

DAILY TIME**SECTION 1 | JOHN 9:1-12**

In John 9, Jesus heals a man who has been blind since birth, a circumstance that conjures questions on God's judgement and salvation. In the passage before, a group of Jews tried to stone Jesus after he proclaimed the truth about his relationship with God. Here, the narrative about disbelief continues as a group of Pharisees (a group of religious leaders) go to lengths to prove that Jesus did not perform a miracle. In verse 25 the man proclaims, "I was blind but now I see."

There was a belief at the time that one's circumstances were like a mirror between their physical and spiritual life. So if someone was diseased in life then that was a reflection of their spiritual condition. This may seem silly, but we are also drawn to this impulse to believe that our circumstances reflect our standing with God. When a loved one passes away, or when we lose our scholarship, or when a disastrous tsunami devastates an already struggling third-world region, we often blame God or wonder why he is punishing. Or we believe the reverse. If someone is rich, then they are faithful to God. Or if someone is poor, then they don't love and obey God enough. At some point, we have

all adopted this mindset and it can be difficult to shake. In this passage, we learn how Jesus responds.

¹As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His 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 works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

⁶After saying 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.

⁸His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, “Isn’t this the same man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some 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 asked.

¹¹He 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.”

¹²“Where is this man?” they asked him.

“I don’t know,” he said.

? Are there moments in your life that you have blamed God for your circumstances? What were they?

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❓ Do you ever think or feel like your standing with God is impacted by your sin or obedience? Can sin or disobedience affect our relationship with God?

SECTION 2 | JOHN 9:13-34

Imagine that each day as you walk to class you pass a blind man with a cardboard sign. You see him day after day. Then you heard a preacher walked up to him and put his hands on the man's eyes. When you are walking back from class, you see the man again and he can see! Before reading today's scripture, reflect upon how you would react to this scene. How would you react? Would you believe it? Or would you struggle to believe it and try to explain it away?

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. ¹⁴Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see."

¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath."

But others asked, "How can a sinner perform such signs?" So they were divided.

¹⁷Then they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened."

The man replied, "He is a prophet."

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¹⁸They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. ¹⁹"Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?"

²⁰"We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. ²¹But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man is a sinner."

²⁵He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

²⁶Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

²⁷He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?"

²⁸Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! ²⁹We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from."

³⁰The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will.

³²Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

³⁴To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

- ❓ Look back at your response prior to reading the passage. How was your response similar or dissimilar to the Pharisee’s (be specific)? When do you experience disbelief in your faith?
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SECTION 3 | JOHN 9:35-41

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

³⁶ “Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.”

³⁷ Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.”

³⁸ Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

³⁹ Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.”

⁴⁰ Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?”

⁴¹ Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

- ❓ How and why do you think the Pharisee’s are spiritually blind?
- ❓ Why is the healed man able to understand who Jesus is while a group of ‘faithful’ men are unable to?
- ❓ How or when do you find yourself in spiritual blindness?

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GROUP TIME

WEEK 4 - BUT NOW I SEE

So far, we have reflected upon our own perspectives on God, disbelief, and spiritual blindness. Now it's time to consider the implications that Jesus' healing has on the people we encounter. We can often get caught up in theological discussions or in our individual relationship with God (which both have their place!) but our purpose as God's people is to go and make disciples as we strive to take on the image of Christ. What a blessing it is to be free from focusing on ourselves all the time and to have an intentional outward focus on others!

While the people of the town ignored this man as he begged for help and the Pharisees turned him away, Jesus saw this man's need and approached him in compassion. Read the passage below, from *The Message*. As you read, consider the implications this passage has on how we can live in the image of Christ by how we live compassionately toward those around us.

JOHN 9 (MSG)

¹⁻²Walking down the street, Jesus saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked, "Rabbi, who sinned: this man or his parents, causing him to be born blind?"

³⁻⁵Jesus said, "You're asking the wrong question. You're looking for someone to blame. There is no such cause-effect here. Look instead for what God can do. We need to be energetically at work for the One who sent me here, working while the sun shines. When night falls, the

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workday is over. For as long as I am in the world, there is plenty of light. I am the world's Light."

