

SEEING JESUS IN JOHN

WEEK NINETEEN: THE INVESTIGATION OF JESUS

READING

24 So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, “God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner.” 25 “I don’t know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!” 26 “But what did he do?” they asked. “How did he heal you?” 27 “Look!” the man exclaimed. “I told you once. Didn’t you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?” 28 Then they cursed him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! 29 We know God spoke to Moses, but we don’t even know where this man comes from.” 30 “Why, that’s very strange!” the man replied. “He healed my eyes, and yet you don’t know where he comes from? 31 We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. 32 Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he couldn’t have done it.” 34 “You were born a total sinner!” they answered. “Are you trying to teach us?” And they threw him out of the synagogue. John 9 (NLT)

TEACHING

This is the rest of the story from last week about the healing of the man born blind. The religious leaders are trying to determine what happened and who was responsible. They didn’t like that the man was healed on the Sabbath. Jesus had broken one of their rules about doing work on the Sabbath, but Jesus knew that the Sabbath wasn’t supposed to prevent people from doing good for those in need. These religious leaders were more concerned with rule keeping than with helping others. Jesus knew their hearts were wrong.

In this story, we see these leaders arguing with the formerly blind man about Jesus. Some people may want to argue with you about what you believe. They may not believe in Jesus and they may want you to provide proof for what you believe. There are plenty of good reasons for believing in the existence of God and there is real historical evidence for the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. But you have another tool for defending your faith: your story! This man doesn’t know how to debate these religious leaders but he does say something that they can’t question: “I was blind, and now I can see!” God may not have opened your physical eyes, but he has opened your spiritual eyes. Your story of how God has filled your heart with love for others or how God has given you peace in hard times or how God is changing your heart more and more every day is your way of saying, “I was blind, and now I see!”

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RESPONSE

OPENING QUESTION(S):

- What type of things do you and your friends argue about?
- Are you good at arguing for your point of view? Why or why not?

TODDLERS/PRE-K:

- In this story, who argued with the man who used to be blind?
- How did the blind man explain what Jesus did for him?

CHILDREN:

- Why were the religious leaders arguing with the man who used to be blind?
- How did the man answer them?
- How would you explain to a friend what Jesus has done for you?

TEENAGERS:

- Why did the religious leaders care about the rules more than helping others?
- How would you defend your faith to someone who questions you?
- What would your story of “I was blind, but now I see” sound like?

ADULTS:

- Are there any rules you love that keep you from loving people? What are they?
- How are you finding opportunities to share your story with others?

PRAYER

God, thank you for opening my spiritual eyes. Thank you for helping me to see myself truthfully – realizing how lost I am without you and how much I need your grace. Thank you for helping me to see You truthfully – realizing how beautiful and wonderful you are. Give me wisdom to defend my faith. Help me to love winning people more than winning arguments. Help me to make my story about you and not about myself and give me opportunities to share my story. In Jesus' name, Amen.

NEXT LEVEL (ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL TEACHING)

Read the rest of this chapter. In the final seven verses of chapter nine, Jesus and the formerly blind man come face to face again. In this passage, Jesus teaches a powerful truth about the blinding effect of pride. Jesus says he came to open the eyes of the blind, but also to blind those who think they see. Jesus wants to humble the proud (make them “blind”) so that they know their great need for him and for his work in their lives. Sometimes God uses great loss in our lives to point us to him. He is a redemptive God!