



## LEADER GUIDE

# JOHN

## SIGNPOSTS OF THE SAVIOR

### THE SIGN OF HIS LIGHT

**BIG IDEA:** Only through Jesus can we truly see.

**DATE:** Sunday, February 15 and Wednesday, February 18, 2026

**SCRIPTURE:** John 9:1-11;30-33

### OPENING QUESTION

**Opening activity:** Ask your group to close their eyes and keep them closed. Then ask them to perform some basic tasks like getting their ATM card out of their wallet, shaking hands with the person next to them, or taking a picture with their phone.

**SHARE:** We can so easily take our sight for granted. Did you know that Claude Monet, the founder of the French Impressionist art movement, had a vision impairment that would lead to his blindness? But amazingly, he didn't let it stop him. In fact, Monet continued to paint some of his most acclaimed works *after* his vision loss.

**ASK:** When have you seen someone succeed despite what others might call a limitation? *What did they accomplish? How did it inspire you?*

There are some who look at disabilities as being a hindrance. Then there are some who see it as just experiencing the world differently. In today's session, we're going to see a blind man who was hindered not by himself but by the society in which he lived. Yet Jesus was going to use this man's disability to show a more profound condition, not of the man, but of the society surrounding him. Of course, true blindness occurs when we miss seeing who Jesus truly is!

### SETTING THE STAGE

Today we come to the sixth sign or miracle that points to Jesus as being the long-awaited Messiah. Take a minute to recall what signs we have seen so far and what we learn about Jesus in each of them.

Ask your group if they can recall what miracles we have discussed so far and what that taught us about Jesus.

- The Sign of His Glory – turning water into wine at the wedding (something only God could do, showcasing His glory)
- The Sign of His Grace – healing of the royal official's son (His grace is for all – not just the Israelites; not limited by proximity as he healed him from afar)
- The Sign of His Authority – healing of the man at the pool (showing it wasn't the pool that healed him but through the authority of Jesus)
- The Sign of His Provision – feeding of the 5,000 (Jesus provides for our physical needs, too)

- The Sign of His Presence – Jesus’s walking on water (Jesus’s presence in the boat brought immediate peace)

Two of John’s themes throughout this Gospel are darkness/light and blindness/sight. Both are in today’s passage in John 9.

Our Lord performed miracles in order to meet human needs. But He also used those miracles as a “launching pad” for a message conveying spiritual truth. Finally, His miracles were His “credentials” to prove that He was indeed the Messiah. “The blind receive their sight” was one such messianic miracle (Matt. 11:5), and we see it demonstrated in this chapter. Jesus used this miracle as the basis for a short sermon on spiritual blindness (John 9:39-41).

## SCRIPTURE READING

### John 9:1-11; 30-33 (CSB)

As he was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup>His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” <sup>3</sup>“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” Jesus answered. “This came about so that God’s works might be displayed in him. <sup>4</sup>We must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. <sup>5</sup>As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

<sup>6</sup>After he said these things he spit on the ground, made some mud from the saliva, and spread the mud on his eyes. <sup>7</sup>“Go,” he told him, “wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means “Sent”). So he left, washed, and came back seeing. <sup>8</sup>His neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar said, “Isn’t this the one who used to sit begging?” <sup>9</sup>Some said, “He’s the one.” Others were saying, “No, but he looks like him.” He kept saying, “I’m the one.” <sup>10</sup>So they asked him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” <sup>11</sup>He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and told me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So when I went and washed I received my sight.”

<sup>30</sup>This is an amazing thing!” the man told them. “You don’t know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup>We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but if anyone is God-fearing and does his will, he listens to him. <sup>32</sup>Throughout history no one has ever heard of someone opening the eyes of a person born blind. <sup>33</sup>If this man were not from God, he wouldn’t be able to do anything.”

## DISCUSSION

### READ JOHN 9:1-5

In the first century, there were no social services provided to assist the blind, so the man wasn’t able to perform work like other people; therefore, he was relegated to a life of begging in order to provide financial support.

Use the commentary to explain the faulty assumptions being made about the blind man.

In John 9 Jesus is showing His disciples the urgency needed to reveal Himself as the light to the world, because He could see that the days were coming soon when His earthly ministry would be finished and they would need to reflect His light.

