

WEEKS 1-5



WEEK 1

WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

READ

Take some time in advance to read and consider the Bible study questions and come up with personal examples to encourage discussion.

DISCUSS

We hope those who participate in the study walk away knowing, feeling, and doing differently as a result of amazing discussion. WEEK ONE JESUS: THE HEALER

BLINDSPOTS

BIG IDEA

On Sunday, we were introduced to the man who was born blind. In this story, we saw Jesus restore sight and also were reminded of who Jesus revealed Himself to be earlier in John 8: The Light of the World. Jesus performed many miracles in His time here on earth. While many may have taken them for granted, Jesus continued to perform them in order that He could not only meet human needs, but also to use them as a starting point in teaching a spiritual truth. This miracle was no different!

In the case of the blind man, many tried to blame his blindness on sin. Jesus had other plans! He looked beyond the blindness and saw the need of the man. Through his healing, Jesus not only brought sight to the blind man, but He brought glory to God! He also revealed a truth about spiritual blindness and our only remedy, Jesus Christ!

<u>Passages We'll Review:</u>

Isaiah 42:1, 6-7; Matthew 5:14-16



JESUS: THE HEALER OF THE BLIND

BLINDSPOTS

OPENING

What stood out to you from the message this week? What led you to really think? Did anything challenge you?

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up? Why?

WATCH

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What jumped out at you from the video in this session? What are some of the key points that affected you more than others?



Think back to our opening question about your childhood dream job. Of all the jobs you could have chosen, *Servant* was likely not one of them! However, in verse 1 we see the reference to "my servant."

BLINDSPOTS

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How can we tell that this "servant" refers to Jesus?

(In Mark 1:9-11, we encounter the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. After this, God responded by saying, "You are my beloved Son; I take delight in You." This reflects back to Isaiah 46:1, the one "in whom my soul delights." We see a promise of the coming Messiah!)

In the video, Michael used the word "Behold" in verse 1. We don't use this as much in today's language. What are other words that we use instead?

(Examples: look, watch, observe, consider, study, "check it out",...)

NOTES

JESUS: THE HEALER

OF THE BLIND

JESUS: THE HEALER

NOTES

What can we "behold" in our daily lives that competes with Him?

BLINDSPOTS

VEEK

(Examples: Famous people such as actors, athletes and political figures, powerful people, charismatic people, etc.)

Jesus was not the powerful king or military figure that many expected. Instead, He came bringing gentleness, encouragement, justice and truth to a lost and dying world. Instead of simply defeating or destroying those who were against Him, He exhibited patience and mercy.

How does this carry over to our lives and purposes today?

(God calls us to be servants of Christ and to exhibit His righteousness to a lost world around us. We are to carry His light to the dark places and demonstrate His grace and mercy to those around us.)



Read Isaiah 42:6-7

How does Jesus fulfill the character and the calling of the Servant of God?

(Jesus came as the new covenant between man and God. He came to reconcile us to God by providing deliverance from death and condemnation for all who have sinned. He came to open our eyes from spiritual blindness so that we can see the Light of the World, just as He did for the man born blind.)

Which of the promises in verses 6 and 7 stand out most to you? Why?

(Open for discussion)

BLINDSPOTS

NOTES

JESUS: THE HEALER

OF THE BLIND

Why do so many people respond to Christ with the same skepticism of the Pharisees?

VEEK

(The Pharisees' hearts were blinded by worldliness and sin. They thought they knew what was best. They sought after man's recognition and praise rather than bringing glory to God. They chose power and notoriety over surrendering to Christ. This is also the case for many people today.)

In the darkness of the world around us, we can be blinded to the root cause of our separation from God. Only by His Light can we have our eyes opened to expose the real problem: Sin. In us. We cannot free ourselves from the bondage of sin; only Jesus can!



JESUS: THE HEALER OF THE BLIND

DIGGING DEEPER

NOTES

BLINDSPOTS

Read Matthew 5:14-16

How is God's calling on our lives the same as His calling for Jesus?

(Jesus commanded us to also be the light of the world. We are to reflect His radiance and shine His love and light into the darkness around us. We are to lead others to the hope found only in Christ!)

