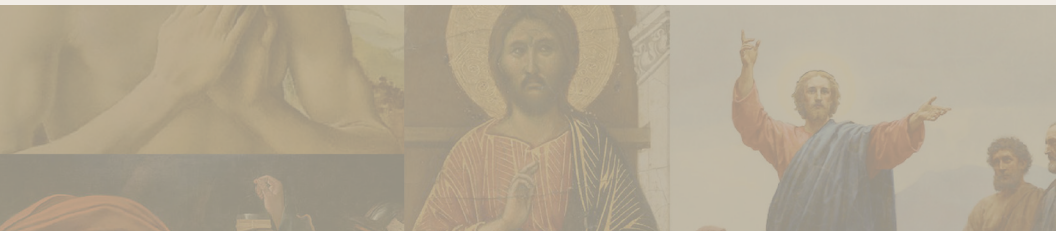
What step can you take this week to do what the Word of God says? **Consider one of these next steps:**

- Memorize a verse and challenge yourself to put that verse into action as you memorize it. Here are some to consider: 1 John 3:16; Matthew 28:18-20; Colossians 3:12-14; Psalm 23
- Commit to coming to this group weekly. Here, we will wrestle with the word of God and learn how it applies to our lives.
- Study the Bible. Then write down a next step or takeaway from that passage.

Closing Prayer

Take a moment to hear any prayer requests you may have. Then read these words as a closing prayer.

¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. – 2 Timothy 3:14-17



WEEK 2

THE PROBLEM OF JESUS' TEACHING

Monday – John 14:6 & Matthew 7:13-14

Jesus makes scandalizing claims of exclusivity in these passages. What are those claims? What do you think the narrow gate is? The wide gate? We're reminded through these passages that Jesus is the only way. Which way do you think you are currently going? Pray that you will respond to the message of Jesus by walking in his way alone.

Tuesday – Matthew 5:21-22; Matthew 5:43-46

Jesus' teachings changed everything. He brought new commands that recalibrated how the people understood the Law. These verses are from one of Jesus' most famous sermons – The Sermon on the Mount. How did Jesus change their view of the Law? What had they been told before? What changed? What would it look like for you to live out these teachings?

Wednesday – Matthew 4:17; Matthew 13:44-46

Jesus' biggest proclamation was that the kingdom of God was near. The kingdom of God is the reign of God on earth – right here, right now. It's us living in relationship with God and submitting ourselves to God's authority in our lives. How do the parables in Matthew 13 describe the value of the kingdom of God? Do you place that much value in the kingdom? What would it look like for you to value God's kingdom above everything else?

Thursday – Luke 9:23-26

To follow Jesus is to deny ourselves. We can't pursue Jesus and the ways of this world simultaneously. What might God be saying to you through these teachings today? Take time in prayer to surrender your life before God. Consider how you can follow Jesus more fully today.

Friday – Colossians 1:15-23

Jesus Christ is before all things, and in him all things were created. Everything else is meant to come after him. He is the Creator and Lord of our lives. What does it look like to live his way? What things hold the top spot in your life, sometimes even above Christ? What would it look like for Christ to be the priority that drives those things rather than the other way around?

GROUP STUDY

Prepare

Who do you go to when you need advice?

Listen

Video Teaching: fcc-jc.org/problem

Reflect

- What is the problem of Jesus' teaching?
- How is Jesus different from other teachers?
- How should we interact with the teaching of Jesus?

Study

Read Mark 8:34-38.

Jesus' teaching isn't easy to follow. While Jesus promises eternal life, he certainly doesn't promise that life will always be easy.

- What instructions does Jesus give here?
- How do these teachings differ from what we typically hear from leaders in today's society?
- What does it look like to deny yourself and pick up your cross on a day-to-day basis?

Read Mark 10:17-31.

This passage shows us an example of someone who was asked to deny himself to follow Jesus. He didn't mind following some of Jesus' teachings, but he didn't want to follow Jesus when it cost him something great.

- Why did this man go away sad?
- The disciples are amazed because this is a hard instruction to follow. What question do they ask Jesus and how does he respond? (v. 26-27)
 - How can Jesus' answer help us as we struggle to deny ourselves and take up the cross?
- Based on verses 28-31, what are some of the costs of following Jesus?

WEEK 2 – GROUP STUDY

Read Matthew 7:24-29.

