

Leader Devotional

Equip

God created man "from the dust of the ground" (Genesis 2:7). Some think that by healing the blind man with mud, Jesus was demonstrating again that He is the Creator. He was revealing the truth of John 1:3: "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

The divine source of this miracle must have been something grasped by the blind man, because he said in John 9:33, "If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." This might be a confusing statement, considering the fact that we see magicians performing tricks throughout Scripture. However, the blind man realized, through faith, that Jesus was from God.

Jesus did not just heal the blind man physically; He also healed him socially. After the man was healed, his physical ailment no longer excluded him from his community or (according to the religious leaders) condemned him as a sinner. In John 9, we first saw the blind man as a beggar, condemned as a sinner by his community. Then we saw him progress to a state of dignity—even to the point of standing up to the Pharisees. Finally, Jesus loved and respected the blind man enough to restore him: mind, body, and soul. Then Jesus rejoiced with the man as he came to a state of belief, worshipping Jesus, the Son of Man.

Support

Because of the fall, we live in a world that deals with the realities of pain, death, and separation from God. Therefore, suffering is connected to sin because it was original sin that brought forth the suffering in the first place. Even so, Jesus is the One who is able to restore our bodies, hearts, and lives to be whole in Him.

God's love compelled Jesus to heal the blind man. Because Jesus loved him so much, Jesus desired to restore his physical body. Jesus also desired to bring his soul into a place of connection with God.

God loves you so much that He desires to restore your body, your mind, your heart, and your soul. He longs to pour out His Spirit upon you and restore you to wholeness in Him. Where is there a place in your life where you need God's restorative power? Are you grieving? Are you in physical pain? Are you simply feeling bored or exhausted? With expectancy in your heart, ask God to restore you—your mind, body, and soul.

God might have a plan to restore you or someone you love to better health. He might have a plan to restore your heart from pain and sadness to joy and peace. God wants His glory to be revealed through your life, and He will restore you. Repeat after me: Jesus restores! Again! JESUS RESTORES!

Close in Prayer.

At this time, split the children into two smaller groups: Kinder & 1st, 2nd & 3rd. Bring one group upstairs to the empty classroom closest to the main exit of the hallway (what used to be the old nursery). The other group will remain in the K-3rd classroom. Focus on Activity #1 first. After 10 minutes, switch locations and focus on Activity #2.

Activity #1: 10 Minutes | Guess What's In Front of You

What You Need: *blindfold, a bag filled with different things - toys, office supplies, shells, etc. that the children will hold and guess without seeing (10-15 items)*

What To Do:

1. Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
2. The leader picks one child to wear the blindfold first and be the blind man in the Bible Story.
3. Place an item from the bag of things in their hands.
4. Invite them to guess what the item is solely based on touch. If they do not know, have the children around give hints/clues to help them.
5. When they feel confident in their guess, have them take off the blindfold to see the item, just like Jesus restored the blind man's sight with mud and His spit.
6. Repeat with each kid, but make sure to give them a different item that has not been used.

Activity #2: 10 Minutes | Before and After

What You Need: *Before and After images (divide them into two stacks—"before" and "after," keeping the images in the same order in each stack. Keep the images facedown)*

Relate:

When Jesus encountered the sick, He healed and restored them. What does restore mean? **Pause for kids to respond.** To restore something means to fix it or return it to its original condition. When Jesus healed the sick, He also restored their reputations and relationships with their communities.

What To Do:

1. Pick up one of the "before" pictures and hold it up for the kids to see
2. Ask: What would you do to restore this item? Why would you want to do that? *Pause for kids' responses.*
3. Then pick up the corresponding "after" picture and hold it up for the group to see
4. Say: Now that it's restored, what good can it be used for?
5. Repeat with each pair of "before" and "after" images.

Ending:

*Return to the K-3rd classroom and let kids play until parents arrive. K-3rd is **not** allowed on the playground at this time. As parents pick their children up, tell them the main points we talked about today and the activities we did. Please make sure kids take home all the things that they came with (ex. Jackets or toys) and any crafts they made in class.*

After children are gone, please wipe down the chairs and tables and put supplies back so they can be ready for the next service.