As servants of Christ, what should be our ultimate goal? How can we accomplish it?

(We should work to bring glory to God and draw others to Him. We can do this by not treating others as the world treats them, but treating them as Jesus did. We can encourage them, lift them up, give a helping hand, pray for them, and share the Gospel Message with them, to name a few.) WEEK ONE

BLINDSPOTS

PRAY

Consider the following as you pray together:

6

- Isaiah spoke these words to a people who were broken, sinful and in dire need of hope and rescue. They needed deliverance from their bondage. God's response was given to encourage them. What does this passage awaken in your heart today?
- What is your greatest longing in life? Do you see your unique fit in God's big picture? If not, spend time allowing Him to open your eyes to His plan and purpose for you in the world around you. True fulfillment only comes from Him!
- What is the darkest relational sphere in your life currently: family, friendships, work, or neighborhood? How can you bring the brightest light to shine in this darkest area?

Just as Jesus provided sight for the man born blind and light to those in darkness, He can fill us with purpose and hope for our lives. We can be encouraged by this: For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness" - He has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6)

NOTES

JESUS: THE HEALER

OF THE BLIND



WEEK 2

WATCH

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READ

Take some time in advance to read and consider the Bible study questions and come up with personal examples to encourage discussion.

DISCUSS

We hope those who participate in the study walk away knowing, feeling, and doing differently as a result of amazing discussion. WEEK TWO

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR OF UNBELIEF!

BLINDSPOTS

BIG IDEA

This week, we saw the parents of the man born blind. Even though they had seen what Christ had done, they chose to reject Him for their own sake. They valued their own reputation over honoring Christ. They were only two of many who chose to reject Him. Yet He came to be the sacrifice for all people, in spite of what He would face. As we reflect on the sacrifice He made, we can find hope in the words of the song "Man of Sorrows."

Man of Sorrows, Lamb of God, by His own betrayed. The sin of man and wrath of God has been on Jesus laid.

Silent as He stood accused, beaten, mocked, and scorned. Bowing to the Father's will He took a crown of thorns.

Sent of heaven, God's own Son to purchase and redeem. And reconcile the very ones who nailed Him to that tree.

Oh, that rugged cross, my salvation where Your love poured out over me. Now my soul cries out, "Hallelujah, praise and honor Lord to Thee."



THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR OF UNBELIEF!

BLINDSPOTS

Passages we'll review:

Isaiah 53:3-5; John 1:10-13; Matthew 10:26-33; Philippians 3:7-11

OPENING

What stood out to you from the message this week? What led you to really think? Did anything challenge you?

How would you feel if someone took all the credit for a major accomplishment you had achieved? How would you feel if someone took the responsibility and consequences for a major mistake you made? Which of these would you be more likely to let happen?

WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

What jumped out at you from the video in this session? What are some of the key points that affected you more than others?

WEEK TWO

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR OF UNBELIEF!

BLINDSPOTS

READ

NOTES

Read Isaiah 53:3-5

In today's passage, we find that the One sent to be our Redeemer was the most unlikely person expected! Nothing about His appearance drew the attention of others. They saw no worth in Him. They didn't believe in His teachings. And yet, He was exactly what we needed in a Savior!

How should we respond to the Suffering Servant illustrated in this passage?

(Christ was an innocent Servant. He was perfect and sinless, yet He took on all of our sin. He died in the place of the guilty in order that we might be saved. Our response ought to be to praise and worship Him for His holiness, faithfulness, and unconditional love.)

BLINDSPOTS

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR

NOTES

OF UNBELIEF!

Read John 1:10-13

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Let's think back to the earthly life of Jesus. Who despised Him during His birth and ministry? Why did they despise Him so much?

(At His birth, Jesus was despised by King Herod. After learning of His birth from the wise men, Herod felt threatened by this Messiah that had been promised, concerned that He would rule in Herod's place. During His ministry, Jesus was despised by the Pharisees and teachers of the law because He seemed to counter the many laws by which they lived and obtained their high moral status. Jesus revealed that their "righteousness" was only external and not a true reflection of a heart change.)

