



This series is designed to cover some of the stranger stories from the Bible and was originally meant to tie into the *Stranger Things* show on Netflix.

While there are many strange stories in the Bible, we felt these three lent themselves best to the style we were going for and our overall series direction: showing that God has an overall plan for us, and He will resort to some really strange things sometimes to accomplish His plan.

We also tried to include as much context for each story as we could so new students would not feel confused or left out. Make sure to do an assessment of your group, though, and give any additional context that may help them.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

To create a moment they will remember, we did acoustic worship and teaching time outside around a bonfire each week. You could also use this series in October, which could fit around a Halloween theme.

## **SMALL GROUPS**

Throughout this series, we split students into smaller groups for further discussions after the message. I highly encourage you to do the same, as it will give the students an opportunity to process the story together and begin to put together their own next steps (application of the Scriptures).

If you do choose to have small group discussions, I have provided some guides as a part of this series.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

If you have social media accounts for your ministry, we have included square and vertical images for the series title, each week's main idea, and blank images.



## INTRODUCTION

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: I started out talking about the Netflix show, *Stranger Things*, to tie into the series title. If you are a fan, you could talk about why you like it or how you watch it. If you are not a fan, or you want to add something else, you could also open with some strange personal story instead or before you talk about the show.]

Who here is a fan of the *Stranger Things* show? Who binge watches the entire season as soon as it is released?

Well, as many of you know, the story takes place in a quaint little town in Indiana. At least, it's rather quaint until some people go missing. Over time, even stranger things begin to happen.

Often, when we look at the Bible, we can look at it with apathy, especially those of us who have been Christians for a long time. We may think we already know all the stories, and there is no real reason to keep going to it on a regular basis.

Others here have never really given the Bible a chance, and you might be wondering what the point of it is.

Overall, the Bible tells one giant story of redemption. God created the world with a purpose in mind, but people chose to do their own thing, to go their own way. The story of the Bible is God trying to bring us back to Him. And while there are some pieces that are confusing and others that can seem boring, there are also some amazing stories in there!

The Bible is also filled with some really strange things:

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: I recommend editing this list below to be age-appropriate for your audience.]

- A teenage boy who fell asleep during a sermon, only to fall to his death out of a third-story window. God, through the Apostle Paul, brought him back to life.

- A guy who got tangled in a tree by his long flowing hair, only to be found by the opposing army later. They captured and killed him.
- One guy tied a bunch of foxes together and lit their tails on fire to burn down the farmland of some of God's enemies.
- Another guy stabbed a really overweight king, and the sword actually disappeared in the king's belly.
- One lady killed a guy by driving a tent peg through his skull.

## STORY

Tonight, we are going to talk about another strange story from the Bible which is recorded in the Old Testament, in the book of Numbers.

[AUTHOR'S NOTE: This series is designed to re-tell the stories from the Bible. We did this while sitting around a fire, which was reminiscent of telling ghost stories. However you do this, have fun with the storytelling.]

At this point in the timeline of the Bible, Israel, God's chosen people, had been established, but then was captured by the Egyptians. After 10 plagues, God used Moses to lead them out of captivity through the wilderness toward a promised land. The Israelites had just finished their latest fit of anger (this happened a lot as it was a long journey to this land, and they got impatient), which was met with punishment from God in Numbers 21.

After God straightened them out from that whole ordeal, the Israelites began traveling along across the land, taking over several other nations that God was handing over to them. They eventually got to the plains of Moab, along the Jordan River.

Balak, the king of Moab, was terrified of the Israelites, especially after he heard they took over the Amorites' territory. Therefore, Balak called upon Balaam.

According to many Bible scholars, Balaam was a great prophet of God. He had even grown a great reputation for his abilities. But at some point, this went to his head, he became selfish, and he turned away from God.

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