What did Jesus mean by declaring Himself the light of the world?

How does Jesus's response to the disciples help us put suffering into perspective? Do you ever find yourself writing a story about someone you know nothing about?

### READ JOHN 9:6-11

Use the commentary to give more information on the pool of Siloam.

The time for Jesus to not just declare that He is the light of the world but to show it to this blind man and to His disciples was about to occur. Up to this point, this man's life was defined by darkness. The very concept of light was foreign to his understanding and yet, the One who created light was about to give the ability for this man to experience light and see the Light all at one time!

What are some ways Jesus opens our eyes to see?

Have you ever asked God to open your eyes and to see people the way He sees them? What happened?

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

The light of the world came to bring sight to the world.

Jesus wanted to extend grace no matter the cause of the blindness. There is grace that's available to anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord. We all have a spiritual blindness that far outweighs any physical issue and show us that the only cure is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Furthermore, we are called to express the same faith as this man when grace is extended to us. Faith believes in who Jesus is and what He can do. Jesus is the One who opens our eyes to see. Encourage your group to pray for opened eyes.

### READ JOHN 9:30-33

In what ways might we be vulnerable to false views of God if we don't keep our eyes on Jesus?

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

RECAP: Review the lessons learned by drawing this chart on the board and going through it.

|         | PHYSICAL BLINDNESS  | SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS   |
|---------|---|---|
| CAUSE   | injury, disability, disease   | sin   |
| EFFECTS | unable to see, or poor vision                                       | doesn't recognize Jesus, our own sin, or God's work                   |
| CURE    | surgery, transplant, glasses, medicine, miracle, some are incurable | trusting Jesus for salvation, asking the Holy Spirit to open our eyes |
| SUBJECT | the blind man   | the Pharisees   |

When Jesus arrived on the scene, everything changed, and the man who had never seen God's beautiful creation or the faces of his loved ones, was made to see. However, the greatest miracle

was not the opening of his eyes but the opening of his heart to the Savior. **Remind your group of today's big idea** - Only through Jesus can we *truly* see.

## RESPONSE

We see the transformation this blind man undergoes – not just physically but spiritually. First, he calls Jesus “a man” (v. 11), then “a prophet” (v. 17) and he finally concludes Jesus had to be *from God*. His eyes are opened and in verse 38 we find him acknowledging that Jesus is Lord and worships Him for who He is. Where are you in this process? How do you see Jesus? And if your eyes have been opened, how are you being a light to others? Do you see Jesus as He sees them?

**PRAY:** Thank God for the ways He has opened our eyes to see His truth. Ask Him to help us guide others to His truth and to help them overcome obstacles in their lives.

## READING PLAN

2/15 – 2 Kings 25; 2/16 - Daniel 1; 2/17 - Daniel 2; 2/18 - Daniel 3; 2/19 - Daniel 6; 2/20 - Psalm 23; 2/21 - Psalm 126; *Memory Verse: Psalm 23:4*

## COMMENTARY

### John 9:1-5

#### ***Jesus is the light of the world.***

The preceding chapter is one filled with conflict. Pharisees accused Jesus of lying (8:13), suicidal tendencies (v. 22), and being a Samaritan and a demon (v. 48). As Jesus withdrew, He may have passed by an area of the temple where sick people sought alms and prayer. En route, Jesus and the disciples saw a man blind from birth.

**Who sinned (v. 2).** It was common to relate illness to sinful behavior. It was natural for Jesus's disciples to think as Job's friends had – that past sin lay behind the present malady. They may have remembered the Old Testament warning about judgment in Exodus 20:5: “I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of the fathers' iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations.” They wondered if this man's parents bore judgement for personal or ancestral wrongs that brought about this birth abnormality.

We fail to understand all the reasons people suffer. It's fruitless for us to offer personal speculation in these instances. We, like John, can speak of things “too wondrous” or great for us to know. Whatever the case, the disciples sought new understanding from their rabbi. They were seeking the truth from Him; Jesus proceeded to dispel their “either-or” assumption.

**“Neither this man nor his parents sinned” (v. 3).** Jesus did not teach that this man and his family were sinless; of course they were not. But He taught that the blind man's condition was not due to what he or his family had done or how they had disobeyed the Lord. He had an entirely different rationale for the man's blindness.