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR OF UNBELIEF!

BLINDSPOTS

Looking back at our passage from Sunday, John 9:13-23, why did the Pharisees doubt the man's testimony (Verse 16)? How did the Pharisees, and even the people of Israel as a whole, not realize that Jesus was indeed their Messiah?

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(The Pharisees felt that Jesus violated the Sabbath by healing this man, thus not following their laws and traditions. The people were expecting a mighty, powerful king. To them, Jesus didn't "appear" to value the right things: money, power, fame, notoriety, influence, and being served. In fact, Jesus was the opposite of all of these things!)

How does this apply to us today as followers of Christ?

(As we follow Christ, we will face much of the same persecution He faced. We may be mocked, shamed, undervalued, even persecuted because of our faith in Him. We must remember that, just as Christ became the Suffering Servant for us, we too may have to make sacrifices and suffer to do the work He has given us to do.)

EEK

Jesus was viewed in the light of any other servant of the day. He was mocked, rejected, even hated. Those in power sought to silence Him, even to the point of death. In fact, He was sold out by one of His own for a measly 30 pieces of silver, the amount given to the master in the event that his slave died an accidental death. They were ashamed of Him because He didn't live up to their standards. Yet He proved through His actions that the things valued by man weren't needed to be successful in doing God's work!

NOTES

BLINDSPOTS

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR

OF UNBELIEF!

Read Matthew 10:26-33

/EEK

Does God really expect us to follow Christ's example and be a suffering servant for His sake? Why or why not?

(Yes! We must remember that we have no reason to be afraid of man's threats! As a result, we should be quick to confess Him before others! We are to follow His example of the Suffering Servant in taking up our cross daily to follow Him. We should live with the same spirit and attitude that Jesus did in order to draw others into a relationship with Him. He will always be there to support us, and we know our eternal home is with Him!)

We have an invitation to follow Christ's example and become what He desires us to be as Kingdom people! When we confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior, it is more than just mere words; it is about living it out! We must not just talk the talk, but also walk the walk!

NOTES

BLINDSPOTS

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR

OF UNBELIEF!

WEEK TWO

BLINDSPOTS

DIGGING DEEPER Read Philippians 3:7-11

NOTES

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR

OF UNBELIEF!

Just as we saw with the Pharisees, many in Paul's time refused to leave the old way of life and put aside their own self-righteousness, or the righteousness of the law, in exchange for the righteousness that comes from God.

What is the difference between the righteousness that comes from the law and righteousness that comes from God?

(Righteousness that comes from the law is a self-righteousness that is based on tangible, earthly treasures and our own piousness. It is only an outward display, but has no effect on the heart. Righteousness that comes from God is based on our inward motivation and being in the right standing with God. It comes from what Christ has done on our behalf and is not from anything we have done.)

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR OF UNBELIEF!

NOTES

BLINDSPOTS

What was Paul's goal in verse 10? What does it mean to know Jesus? How can we know the power of His resurrection and be conformed to His death?

EEK

(Paul's goal was to know Christ. Knowing Jesus is more than just knowing **about** Him. It illustrates an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Knowing Him means we identify with Him and share in His sufferings, even to the point of death. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is the power that helps us to live the life He calls us to live. Because of His victory over sin and death, we can experience His resurrection power as we do His work and can experience true life in Him, dying to our old ways and striving to be more like Him each day!)

BLINDSPOTS

Paul saw it as a privilege to suffer for Christ's sake. As we grow in Christ and do His work, we will be attacked by the enemy, Satan. While we suffer this attack and even possibly face death, we can rest assured in knowing that our future is eternal life with Him!

NOTES

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR

OF UNBELIEF!

PRAY

EEK

Consider the following as you pray together:

- Reflect on your own personal journey. What are some sorrows you have suffered in life as Christ did?
- Take time to evaluate the "things" in your life that matter the most. What "gains" in your life are the most challenging to view as a "loss?" What have you given up for the sake of Christ? Was it worth it?