We aren't meant to pick and choose which of Jesus' teachings we like, but we're called to make them the foundation of our lives.

- What happens when we hear these words but don't put them into practice?
- What happens when we do put them into practice?
- Which foundation do you have today? Do you need to make any changes?



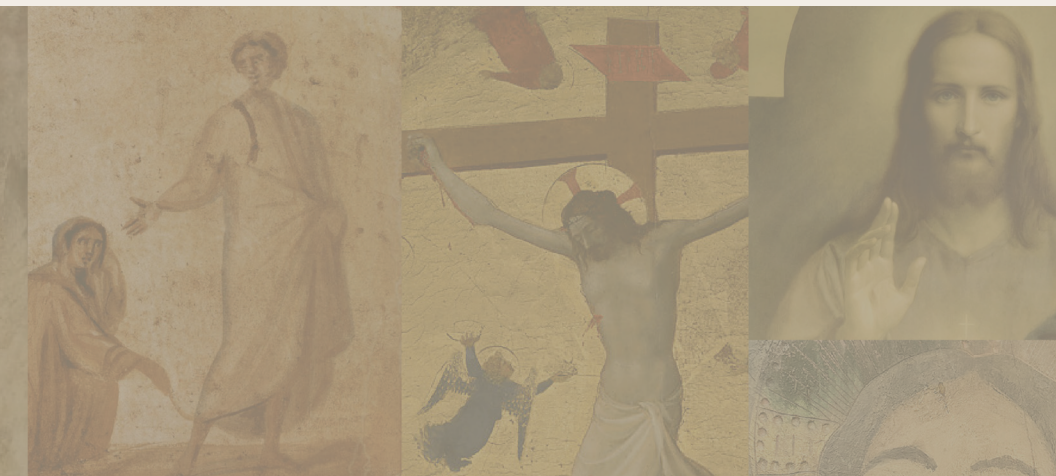
Respond

Is Jesus the main authority over your life today?

- What other voices are influencing and shaping your actions?
- What step can you take this week to make the voice of Jesus louder and the voice of other influences quieter in your life?
- Take inventory this week about what and who influences you most. Notice when you're listening to a voice besides the Word of God.

Closing Prayer:

Take a posture of surrender as you pray together to close. Consider bowing your head, closing your eyes, extending your open hands, or even kneeling. Pray that God will make the impossible possible in your life today, and give you the strength to deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow Jesus.



WEEK 3

THE PROBLEM OF THE DIVINE CLAIM

Monday – John 10:22-42

What does Jesus claim about himself in this passage? What do his opponents say about this claim? What problem do his opponents have with Jesus' claim? Reread verses 27-30. Praise God today for the blessings found in these promises!

Tuesday – Colossians 1:15-23; 2:9-10

Though the events of the gospels occurred first, the letter of Colossians was written before the gospels were. With this in mind, letters like this become our best windows into how the early church encountered Jesus – who they believed him to be and what this meant for them. What are some of the claims made about Jesus in this passage? What is he responsible for – both in the world and in our lives?

Reflect on the reality that even before the gospels were written, the very earliest records treat Jesus as divine.

Wednesday – John 14:1-7

Wrapped up within Jesus' comforting words to the disciples are reminders of who he is. But these declarations of Jesus are not a display of power, but rather simple truths that reveal his abounding love and care for them. How does Jesus comfort his disciples? How does this passage bring comfort to you?

Thursday – Romans 8:28-39

Paul here draws the connection between Jesus' divine claims to our salvation and forgiveness. Because of who Jesus is and what he has done for us, nothing may separate us from the love of God our Father.

Verses 35 and 38-39 assure us that nothing will ever separate us from the love of Christ. In what circumstances are you prone to forget this? What are some tools or practices to help you to remember the love of Christ in those circumstances?

Friday – Matthew 26:36-46

Passages like this remind us that Jesus experienced humanity fully. He experienced physical pain, emotional anguish, and the disappointment of people letting him down. Bring your needs in prayer before God today, knowing that we worship a God who met us fully on earth. Be in awe that the God of the universe met us here on earth and experienced all that we do today.

GROUP STUDY

Prepare

Who in your life have you been friends with for the longest time? Describe that friendship.

Listen

Video Teaching: fcc-jc.org/problem

Reflect

- What is the problem of the divine claim?
- How do we know that the early church believed in the divinity of Jesus?
- What does it mean for us that the Son of God met us here on earth? Use the space below to record an answer. Add to this list as you go through the study today.

