

“Breakthrough!” in 2022

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 11.13.2022

Believing is Seeing – John 9:8-41

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

Our study last week centered on this incredible, albeit peculiar miracle that Jesus performed on a blind man. Using His own spit, Jesus made mud from the dust, then He rubbed the mud on the blind man’s eyes and told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. The man did as Jesus said and came back seeing. As great as that miracle was, it was only the second most impressive thing that happened to the guy that day. The greatest thing that happened to him is that he became a follower of Jesus. It’s wonderful that he had his physical eyes opened, but even greater than that is his spiritual eyes were opened. We’ve seen God open deaf ears and heal incurable cancers and open blind eyes. However, we must never forget that the greatest miracle of all is the miracle of new life in Jesus Christ. In our story today, we’re going to see the blind man’s journey to faith in Christ, the light of the world. Let’s get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you from this week’s sermon?
2. What is the darkest place you’ve ever been? How did the glow of even the slightest amount of light change your perception?

One of the very first things mentioned about Jesus in John’s Gospel was the metaphor of His being the light of men. John used the dynamic of light versus darkness repeatedly throughout his Gospel to emphasize the stark difference between being shrouded by sin and the glorious deliverance available only through Christ. In today’s passages, Jesus used a sign of healing to demonstrate how the Light overcomes blindness/darkness. In doing so, the one healed of blindness unreservedly told of the One who had healed him.

Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER JOHN 9:8-12

1. Why did the people doubt the identity of the healed blind man in John 9:8-9?
2. What is disappointing about the blind man's "neighbors" (John 9:8)?
3. When did the healed blind man learn the name of "Jesus" (John 9:11)?
4. Did He believe in Jesus' power to heal him?
5. What example does the blind man set for us?

When reading John’s Gospel, it’s important to note how John addressed both the spiritual and physical realm concurrently. When Jesus referred to Himself as the Light of the World in John 8:12, He was making a proclamation of His salvific purpose in the world. Repeating the identification in John 9:5 links the healing of the man blind from birth with Jesus’ proclamation of His salvific work. In other words, Jesus used the sign of the healing of the man born blind to physically demonstrate His eternal power over spiritual darkness and blindness.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 9:13-34

1. Why do the Pharisees ask the formerly blind man what he thinks in John 9:17?
2. Why did they "not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight" (John 9:18)?

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3. Why did his parents respond to the Jews as they did?
4. Why do you think the Pharisees were incapable of refuting the healed man’s story? What does that indicate about the power of your own experience with Jesus?
5. What are the high points, so to speak, of your experience with Jesus? What are the pivotal moments that you would make sure to communicate?

The healed man, who had understandably become frustrated with the incessant badgering from the Pharisees, concluded his exchange with them with a notable observation: “This is an amazing thing....You don’t know where He is from, yet He opened my eyes! We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He listens to them. Throughout history no one has ever heard of someone opening the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, He wouldn’t be able to do anything.” His spiritual eyes had been opened as well as his physical eyes, so his clear insight confounded the Pharisees.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 9:35-41

1. What were the stages in the blind man's identification of Jesus?
2. What should the man have done the instant he saw Jesus in John 9:35?, In your opinion, why didn’t he do that?
3. What were the circumstances through which Jesus initiated His relationship with you? Why is that important to understand when telling of your experience with Jesus?
4. What are some attitudes or dispositions that we experience that can threaten our ability to “see”?

The Pharisees in this passage were blinded by their own sense of righteousness that came from knowing the right things, doing the right things, going the right places, and so on. The reality, Jesus said, was that because they were prideful in their own spiritual knowledge, they were blind to the things of God. Their knowledge carried no corresponding action, no sign of transformation. As result, even with God Incarnate standing in front of them, they were oblivious to the truth.

Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

If you have been given the gift of spiritual sight, and the eyes of your heart have been opened to the truth of the gospel, then this is how you must respond! Worship is the byproduct of belief. The irony of this scene is that this guy had just been cast out of the synagogue. He had no place to worship the Lord. But it turned out to be ok because they had already kicked Jesus out a long time before. The Jews may have cast him out of the temple, but the Lord of the temple found him. The temple they were worshipping in was just an empty shell anyways. Jesus was the manifest glory of the Lord! - Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

1. What questions or topics give you the greatest sense of hesitation when sharing your experience with Jesus? How does the limited ability of the man born blind to answer questions about Jesus impact you?
2. What are some things that can threaten to make you prideful in your religious knowledge? Are those things inherently bad things? How does worship help weaken that threat?
3. Read Ephesians 2:10. In conjunction with Jesus’ teaching about doing the works of God while it is day, how does Ephesians 2:10 help you understand the best way for you to share your experience with Christ with others?

PRAYER - Thank God that He came into this darkness to save us. Pray that those in your group would be sensitive to the opportunities to share their experience with Jesus this week.

“Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun.”
{2nd Corinthians 5:17}