 Will you follow Christ, regardless of what man may say or do? The man born blind did! Following his example, take a look at your own life. How do you respond when the pressure is put on you? Do you respond like the man born blind and give credit to God, professing your faith in Him? Or do you respond as his parents and pretend you don't know Him or His ways?

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As you go through this week, remember the suffering Jesus endured in order that we could have a relationship with Him! Then, as you face difficulties in living for Him, you can find hope in His word!

But when you do good and suffer, if you endure, it brings favor with God. For you were called to this, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in His steps. (1 Peter 2:20b-21)

NOTES

BLINDSPOTS

THE REJECTIVE BEHAVIOR

OF UNBELIEF!



WEEK 3

WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

READ

Take some time in advance to read and consider the Bible study questions and come up with personal examples to encourage discussion.

DISCUSS

We hope those who participate in the study walk away knowing, feeling, and doing differently as a result of amazing discussion. WEEK THREE

THE IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR OF UNBELIEF!

BLINDSPOTS

BIG IDEA

On Sunday, we learned about the second "trial" of the blind man who had been healed by Jesus. The Pharisees continued to guestion him on what had taken place, setting Him up as a sinner so as to discredit Jesus' ministry. The man, however, didn't debate the nature or character of Christ. He simply bore witness to what had he encountered: "Whether or not He's a sinner, I don't know. One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I can see."

A witness is simply this: a person called to testify and give evidence; someone who sees an event reports what happened. Legally, it is and important to get eyewitness testimony from one who has knowledge of the situation from their own senses. It is also important that the witness is credible, with a testimony that is truthful and believable. This man was both! Sadlv. the Pharisees chose not to believe the witness or this testament, or tangible proof, of his faith. In his response to the Pharisees, we see the man who had been blind use the opportunity to praise God and give credit to the miracle He had performed! Today we will look at how we can be a witness and give testimony to what God has done for us.



Passages we'll review: Psalm 66:16-20, Psalm 51:10-19

OPENING

What stood out to you from the message this week? What led you to really think? Did anything challenge you?

What is the nicest thing anyone has ever done for you? Why was it so meaningful?

WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

What jumped out at you from the video in this session? What are some of the key points that impacted you more than others?



NOTES

BLINDSPOTS

READ Read Psalm 66:16-17

As the psalmist reflected on what God had done, what was the first thing he did? How can we follow the example of the psalmist?

(The psalmist shared with other followers of God what God had done. We must share with other believers when we experience God's work in our lives. When we celebrate what God has done, we are giving Him glory and are encouraging others to worship Him!)

How has someone else's testament of God's faithfulness encouraged you?

(Open for discussion)

BLINDSPOTS

NOTES

Why is it so important to share with others what God has done in our lives?

EEK

(When we share with others, they can see how God has worked in our lives. Sometimes, they may be able to relate to a similar experience. In other times, we may be able to share how even a difficult experience resulted in God being glorified. This can help to strengthen their faith as well. Even when we may be facing a difficult time, seeing God at work in other believers' lives can encourage us and lead us to give glory to God!)

Our worship to God includes giving praise to Him for all He has done, both in the world around us and in our own lives. Worship is an overflow of our hearts to His worthship.

NOTES

What things can prevent us from sharing with others what God has done?

BLINDSPOTS

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(We can take for granted the ways in which God answers our prayers. We can also be more concerned about what others will think about us when we share than about what God has done, being self-focused rather than Godfocused. We could also be more concerned about the repercussions of sharing, instead of the need of others to hear our testimony and give glory and honor to God.)

How can we overcome the hesitation to share our own testimony with others?

(We must remember that our testimony of what God has done in our lives isn't really about us or for our glory. Looking back to Week 1 of our series, we can be reminded that God often allows situations in our lives, not because of sin we committed, but in order to bring glory to His Name!)

BLINDSPOTS

THE IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR

NOTES

OF UNBELIEF!

Read Psalm 66:18-19

VEEK

REE

What is necessary in order for God to hear and answer our prayer, however He may choose?

(We must first have a relationship with Him. When we pray, we must have a heart for Him. As JT mentioned in the video, God doesn't hear the prayers of those who cherish sin.)