**“God's works might be displayed in him” (v. 3).** This passage deals with the sovereignty of God and offers another difficult theological issue for modern believers. Some interpret this passage to mean that God's preexisting plan was for the man to have blindness, so that years later Jesus

could heal him and demonstrate the power of God within him. Others suggest that Jesus stepped into a situation of need independent of God's preexistent will and decided to show favor to the man. However we interpret the passage, we can conclude that the miracle of healing underscored the truth of Jesus's teaching in the preceding chapter and His statements later in this chapter about being the light of the world. Jesus demonstrated God's light that day through this miracle, and only the spiritually deficient religious leaders would fail to recognize it.

**"We must do the works" (v. 4).** Jesus insisted He must do God's work, even in times of testing. Tension was in the air. Jesus may have had only a few moments to escape being stoned. The Pharisees were not finished. They targeted Him for further attack. Jesus's delay in departure in this uncertain moment demonstrated His commitment to compassion. Most would have quickly fled the area of under threat of hurt. Jesus gave a stellar example of commitment. We learn from Him that we must live His light and show compassion to others. We must make it a priority to love and serve others despite adverse circumstances around us.

**"Night is coming" (v. 4).** In the ancient world, night meant it was impossible to work as the normal day shut down. Night implies finality and the end of opportunity. Jesus taught that His disciples, like Him, should do the works of God and do them promptly. The night comes at some point and cancels opportunities to serve. There is only regret when we fail to do the will of God in the day, that is, when we have opportunity.

**"The light of the world" (v. 5).** This is another of John's seven "I am" statements of Jesus, and a restatement of John 8:12. John introduced this theme in the Gospel's prologue. He contrasted Jesus with John the Baptist: "There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify about the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world" (1:6-9). Night is coming, and opportunity will cease, to be sure. But night also implies danger or the willful ignorance of humanity who choose to disobey God (3:19). Jesus, in contrast, bears the light of God's presence, love, and purpose. We follow this light to find security and salvation.

## **John 9:6-11**

### **As the light of the world, Jesus brought sight to the man born blind.**

**Spit on the ground (v. 6).** Spitting is often associated with great insult, as it was when directed toward Jesus after His arrest. But this incident is certainly not to be understood as an insult. Some ancient peoples believed saliva had healing powers, but, of course, Jesus did not need any medicine to show the power of God. Nor did the pool of Siloam have any unique healing properties. Though not typical, the methodology in this miracle is not unique, since it is one of three similar incidents involving saliva in the Gospels. John gave no explanation why Jesus chose such an unusual method.

**Pool of Siloam (v. 7).** Jesus made a pasty poultice to anoint the man's eyes, applied it to his eyes, then told him to find his way to the pool of Siloam for washing. The pool of Siloam is introduced in 2 Kings 20:20 as King Hezekiah's public works project to bring water inside the gates of Jerusalem, though its name does not appear in that passage. It was fed by Hezekiah's tunnel, sometimes called the Siloam Tunnel, for the purpose of providing the city a supply of water, particularly during a time of siege when enemy troops surrounded the city to prevent inhabitants from coming and going. The pool's location was discovered by modern archaeologists in 2004, near the ruins of

a Byzantine church built to commemorate the pool. It's believed the pool was more than 200 feet in length.

John noted that the pool's name means **Sent**. The One who had been sent from heaven to take away the sins of the world and provide sight to the spiritually blind sent this physically blind man to the pool of Sent. In obedience, the blind man left and made his way to the pool.

**Washed (v. 7).** If Siloam was two hundred feet long, the blind man could have stepped into the pool and washed his body. In this way, it would have been something like a baptism. But the same verb is used in Matthew 6:17 to describe washing one's face while fasting to prevent drawing attention to oneself. Therefore, we do not know exactly how the man washed. Furthermore, neither Jesus and his words to the blind man or John and his account of the incident gave any rationale for this "stage two" in the healing miracle - first the saliva mud, and then the washing. Regardless of Jesus's rationale for placing mud on the blind man's eyes and sending him to the Siloam pool to wash it off, the man's compliance resulted in his healing. The one who had never seen a day in his life came back seeing!

**His neighbors and those who had seen him before (vv. 8-9).** The blind man found healing and joyously returned home. Those who knew him puzzled over this, not recognizing him at first. They debated among themselves whether this was the same or someone who looked like that man.

