

## STUDY GUIDE

**Monday, June 29 – Read John 4:49-50** When Jesus returned to Cana where He had changed the water into wine, He met a government official who begged Him to come to his home and heal his son who was about to die. Jesus' response was not what you might expect, "Will you never believe in Me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?" (Vs. 48). Was Jesus rebuking him? I don't think so. I believe He was describing our human condition that says, "If I can see it, I'll believe it!" But Jesus was about to turn that around! Jesus was teaching a principle of faith that says, "You'll see it when you believe it." The official believed that if Jesus didn't come to his home and heal his son, the boy was sure to die. He pleaded, "Lord, please come now before my little boy dies!" (Vs. 49). He made two common mistakes. He assumed that Jesus had to be present to heal his son, and that it would be too late if the boy died! But Jesus would show him that God works the miracle in His time and in His way. So He tells him, "Go back home. Your son will live!" (Vs. 50). What would you do? This was certainly not what he had expected. Sometimes our expectations of what God should do and how He should do it get in the way. You have to give some credit to this official though. He made no further appeals. As desperate as he was, he chose to believe Jesus and started home. On the way home his servants ran to meet him with the good news that his son was alive and well! In fact, he discovered the miracle occurred at the exact time Jesus had told him to go back home! Common sense says, "I'll believe it when I see it!" but faith says, "You'll see it when you believe it." The official believed what Jesus told him and, when he acted on that assumption, he saw the miracle! Are you in a crisis of faith? What has God said that you simply need to believe Him for today? Trust God to work the miracle in His time and in His way.

**Tuesday, June 30 – John 5:2-6** When Jesus asked a paralytic if he wanted to get well, you would think his response would be enthusiastic, but the man made excuses as to why he remained in such a sad condition. His will had become as paralyzed as his body. How often has Jesus reached out to you, only to hear an excuse as to why you never change? The man had a good excuse. He said, "Sir, I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me." All the man could see for 38 years was the impossibility of his condition. He had resigned himself to remain just as he was – unchanged. Have you also given up on the possibility of changing? Ignoring his excuses, Jesus said, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!" He told the man to do the very thing he had been unable to do; but, in His command was the power to do it! Hebrews 4:12 tells us, "For whatever God says to us is full of living power..." It was the power of Jesus' word that enabled this man to change. He was instantly healed. The Bible says, "He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking!" The word of God has the power to change lives today. But there was a much deeper change needed in this man, though, as there is in your life and mine. The man did not realize until later who it was that had spoken to him and healed him. Jesus had disappeared in the crowd. A while later, Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, "Stop sinning or something even worse may happen to you." This suggests to me that this man's plight may have been the result of some bad decisions or sin on his part, but there is no record that the man sought forgiveness as had others that Jesus healed. How tragic to be that close to Christ, even experience a miracle, and yet remain unsaved. Miracles don't produce faith. The greatest change in our lives happens in our hearts. It's there where we need our greatest healing. The miracle you need most leads you to what you really need most – a deeper relationship with God. Have you stopped short of experiencing the greatest miracle of all?

**Wednesday, July 1 – Read John 6:5-6** When you compare the story of the feeding of the 5,000 in each of the gospels, you will see that there were four possible solutions for the problem the disciples and Jesus were facing: 1. According to Mark's account, one solution was to send the people away. Get rid of the problem. However, Jesus knew how hungry the people were, and there was no time for travel since it was already evening. 2. Another option came from Philip. He suggested buying food, but that only raised more problems as to where they would get it and how they would pay for it. Philip counted the cost, and it added up to about 200 days wages to feed them. Even that, he said, would not be enough to satisfy their hunger. 3. Andrew came the closest to a solution. He canvassed the crowd and found a little boy with a sack lunch that was willing to donate all he had, five small barley loaves of bread and a couple of small fish. But reality set in and Andrew said, "How far will they go among so many?" How often the need seems greater than the supply! 4. Finally, Jesus spoke up. When He asked Philip in the beginning, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people?" the Bible says, "He was testing Philip, for He already knew what He was going to do." He always does! Jesus took the little boy's lunch, gave thanks to God, and gave it to His disciples to distribute to the people. Not only did the people eat all they wanted, but the Bible says the

disciples collected 12 baskets of leftovers! Little is much when God is in it! God will often test our faith so that we may learn to trust in Him even when we don't have the resources to do what He says. If you want to see a miracle in your life, offer to God what you have and let Him do the rest.

**Thursday, July 2 – Read John 6:16-21** This miracle comes on the heels of feeding the 5,000. The crowds were understandably impressed with both Jesus' teaching, miracles, and provision! John tells us, in verse 15, that the crowd was ready to force Jesus to be their King. But that wasn't why He came, and He knew that their motives were not pure. They wanted an earthly king who would deliver them from the oppression of Rome and satisfy their every physical need. Jesus said to the fickle crowd, "I tell you the truth, you want to be with Me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs. But don't be so concerned about perishable things like food. Spend your energy seeking the eternal life that the Son of Man can give you." John 6:26-27 (NLT). As Jesus slipped away into the hills, the disciples went down to the shore to wait for Him. Since it was getting dark and Jesus had not returned, they got into the boat and headed across the lake. It wasn't long before they found themselves in the midst of a fierce storm on the lake. John tells us that Jesus came walking to them, in the storm, on the water! Imagine being in the boat with those disciples. I would have been as terrified as they were! But Jesus calls out to them, "Don't be afraid, I am here!" In the language of the New Testament, Jesus uses the very name of God. He says, "Don't be afraid. The I AM is here!" Wow! When they let Him in the boat, the Bible says they immediately arrived at their destination! If you're going through a storm in your life, take comfort in knowing that your Savior will come to you and bring you to your destination. The great I AM is with you!

**Friday, July 3 – Read John 9:1-3** How often have we jumped to the wrong conclusion about suffering in our lives? Here was a man born blind. With no social welfare available, all he could do was sit and beg. It was a pitiful sight for the disciples, and they jumped to the wrong conclusion, thinking he or his parents must have sinned to be in such a condition! Jesus revolutionized their thinking with an entirely different perspective! He said that the man was blind "so the power of God could be seen in him!" Our weaknesses in life are the platform for God to show Himself mighty! In our weakness, His strength is made perfect. Your strengths may impress others; but, if you'll let Him, God will use your weaknesses to influence them. Jesus took compassion on the man and used the miracle for a message on spiritual blindness. After spitting on the ground and making mud with His saliva, Jesus spread the mud over the eyes of the blind man. Jesus then told the man to go wash in the pool of Siloam. When he did, the Bible says he came back seeing! There's nothing like a little irritation to make you seek cleansing, is there? This man had no idea who Jesus was; He had never seen Him. When you read the story, you discover the greater miracle comes at the end. Later, Jesus finds the man and asks him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" The man replied, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him." John 9:37-38 (NKJV). The miracle was twofold. He was given both physical and spiritual sight! The miracle he thought he needed most led him to the miracle he really needed most, a personal relationship with the source of miracles!

*Adapted from: <http://waterbrookmultnomah.com/books/246647/find-your-miracle-by-kerry-and-chris-shook/>*