

SEEING JESUS IN JOHN

WEEK EIGHTEEN: JESUS HEALS THE BLIND MAN

READING

1 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. 2 “Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?” 3 “It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,” Jesus answered. “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. 4 We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work. 5 But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world.” 6 Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man’s eyes. 7 He told him, “Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “sent”). So the man went and washed and came back seeing! 8 His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, “Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?” 9 Some said he was, and others said, “No, he just looks like him!” But the beggar kept saying, “Yes, I am the same one!” 10 They asked, “Who healed you? What happened?” 11 He told them, “The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.’ So I went and washed, and now I can see!” John 9 (NLT)

TEACHING

In this story, Jesus performs a pretty remarkable miracle and he does it in a really unusual way. This man was born blind; he had never seen the face of another person or even the light of day. We don’t know exactly why Jesus made mud and spread that mud over the man’s eyes. In Genesis 2:7, we read that God formed man from the dust of the earth so this may be a reminder of the creative activity of God. While we don’t know why Jesus did this miracle this way, we do know that the blind man’s life was dramatically changed and we learn three important truths about sickness and struggle.

- 1) Sickness and struggle are not always the result of sin. On one level, cosmic sin (the brokenness in this world) is ultimately why we all suffer. But Jesus clearly teaches here that on another level, personal sin is not the cause of personal sickness and suffering. We should never assume people who are sick, are being punished for personal sin.
- 2) We also learn that God may allow struggle and pain in our lives to give him an opportunity to show his power and his goodness. God can receive glory from his redemptive work in the mess of our lives.
- 3) God will use his work in our lives to point others toward Jesus. When people know that God has opened your eyes—your spiritual eyes—they will want to know how it happened. This opens the door for you to share your story.

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RESPONSE

OPENING QUESTION(S):

- Do you know anyone who was born with a physical disability?
- What have you learned from your friendship with that person?

TODDLERS/PRE-K:

- In this story, what couldn't the man do?
- What did Jesus do for the blind man?

CHILDREN:

- In this story, what did Jesus do for the blind man?
- How did the neighbors respond to the healing?
- How did the blind man explain what Jesus did for him?

TEENAGERS:

- In this story, what did Jesus do for the blind man?
- What do you notice about the neighbor's response and the blind man's answer to them?
- How would you explain what Jesus has done for you?

ADULTS:

- What lifelong struggles have you had that Jesus has helped you with?
- How are you using your story to point others (including your children) to Jesus?

PRAYER

God, thank you that you love people who are hurting and in pain. Thank you that you opened my spiritual eyes to see myself correctly, to see this world correctly, and to see You correctly. Help me to fix my eyes on you and give me a desire to see you even more clearly. Give me opportunities to share my story with others and give me the boldness and wisdom to know how to do so. Thank you that someday you will heal and restore everything broken in me and around me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

NEXT LEVEL (ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL TEACHING)

This healing met a physical need. It provided sight to a man who was born blind. But even in this sign, Jesus is pointing us to a greater need – the need for spiritual sight. That is why Jesus talks about “night” in his reply to the disciples and that is why Jesus reasserts this claim that he is “the light of the world.” As the light of the world, he finds us in our darkness and he shows us the truth and the hope that is found in him. If we don't find our “light” in Christ, we will look to anything and everything else for truth and hope.