**"The man called Jesus" (v. 11).** Upon being questioned about his ability to see, the formerly blind man explained that Jesus had given him a strange command that, when followed, had brought about the presence of his sight, though he didn't know where Jesus was at the time. Presumably his neighbors and acquaintances wanted to go and meet this man of miracles for themselves.

Notice the progression in the man's understanding of who Jesus is. In talking with his family and friends, he identified Jesus a man (v. 11). When the Pharisees began to question him regarding the identity of the One who healed him, the man replied, "He's a prophet" (v. 17). His understanding would continue to grow as we move through the remainder of his story.

### **John 9:30-33**

#### **The work of Jesus points to who He is.**

**Context.** His neighbors brought the formerly blind man to the Pharisees. Perhaps they wished to learn a theological explanation from the religious elite, or maybe they wanted the Pharisees to rejoice with them that the power of God was in evidence among them. Perhaps they thought the Pharisees might know where Jesus was. But the response of the religious leaders was mixed. Some of them were distraught about the healing having taken place on the Sabbath, as they often were, while others questioned how an evil man could have done such a remarkable act of healing. Having reached no conclusion on their own, these leaders further interrogated the man who was healed about the exact circumstances of the healing. At this point, the healed man called Jesus a prophet and other than this, seemed to know very little about Him. Jesus is called a prophet four times in John's Gospel. This designation indicated those who used the title believe Jesus was *sent* by God. The Pharisees also summoned the formerly blind man's parents to testify further about what had happened. His parents were afraid of being identified with Jesus and forbidden to worship in the temple; and they might not have known anything beyond what had already been said.

The religious leaders insisted Jesus was a sinner and couldn't do the works of God. The man who was healed insisted he didn't know everything about this matter but only knew that Jesus had miracle-working power. The man gave a familiar response to his inquisitors: "Whether or not he's a sinner I don't know. One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I can see!" (v. 25). This is a proclamation popularized by John Newton in his hymn of testimony, "Amazing Grace."

**"An amazing thing" (v. 30).** The healed man described the healing as *amazing*, as indeed it was. The Greek word is used six times in the New Testament. It appears in 1 Peter 2:9, when Peter described God bringing people from darkness into His "marvelous" light. It is translated "awe inspiring" in Revelation 15:1 to describe the sign of the end times. Surely this miracle was beyond the comprehension of the man who was healed and beyond that of the Pharisees as well. Their hearts were hard, and they tried to find a way to condemn Jesus rather than to join in responding with awe and rejoicing. God's work in His world and in the lives of people is always amazing.

**"You don't know where he is from" (v. 30).** The man who was healed demonstrated boldness in responding to the critical inquisition of the Pharisees. They claimed they didn't know where Jesus was from, implying that he didn't have the same spiritual credentials as Moses. The implication was that Jesus was a "no name" teacher with no spiritual authority, a spiritual upstart without sanction.

**"God-fearing" (v. 31).** God fearing doesn't mean terror, but reverence for God. The Greek uses a compound word composed of "God" and "worship" or "devout." The adjective is used only here in the New Testament when the healed man continued his bold testimony. **"God doesn't listen to sinners,"** he said. His assertion was that it was impossible for Jesus to do miracles without God-ordained authority. The miracle he experienced demonstrated Jesus was a man of holiness.

**"Listens" (v. 31).** This common verb is used over 400 times in the New Testament, and interestingly, twice in this man's assertion that God doesn't hear sinners but does hear those who reverence Him. This observation came from the presumably unschooled, formerly blind man who now had amazing spiritual insight.

**"From God (v. 33).** Whereas the healed man had previously identified Jesus as a man (v. 11) then a prophet (v. 17), he now concluded that Jesus had to be *from God*. A few verses further on, he came to recognize and acknowledge that Jesus is "Lord" and worshiped Him for who He is (v. 38).

This man's spiritual wisdom is inspired motivation for us to earnestly seek God in our lives and to bring our needs to Him in prayer. We can be assured that the God of Scripture hears the fervent prayers of humble men and women who reverence Him (Ps. 10:17-18).

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*The Bible Exposition Commentary, Volume 1* by Warren W. Wiersbe. Victor Books: 1989.