No matter what we may try to portray on the outside, God knows what is in our heart! While we can pray a pious, perfect prayer, if it is not genuine, He knows! He looks beyond the outward appearance, deeper into the heart!

NOTES

BLINDSPOTS

What do you think can hinder or interfere with the effectiveness of our prayers?

(Our prayer life can be affected by unconfessed, unrepented sin. If we continue to do what we know is wrong, it will hinder our communication with God. We can also allow the burdens and worries of the world around us to distract us from what matters most and take our focus off of the One who is over all things.)

What have you experienced that has affected your prayer life? How did you overcome it?

(Open for discussion)

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Read Psalm 66:20

VEEK

REE

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BLINDSPOTS (

Why is it so important to remember what God has done for us? How can we be involved in sharing what God has done for us?

(Remembering God's faithfulness can help us through the difficult times. It can also encourage others who are going through similar struggles. But it also redirects our focus to the One who is worthy of our praise and reminds us of His greatness. It can also give us the opportunity to share Him with those who do not have a personal relationship with Him.)

DIGGING DEEPER Read Psalm 51:10-19

Why did David ask for God to "create a clean heart" in him?

(In this Psalm, we see David after he was confronted by the prophet Nathan over his sin of adultery and murder. David was known as a man after God's own heart. He had a relationship with God built in the days of his youth out in the pastures tending sheep. But his sin of adultery, murder, and attempted cover up caused a riff in his relationship with God. The consequences of his sin had been eating away at him.)

BLINDSPOTS

EEK

How did David's own experience of God's forgiveness affect others?

(David was able to share God's faithfulness and righteousness with others. He could share about God's provision in the good times and God's forgiveness and restoration in the difficult times. His experiences gave others the opportunity to witness God's greatness and give praise to Him.)

BLINDSPOTS

David's prayer shows us his awareness of God as his Redeemer. We, too, have a Redeemer in Christ Jesus, who can restore and renew us, even when we've messed up. We have been given the gift of righteousness that can only be found in Christ alone. It is our responsibility to share it with others!

NOTES

PRAY

EEK

Consider the following as you pray together:

• Even when we are going through difficult times. God can use someone else's testament of His faithfulness to encourage us. Take time this week to thank Him for those in your LifeGroup and others that you are surrounded by who encourage you daily. Let those people know thev are an encouragement to you!

We can use the witness of the blind man who had been healed as a model for our own lives. We can use our own personal testimony to connect with others and then introduce them to Christ. Who is someone you can tell about what God has done for you? Look for opportunities this week to share your story with others.

BLINDSPOTS

EEK

 Often, we look for what fits into our plans in life. We hold tightly to what was never ours to begin with. Are you willing to offer yourself and your life for God's honor, just as the man born blind did?

As you encounter opportunities this week to share your own testimonies, remember what Paul tells us in Colossians 3:17: And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.



WEEK 4

WATCH

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READ

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DISCUSS

We hope those who participate in the study walk away knowing, feeling, and doing differently as a result of amazing discussion.

BLINDSPOTS

BIG IDEA

Compassion. This word has many definitions. One source defines compassion as "a relational process that involves noticing another person's pain, experiencing an emotional reaction to his or her pain, and acting in some way to help ease or alleviate the pain." In the Hebrew language, there are at least five definitions, but today we will look at one in particular: Racham, which means "a feeling of pity and devotion to a helpless child. It is a deep emotional feeling seeking a concrete expression of love. This word always expresses the feeling of the superior or powerful for the inferior more or less powerful...The word seeks to bring security to the life of the one for whom compassion is felt." (Holman Bible Dictionary).

According to Compassion.com: "The component of action is what separates compassion from empathy, sympathy, pity, concern, condolence, sensitivity, tenderness, commiseration or any other compassion synonym. Compassion gets involved. When others keep their distance from those who are suffering, compassion prompts us to act on their behalf." Let's look more at what the Bible says in regards to compassion!

NOTES

COMPASSION

WEEKEND



<u>Passages we'll review:</u>

Proverbs 14:31; Proverbs 19:17; Proverbs 22:9; 1 Timothy 6:17-19

OPENING

What stood out to you from the message this week? What led you to really think? Did anything challenge you?

