

Bible Studies on the “signs” in John’s Gospel

Study 7: Blindness and Sight

Discuss:

- How good is your eyesight? Do you wear glasses? When were your eyes last tested? Is your vision getting better or worse?
- Other than our physical eyes, in what other ways can we be blind?

READ John 9:1-7

1. The disciples ask why this man has been born blind (v. 2).
 - a. What assumption do they make about the cause of his disability?
 - b. What do you think of this explanation of suffering and its causes? Can you think of other reasons for suffering?
2. What answer does Jesus give (v. 3)?
 - a. What do you think the “works of God” are?
 - b. When Jesus speaks of the night coming (v. 4), what do you think he means?
 - c. If Jesus is no longer in the world with us, does that mean that he is no longer working?

READ John 9:8-23

3. What does the reaction of the crowd (vv. 8-10) and the Jews (v. 18) to this man’s healing show about people’s willingness to believe in miracles?
4. Why were the man’s parents afraid, and unwilling to take a stand for Jesus (vv. 20-23)? Are you ever afraid to take a stand for Jesus?

READ John 9:24-34

5. What conclusion have the Pharisees come to about Jesus, and what explanation do they offer for what has happened to this man? How does the man point out the flaw in their argument?
6. What do you think of their response to his argument (v. 34)? In what ways do we experience the same out-of-hand dismissal in our community today?

READ John 9:35-41

7. The man expresses a faith in Jesus (v. 38) that the Pharisees had already sensed (v. 28). Jesus then talks about his mission being to help the blind to see (v. 39). What do you think the connection is between these two verses? What kind of blindness (and sight) is Jesus talking about here?
8. Jesus also refers to those who see turning out to be blind (v. 39). The Pharisees then ask if he is referring to them (v. 40).
 - a. In what ways do the Pharisees claim to see (v. 41)?
 - b. And what reveals that they are actually blind?

Conclusion and Reflection

9. John Newton, in “Amazing Grace,” says that he was blind but now he sees. What did he mean by that? Have you experienced the same thing? When and how did that happen?
10. What warning do the Pharisees provide for us, about the possibility of someone thinking they see but actually being blind?
11. Given what Jesus says his mission in the world is (v. 39), how should that shape our goals as Christians and as a church (see Acts 26:16-18; 2 Corinthians 3:16; 4:6; 1 Peter 2:9)?