Study

Read Philippians 2:5-11.

- How does this passage describe what Jesus did?
- Why is it important that Jesus humbled himself in this way?
- What does it mean for us? What actions are we instructed to take in light of this?

Read John 11:17-37.

- What does Martha claim about Jesus in verse 27?
- What does Jesus do in verses 33-35? What does this say about him?
- What does this mean for us today? How do you think Jesus responds when we experience hardship today?

Read Hebrews 2:14-18 and Hebrews 4:14-16.

- Jesus was God in the flesh and even shared in our humanity. What do these passages say about what this accomplishes? Why does it matter that Jesus was human?
- What comfort can we find in these words?
- What should we do when we are tempted? What does Jesus do for us when we are tempted?

Respond

These passages teach us about the significance of Jesus being God with us. Jesus met us here on earth. That changes how we treat others (Philippians 2), how we grieve (John 11), and how we struggle with temptation (Hebrews 2).

- Do you live with an awareness that Jesus is God with us? What would it look like for you to remember that Jesus met us here?
- How does it change your life that we worship a God who meets us on earth?

Share any prayer requests you have with the group. Share as openly as you feel comfortable. As you share, recognize that you are bringing these requests, struggles, and hardships before a God who is present with you now.

Pray over these needs as a group. Then read these words of Philippians 4 to close your time together.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

WEEK 4

THE PROBLEM OF MIRACLES

Monday – 2 Kings 4:1-7 & John 6:1-15

These miracle stories are similar, and they demonstrate continuity of who God is and continues to be. What do these stories reveal about the character of God and God's power over nature?

Look at John 6:2 and 6:14. What word is in both of those verses? Write the word below. What does this say about the purpose of Jesus' miracles?

Tuesday – John 20

The resurrection is just the start of a few miracles performed by Jesus before he ascended into heaven. What other miracles do we see in this passage? Why are they so significant to the message of the gospel today?

Copy verse 31 below. For what purpose did John record these miracles?

Wednesday – Luke 17:11-19

Jesus' healing of these men transformed their lives in two major ways. Not only were they physically healed, but they were socially healed. Jesus told them to present themselves to the priest because their physical healing allowed them to re-enter society. How does this miracle story give us a glimpse into the kind of world Jesus desires?

Thursday – Matthew 9:1-8

Jesus performs two miracles in this passage. What do you think is the answer to his question in verse 5? Now read Colossians 1:13-14. What does this say we have in Jesus? How do you view Jesus' power in light of this? Thank God today for the ongoing miracles of redemption and forgiveness.

Friday – Ephesians 1:3-14

Paul presents us with a beautiful description of what God has done for us. Not only were Jesus' miracles on earth "miraculous," but his love, grace, and obedience to God's calling for him, are miracles that save us all.

List all the things God has done for us that this passage mentions. How are these things miraculous? Which "miracle" of Ephesians 1 are you most grateful for today? Take a moment and say a prayer, thanking God for this wonderful gift.

GROUP STUDY

Prepare

Have you ever witnessed a miracle in your or someone else's life? If so, what was it?

Listen

Video Teaching: fcc-jc.org/problem

Reflect

- What reasons did John give for the authenticity of the miracle accounts?
- What is the purpose of Jesus' miracles? What do they point to?
- Based on this teaching, what do you consider to be modern day miracles?

Study

Read the miracle stories below and answer these questions:

- What does this tell you about God? What can we understand or know about God because of this miracle? (revelation)
- What impact did this miracle have on those around the situation at the time? How can we understand God's plans for the world? (restoration)

Passage	Understanding of God (Revelation)	Understanding of God's Plans for the World (Restoration)
Mark 3:1-6		
Mark 5:25-34		
Luke 9:10-17		
John 9		

