**1. Motivate**

What helped you realize your hearing or eyesight wasn’t what it used to be?

* “What did you say?”
* “turn up the sound on the TV”

A video introduction to the Bible study is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/2s4jnpx3> . If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/4arn9pka>

* can’t hear some frequencies
* couldn’t see the board at school
* blurred or cloudy vision,
* dimming of colors,
* glare or halos around lights,
* Difficulty seeing in low light, and
* Double vision

**2. Transition**

Today we will consider *spiritual* sight.

* Only through Jesus can we truly see Truth.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Jesus is the Light

Listen for a theological issue.

John 9:1-5 (NIV) As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. 4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

What theological debate did the blind man’s presence generate among the disciples? Who did the disciples think was at fault for the man’s blindness?

* maybe the parents
* maybe even the man himself … prenatal sin

How did Jesus answer their inquiry?

* it wasn’t pre-natal sin (not a logical possibility)
* it wasn’t the parents
* Jesus said it happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life

So … did *God* cause the blindness so Jesus could perform the miracle?

Consider this answer to the accusation.

* Consider verses 3 and 4 together
* Interpret it to have a period after Jesus’ answer that neither the man nor his parents had sinned – the end of the sentence
* The last half of verse 3 is the first part of the sentence which continues into verse 4
* Then it would read, “But that the works of God should be made manifest in him, we must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day: the night comes when no man can work.”
* No reason is given for the cause of the blindness

What principle does it teach us about suffering?

* whatever the reason of the suffering …
* It will be an opportunity for God to accomplish good things
* He can display His power, authority, and love for people

Why do we often struggle to explain or understand suffering?

* we incorrectly think that our suffering is too small for God to help (He’s a busy person, holding the universe together)
* just as wrongly, we think our problem is too big for Him to solve
* we might choose *not* to understand and just be mad at God
* lack of faith
* all we can focus on is the pain (physical, emotional, or spiritual)

When have you seen God glorified in the midst of suffering?

* like this man, God can heal
* a person experiences God’s help to deal with the issue
* a bad situation can be a stepping stone to a closer walk with God
* we learn the lesson of God’s sufficiency in any context
* when God is at work, He can make even a bad situation an opportunity to show His power or give someone a “platform” to communicate the power of God to others

How can our group help one another when suffering occurs?

* prayer – lots of prayer
* helping in practical ways – dealing with common, daily chores
* sometimes finances
* just sitting with them or with the family during medical procedures
* caring for other family members (children, elderly parents) when the person has to be otherwise occupied
* being careful not to intrude – sometimes a visit can severely tire a person recovering from a physical problem

3.2 Jesus Gives Sight

Listen for unusual doctoring.

John 9:6-11 (NIV) Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. 7 "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. 8 His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." 10 "How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. 11 He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

Note the unusual method Jesus used to bring about the healing.

* Spitting in the dirt, making a mud “ointment”
* Sends the man to a local spring to wash it off

On what basis was the man given his sight; saliva, dirt, mud, water, or something more?

* the man demonstrated his faith in Jesus’ words and actions
* he did what Jesus told him to do
* he believed that it would work and heal his eyes
* similar to when Elisha told Naaman to dip himself 7 times in the Jordan to be cured of leprosy

What were the various responses from others who saw the man and realized he was no longer blind?

* isn’t this the blind beggar fellow?
* yes, that’s him … no it’s not, just looks like him (no pun intended)
* the man says, “Yes … it’s me! – I am the man!”

They all wanted to know how it was he could now see

So … *we* want to know, when has Jesus opened *your* spiritual eyes in a way that helped you see things differently?

* read a verse I had seen before lots of times and all of a sudden, it spoke directly to something I was worried about
* the preacher’s message was speaking directly to me, I had never seen the issue and understood
* after a car accident where I was nearly killed, I realized how precious was my family
* after an illness from exhaustion at work, I realized the importance that a weekly day of rest was part of God’s good design

In what ways are we sometimes spiritually blind and in need of healing?

* we ignore God’s Word – either a specific teaching or the practice of daily communication with God
* there was a problem in my family that I had been ignoring
* I didn’t realize my attitude was having an effect on my spouse/kids/parents
* I had not been tithing and had been missing God’s blessing

3.3 Jesus’ Actions Show Who He Is

Listen for a snappy comeback.

John 9:30-33 (NIV) The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. 32 Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

Religious leaders were upset because this was “work” that had happened on the Sabbath

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

* They have grilled him on who was this “Sabbath breaker”
* They accuse the man’s Healer as being a sinner … having done “work” on the Sabbath.

What intelligent responses does the man make?

* curious that you religious leaders don’t know someone who can work miracles
* hard to believe he is a “sinner,” whom God would not listen to
* God only listens to people who obey Him and do His will
* so, if this man was *not* from God He could do nothing … but he DID heal my eyes

The religious leaders were upset because Jesus did things they thought would threaten their position. How do people respond when the status quo is disturbed?

* don’t want to hear of it, try to suppress the very idea
* things are good the way they are
* the unknown is considered “dangerous”
* we’ll lose our following, our authority in religious affairs

What are some other obstacles that prevent people from recognizing God’s work today?

* go with the science
* lack of faith
* we see a rational explanation for what is considered God’s working
* even believers often attribute God’s intervention in our lives as “good luck” or “fortunate”
* we are “programmed” to look for, to assume scientific or humanistic cause and effect
* actually Christians saved out of spirit worship are more ready to attribute a miracle to God

Why are we sometimes hesitant to ask God for things only He can do?

* we could be embarrassed if we declare we are trusting God and He doesn’t answer like we think He should
* God is too busy with big stuff (war, global climate change,
world politics, famine, blizzards, hurricanes, earthquakes …) These

* my problem is too small for God’s attention are lies from Satan
* my problem is too big for God – not even He can solve this mess
* He fixed this once before, asking again would “press my luck”

Application

Obey.

* This man grew in his spiritual sight by being obedient.
* Consider areas that may even be blind spots for you.
* Ask God to make you aware, so you can obey.
* Ask for accountability from a group member to help you grow in this particular area once you are aware.

Testify.

* Share your personal testimony of your life before Christ, how you came to trust Christ, and your life since with someone who isn’t a believer.
* After all, once you were blind, but now you see!

Serve.

* Spend some time considering how you can engage and support families or individuals who are disabled or have a handicap.
* Show the love of Jesus as your Savior did!

Crossword - Words and Clues taken from John 9:1-11,30-33 (NIV)

Help and more Fun Family Activities found at <https://tinyurl.com/4arn9pka>