



Turning Lost Students into Christ-Centered Laborers

A PUBLIC REVELATION • Conversion

What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?

John 9

Dancing to the Music of the Gospel

Keith Johnson, a national leader with Cru, often compares the gospel to music, and the Christian life to dancing. Not everyone hears the music, but those who do hear it can't stand still. They all start dancing. And, of course, some people dance better than others. If you haven't already read John 9, stop right now and read it. It's a fantastic story.

Jesus Sends a Man In

By this point in the Book of John, Jesus has already presented himself to the nation formally. He knew that the religious leaders of the day would not accept him. That was part of his plan. Now he's beginning to challenge them directly. And he does it as only He can!

Background

In the ancient world, people often believed that sickness and tragedies were the result of sin. And of course, that's often the case. There are plenty of diseases and tragedies we can avoid by making wise choices. But that's not always the case! Everyone suffers, and some suffer more than others. Imagine being born blind.

John points out that the word "Siloam" means "sent." The Pool of Siloam symbolically meant deliverance to the Jews. Jesus is sending this guy ahead of him in order to create a stir. By going and washing the man encountered other people who witnessed the miracle. Eventually those people drew the attention of the Pharisees.

Tenacity

Always pay close attention to dialogue when you read narrative portions of the Bible. The guy Jesus healed in this passage experienced a life-changing miracle. He's just a common guy. But notice how he completely overwhelms the learned Pharisees.

What's the Big Idea?

When we come to Jesus we experience a powerful transformation.

What's the Problem?

Apart from Jesus, we're enslaved by our blindness and guilt.



Jesus' Illustration

In his grace, Jesus used this blind man as an illustration, and this whole passage turns on that illustration. Jesus sent a blind man in because the Pharisees were blind themselves.

When Jesus frees us from our sin and gives us new life, we're just like this blind man. For the first time, we begin to see! Before closing this study, you might want to discuss John Newton and the hymn entitled *Amazing Grace*, or Lecrae's testimony at www.iamsecond.com/seconds/lecræ/.

Was Blind But Now I See

John Newton was eleven years old when he began sailing with his dad, a shipmaster for England. And he eventually became a slave trader. For years he engaged in the despicable practice of capturing men and women in West Africa to be sold as slaves in markets around the world.

But God intervened in his life. Newton encountered a tremendous storm on one of his journeys, and he began to read a Christian book. God used that book to lead him to repentance. Newton eventually left the slave trade and became a minister. Years later he wrote a pamphlet entitled "Thoughts About the Slave Trade" that rocked Europe. His work, alongside that of William Wilberforce and many others, led to the eradication of slavery in the western world.

Newton also had an effective ministry as a preacher and a hymnologist. He never ceased to marvel at the grace of God. You may already be familiar with his most famous hymn, *Amazing Grace*.

Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found, **was blind but now I see.**

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Thru many dangers, toils and snares I have already come; 'tis grace
hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me; His word my hope secures; He
will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the
sun, we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first
began.

What's Our Response?

Jesus shines in the hearts of those who come to him, and they serve as instruments of his grace.

What Are the Questions?

John 9

LAUNCH

What difference has Jesus made in your life?

EXPLORE

Read 9:1-12.

1. How did Jesus' disciples view the relationship between sickness and sin?
2. Can you think of any diseases that are the result of sin?
3. What was Jesus' view of the blind man's condition?
4. Jesus called himself the "Light of the World." What did he mean by that?
5. Why do you think Jesus went through the process of making mud and telling the man to go wash, instead of simply healing him instantly?
8. Once the miracle became undeniable, how did the Pharisees respond? What did they say about Jesus?
9. Have you seen people be skeptical about the power of God's grace? When?
10. How would you chart the blind man's emotions? How did his emotions change as he went from being healed and seeing for the first time in his life to testifying before the Pharisees and then finally to facing rejection by the Pharisees?
11. Was the healed man afraid of the Pharisees? Why or why not?

Read 9:13-34

6. How did the Pharisees respond to this miracle? What reasons did they give?
7. Why do you suppose they sent for the man's parents? How did the man's parents respond? Why? Why did they ultimately defer to their son?
12. Why did Jesus seek out the healed man later? How did he respond?
13. What type of blindness was Jesus speaking of in verses 39-41?

Read 9:35-41

Look up 2 Corinthians 4:4-6

14. What is this passage describing? Who, according to these passages, is truly blind?

APPLY

15. Have you been encouraged by this passage? How so?
16. This blind man's story is not unique. Jesus can transform anyone, even slave traders like John Newton, into instruments of His grace. Has God transformed you? How?
17. Salvation has been described as "coming into the light." What are some ways that unbelievers are blind? What are some things true Christians see?
18. Are you as passionate about what God has done in your life as this blind man? Why or why not?

What Are the Answers?

1. Jesus' disciples obviously thought that this man's blindness was the result of someone's sin. We don't think that way much today.
2. There are tons of examples of diseases that relate to poor choices: Alcoholism often leads to cirrhosis of the liver, Sexual sins spread STDs, etc.
3. Jesus' statement that "neither this man nor his parents sinned" doesn't mean that they were sinless but that the man's blindness was not the direct result of some specific sin they did.
4. This is the first clue to the meaning of this passage. Jesus is the Light of the World. We are all blind. But he can enable us to see. This theme develops throughout the passage.
5. We don't know all the reasons Jesus healed him this way. But Jesus is obviously sending this guy ahead of him in order to create a stir, and to get the attention of the Pharisees.
6. Again, the Pharisees value their traditions more than Jesus' obvious miracles. They were opposed to Jesus.
7. The parents obviously thought their son was competent to speak for himself.
8. Discuss
9. Discuss
10. What a journey! He was blind his whole life. Imagine the joy and wonder of seeing for the first time! And then he was astounded by the Pharisees, who seemed not to see Jesus for who he was. Then he rebuked them and got thrown out of the community. But then he met and worshipped Jesus face to face!
11. Discuss
12. Jesus revealed himself to him again, and he came to a better understanding of who Jesus is. He originally called Jesus a prophet. But now he's worshipping him.
13. This is the theme of the whole passage. Jesus is the Light of the World. We are all blind. But he can enable us to see.
14. Notice that this blindness is not blindness of the eyes. It's blindness of the heart. The apostle Paul referenced Genesis 1 in this passage. When we come to God through Jesus, we experience new life. It's like God shines a light in our hearts and we begin to understand Jesus for how awesome he is.
15. Discuss
16. This is a great place to share about John Newton, or to watch Lecrae's testimony at www.iamsecond.com.
17. Christ, most importantly, and God's love, His providence, etc.
18. Discuss

Memorize

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts.

2 Corinthians 4:6a