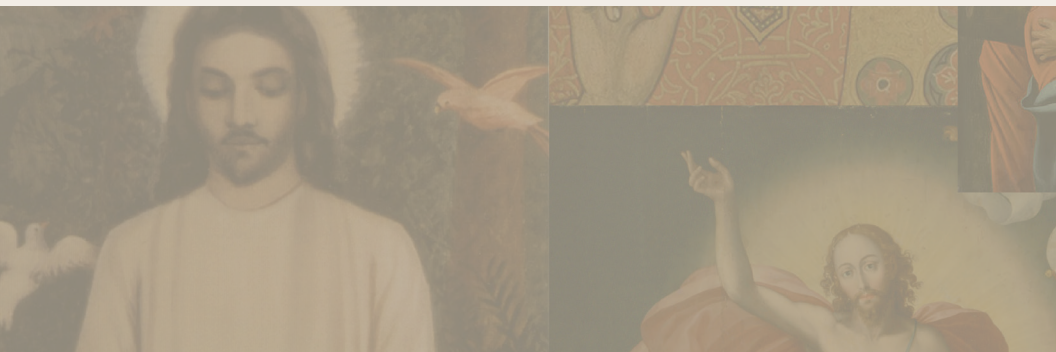
John 9:25 gives us a good example of how to testify to God's work in the world. Do you have any stories to share of how you've seen God work in the world?

Read 1 John 1:5-10 & Ephesians 4:22-32.

How are we called to be transformed in light of God's miraculous power?

Respond

- How have you been transformed by God's miraculous power? Is there an area where you're seeking transformation? How might God be challenging you to surrender this area to the lordship of Jesus?
- How can you be a part of living out God's plans for the world? How can you be a signpost to the kingdom of God?
- How do you see God at work around you today? What does it look like for you to praise God for God's continued action in this world?

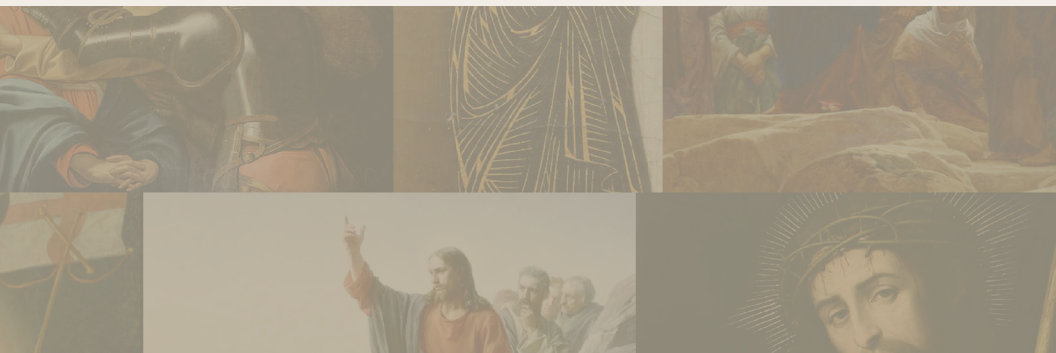


THE PROBLEM OF MIRACLES

Ask God for eyes to see and ears to hear the miracles in your everyday life. Thank God for the ways he has miraculously transformed your life and your community.

Read the words of Ephesians 1:15-23 as a closing prayer for your time together.

¹⁵For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²²And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.



WEEK 5
THE PROBLEM OF JESUS’ DEATH

Monday – Luke 23

Prayerfully read this account of Jesus’ death. This week we will discover why Jesus died and what his death accomplishes for us. As you read each day, add to the chart below. Today, pray that God would speak to you about the gift of salvation as you interact with God’s word.

What the Bible says about Jesus’ death	What this means for me and others

Tuesday – 1 John 1:5-10

What did Jesus' blood accomplish for us? Add to the chart on the left. Why is it important that we confess our sins? Take time today to confess to God how you have fallen short. Then, rest in the promise of Jesus: He is faithful and just and will purify us from all unrighteousness.

Wednesday – Colossians 2:13-15 & Romans 3:21-26

Continue adding to the chart. According to these verses, what did the death of Jesus accomplish for you? What did it change about the world? Praise God that salvation is available for everyone!

Thursday – 1 John 3:16 & 1 John 4:10-19

These passages contain a powerful truth about God, and an instruction on how we ought to live. How do these passages describe love? What does this mean for how we ought to live? What's one practical step you can take today to love someone? Write it down to hold yourself accountable.

Friday – 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Why do we declare the death of Jesus? What does it look like for you to remember Jesus' death and proclaim it? Review the chart on the left. What truths do you want to make sure you remember? Consider memorizing a passage from this week to remind yourself of the death of Jesus and what it means for the world.

GROUP STUDY

Prepare

Who is the most humble person you know? How is their humility expressed?

Listen

Video Teaching: fcc-jc.org/problem

Reflect

- What is the problem of Jesus' death?
- Why was Jesus killed?
- What did Jesus' death accomplish for us?