⁶⁻⁷ He said this and then spit in the dust, made a clay paste with the saliva, rubbed the paste on the blind man's eyes, and said, "Go, wash at the Pool of Siloam" (Siloam means "Sent"). The man went and washed—and saw.

⁸ Soon the town was buzzing. His relatives and those who year after year had seen him as a blind man begging were saying, "Why, isn't this the man we knew, who sat here and begged?"

⁹ Others said, "It's him all right!"

But others objected, "It's not the same man at all. It just looks like him." He said, "It's me, the very one."

¹⁰ They said, "How did your eyes get opened?"

¹¹ "A man named Jesus made a paste and rubbed it on my eyes and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' I did what he said. When I washed, I saw."

¹² "So where is he?"

"I don't know."

¹³⁻¹⁵ They marched the man to the Pharisees. This day when Jesus made the paste and healed his blindness was the Sabbath. The Pharisees grilled him again on how he had come to see. He said, "He put a clay paste on my eyes, and I washed, and now I see."

¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "Obviously, this man can't be from God. He doesn't keep the Sabbath."

Others countered, "How can a bad man do miraculous, God-revealing things like this?" There was a split in their ranks.

¹⁷ They came back at the blind man, "You're the expert. He opened your eyes. What do you say about him?"

He said, "He is a prophet."

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¹⁸⁻¹⁹ The Jews didn't believe it, didn't believe the man was blind to begin with. So they called the parents of the man now bright-eyed with sight. They asked them, "Is this your son, the one you say was born blind? So how is it that he now sees?"

²⁰⁻²³ His parents said, "We know he is our son, and we know he was born blind. But we don't know how he came to see—haven't a clue about who opened his eyes. Why don't you ask him? He's a grown man and can speak for himself." (His parents were talking like this because they were intimidated by the Jewish leaders, who had already decided that anyone who took a stand that this was the Messiah would be kicked out of the meeting place. That's why his parents said, "Ask him. He's a grown man.")

²⁴ They called the man back a second time—the man who had been blind—and told him, "Give credit to God. We know this man is an impostor."

²⁵ He replied, "I know nothing about that one way or the other. But I know one thing for sure: I was blind . . . I now see."

²⁶ They said, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

²⁷ "I've told you over and over and you haven't listened. Why do you want to hear it again? Are you so eager to become his disciples?"

²⁸⁻²⁹ With that they jumped all over him. "You might be a disciple of that man, but we're disciples of Moses. We know for sure that God spoke to Moses, but we have no idea where this man even comes from."

³⁰⁻³³ The man replied, "This is amazing! You claim to know nothing about him, but the fact is, he opened my eyes! It's well known that God isn't at the beck and call of sinners, but listens carefully to anyone who lives in reverence and does his will. That someone opened the eyes of a man born blind has never been heard of—ever. If this man didn't come from God, he wouldn't be able to do anything."

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³⁴They said, “You’re nothing but dirt! How dare you take that tone with us!” Then they threw him out in the street.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and went and found him. He asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

³⁶The man said, “Point him out to me, sir, so that I can believe in him.”

³⁷Jesus said, “You’re looking right at him. Don’t you recognize my voice?”

³⁸“Master, I believe,” the man said, and worshiped him.

³⁹Jesus then said, “I came into the world to bring everything into the clear light of day, making all the distinctions clear, so that those who have never seen will see, and those who have made a great pretense of seeing will be exposed as blind.”

⁴⁰Some Pharisees overheard him and said, “Does that mean you’re calling us blind?”

⁴¹Jesus said, “If you were really blind, you would be blameless, but since you claim to see everything so well, you’re accountable for every fault and failure.”

❓ How does our judgment of people lead us to withhold compassion for them? Should it ever?

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❓ Who is the person *on campus* who you don’t have compassion on because you judge them?

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❓ How are the Pharisees blind to their own spiritual blindness? How do we keep from doing the same?

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❓ Has there ever been a time when you've felt a lack of compassion because of the judgment of others?

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LIVING IT OUT

As a group, decide how you're going to apply something from this week's discussion. Write out what you decide here.

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