Study

During our devotional time this week, you filled out a chart about the death of Jesus and what it means. Continue to fill out this chart as you study more about Jesus' death throughout this lesson.

What the Bible says about Jesus' death	What this means for me and others

WEEK 5 – GROUP STUDY

Read John 19.

- What stands out to you as you hear this account of Jesus' death?
- Why was Jesus killed? (v. 7, 12)
- What do Jesus and Pilate claim about power? (v. 10-11)
 - Why do you think Pilate writes what he does above the cross (v. 13-22)?
 - How is Jesus' power, or lack of power, displayed in the cross?
 - How is Pilate's power, or lack of power, displayed in the cross?
- What does Jesus say in verse 30? What do these words mean?

Read Isaiah 53.

In this moving passage, Isaiah describes the kind of savior God will send. Jesus fulfills this prophecy in every way.

- How is this savior described in verses 1-3?
- According to verses 4-6, what did this savior accomplish for us?
- How does verse 7 describe the death of this savior?

Choose 3-5 passages from this list to read aloud.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| • Romans 8:1-4 | • 1 John 1:5-10 |
| • Hebrews 2:9-18 | • Colossians 2:13-15 |
| • 1 John 3:16 | • Romans 3:21-26 |
| • 1 John 4:10-19 | • 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 |
| • Colossians 1:21-22 | • Romans 6:8-10 |

Use your findings from these texts to add to the chart on the previous page. What do these passages say about the death of Jesus? What does this mean for you? For the world?

Respond

The death of Jesus rescues us, redeems us, and saves us.
This prompts us towards a life of confession and surrender.

We *confess* our need for a savior, we confess our sins to the God who can rescue us, and we confess that Jesus is Lord.

And we *surrender* our lives to the God who surrendered his life for us. We surrender our worldview, our understanding of power, and our selfish ways to God. Take a moment to quietly read over the chart you filled out.

- What do you need to confess to God today?
- What do you need to surrender to God today?
- What next step is God calling you to?

Close by listening to the song *The Wonderful Cross*.

When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of Glory died
My richest gain, I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride

See from His head, His hands, His feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did ever such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose, so rich a crown

Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were an offering far too small
Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my soul, my life, my all

WEEK 6

THE PROBLEM OF JESUS' RESURRECTION

Monday – John 20

Jesus' resurrection prompted a variety of responses such as crying, fear, proclaiming, questions, joy, and confusion. How does Jesus respond to Thomas' doubt? Reflect on your own questions and bring them before God. Notice verse 31. Why was the resurrection recorded in the Gospel of John?

Tuesday – Matthew 28:1-20

Once again, take note of the various reactions to the appearance of Jesus. The chief priests even plotted a plan to cover up what had happened. Why do you think they did this? What does this say about the significance of the resurrection?

When Jesus appeared to the Twelve, he gave them a charge (v. 18-20). The fact that we can read these words today and that we know the story of the resurrection shows that they took his words seriously. What would it look like for you to follow these instructions?

THE PROBLEM OF JESUS' RESURRECTION

Wednesday – Romans 6:3-10; 1 Peter 1:3-9

These passages contain beautiful promises of what Jesus' resurrection accomplishes for us. List what the resurrection means for you according to these verses. How is your life changed? How is your future changed? Reflect on these gifts from God, and take time to thank God for the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Thursday – 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

In Christ, we are a new creation and we are reconciled to God! These gifts come with a mission: the ministry of reconciliation. This means we go into the world as Christ's ambassadors proclaiming the news that everyone can be reconciled to God! Who in your life needs to hear this news today? Write down their name in the margins. Pray that God would give you the opportunity to be Christ's ambassador in your everyday life.

Friday – Acts 5:17-42; Acts 20:17-24

The early church faced severe persecution for their beliefs and proclamations. What does it say to you about their certainty in these historical events that they persisted in sharing even in the face of persecution? What does it say about the value they placed on the gospel? (Notice Acts 20:24). Consider your own faith. How are you valuing the good news of Jesus? The problem of Jesus is that we can't passively interact with him. We must make a choice – hinge our lives completely on his life, teachings, and power – or walk away completely. How will you respond to Jesus today?

GROUP STUDY

Prepare

How far ahead do you like to plan?

Listen

Video Teaching: fcc-jc.org/problem

Reflect

- What is the problem with the resurrection?
- What did the resurrection accomplish? What does the resurrection mean for us today?
- Are you living like the resurrection is true?
- How do we live with eternal significance?

Study

Read 1 Corinthians 15.

This chapter is so helpful to us as we consider the resurrection and what it means for us today.

Consider the following topics Paul addresses here, and discuss the answers to these questions:

- **Witnesses of the resurrection:**
According to verses 3-8, who did Jesus appear to after he rose from the dead? What is the significance of this? (Notice verse 6 especially.)
- **Purpose of the resurrection:**
According to v. 20-28 and v. 50-57, what does the resurrection accomplish?
- **Persecution because of the resurrection:**
What do Paul and other Christians face because they testify about the resurrection? (v. 30-32) According to v. 14 & 32 how does this show that they truly believe in the resurrection?
- **Labor in light of the resurrection:**
What is our labor in the Lord? If you're not sure, remind yourself of the commands Jesus gave in Acts 1. How does Paul describe how we are to work for God? (v. 58) Why?

WEEK 6 – GROUP STUDY

Read Matthew 6:19-21.

- The problem of the resurrection is that we still live in a short-sighted way. How does this passage tell us we ought to live?
- If someone were to examine your life, what would they see that you treasure?
- Learning to live with eternity in mind changes so much about us. How does living this way affect our friendships, time, and finances? What other areas does it impact?
- What's one practical step you can take today to live with eternal significance?

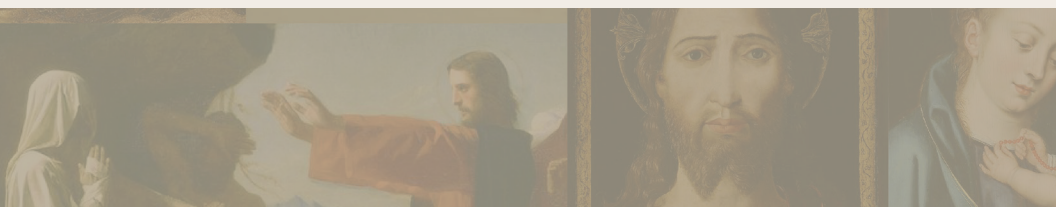
Respond

We've encountered the problem of Jesus throughout this whole study. The Bible makes it clear: if we believe that Jesus is who he says he is, then we are to surrender our lives to him. This surrender comes with the gift of eternal life, and it comes with the task of testifying to the world about the good news of Jesus.

You have a choice to make today. How will you respond to the problem of Jesus?

Discuss these questions as you consider where God is leading you:

- How will you surrender to the lordship of Jesus today?
- Who can you share the good news of Jesus with?
- How is God calling you to live with eternity in mind?



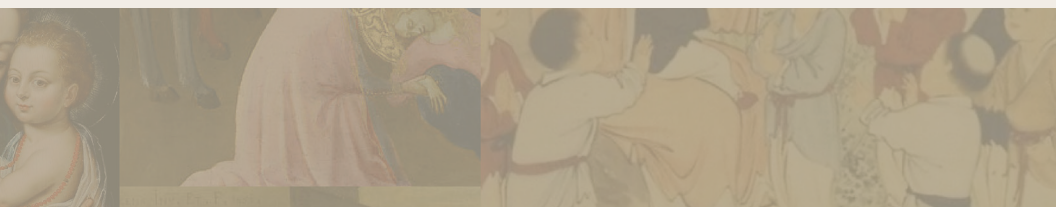
THE PROBLEM OF JESUS' RESURRECTION

If you have more questions about Jesus, go to www.fcc-jc.org/problem to consider what next steps you can take.

Close in prayer by reading this scripture aloud:

2 Corinthians 4:13-18

¹³ It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, ¹⁴ because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. ¹⁵ All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. ¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.



SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

Making Sense of God: Finding God in the Modern World
– Timothy Keller

The Reason for God – Timothy Keller

Mere Christianity – C.S. Lewis

The Case for Christ – Lee Strobel

The Case for Faith – Lee Strobel

Simply Christian – N.T. Wright

Surprised by Hope – N.T. Wright

Simply Jesus – N.T. Wright

Got questions?

Learn more with Senior Minister Ethan Magness at our supplemental events. Go to fcc-jc.org/problem for more details about these events and to submit your questions for Ethan.

You'll also find a list of more resources and other ways to engage with next steps from this study.

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