How much money is "enough" money? Do you have "enough" money, or do you need more? What would you do if you had more money?

WATCH

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What jumped out at you from the video in this session? What are some of the key points that impacted you more than others?



BLINDSPOTS

READ Read Proverbs 14:31

NOTES

COMPASSION

WEEKEND

Why is God insulted by those who oppress or treat the poor with contempt?

(God made mankind in His image. This includes all of mankind, rich and poor. When we oppress, insult, or take advantage of those who are poor, we are not just insulting them, but we are insulting their Maker. When we treat them as worthless, we are also treating God as though He were worthless! As Proverbs 22:2 states: "Rich and poor have this in common: the Lord makes them all.")

Think of this in terms of your own child: How would you respond if someone treated your child poorly? Would you be insulted?

(Open for Discussion)

How is our relationship with God related to our relationship with the poor and needy? Why is God honored by those who are gracious to the needy?

BLINDSPOTS

(The way we treat others reflects the relationship we have with God. The kindness we show to others, especially those in need who cannot return the favor, reflects our heart attitude. Kindness comes from a heart that loves and honors God. So, when we are gracious, kind, and compassionate to those in need, we honor God with our actions.)

Read Proverbs 19:17

Why does this verse connect giving generously to the poor with giving something to God?

(The **poor** in verse 17 refers to those who are feeble or weak. We were reminded earlier that they are made in His image. When we are kind or generous to them rather than feeling pity for them, and have compassion for them and help them, it is as though we were lending to the Lord.) NOTES

COMPASSION

WEEKEND

BLINDSPOTS

God expects those who have a surplus to share their abundance with those in need. Our natural instinct is to hoard our resources and save up for a rainy day. However, God desires that we are generous with His abundant blessings to us.

VEEK

Why should we choose to invest in God's plan of giving to those in need?

(God's investment has a risk-free rate of eternal returns with guaranteed dividends! When He gives to us beyond our needs, we have the ability to help others in need! God will reward, or repay, our faithfulness in His way and in His time. We are not guaranteed a physical (monetary) blessing, but we are guaranteed spiritual and eternal blessings!)

NOTES

COMPASSION

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Read Proverbs 22:9

Some versions use the phrase "bountiful eye" or "good eye," meaning one who <u>looks for ways</u> to be generous, gracious, kind, and compassionate to others.

Do you look for opportunities to give? Do you get excited about giving?

(Open for Discussion)

This verse does not just apply to those who are rich. Who does this "whoever" apply to, and how should it affect each of us?

(Everyone who has something can give to help those in need. We can give our time, talent, or treasure to those who are less fortunate. While we may not see that we have the ability to be generous, God will make sure our needs are met if we give to those in need.)

BLINDSPOTS

COMPASSION

NOTES

WEEKEND

DIGGING DEEPER Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19

Do you think of yourself as rich by society's standards? What about by the world's standards? Why or why not?

(Open for Discussion)

How should those who are "rich" respond to what God has given them?

(We should be humble, putting our hope in God instead of money. We are to put our money to work helping others, be generous, and share with others.)

What does it mean to be "rich in good works?" How does this "investment" help us prepare for the future?

(How we spend our time and resources is a reflection of the attitude of our hearts. Those who are "rich" by the world's standards don't exist to be served because of their abundance, but to serve others with their abundance! This investment will provide us with spiritual and eternal treasures.)

BLINDSPOTS

PRAY

As you go through this week, remember **1 John 3:17-18: "If anyone has this world's goods and sees a fellow believer in need but withholds compassion from him-how does God's love reside in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in action and in truth."** When we have a mindset of generosity and compassion, God can move us to give what He desires: time, talent, and treasures!

Consider the following as you pray together:

- We are created in God's image. Do you see people the way God sees them? Or do you see them based on their status in life?
- How should the fact that the Lord is the Maker of both the rich and the poor impact your life?
- Are you sensitive to the needs of those who are poor? Have you ever sacrificed to meet the needs of someone in poverty? Have you allowed your heart to be touched by their need?
- What changes do you need to make in order to be more generous to those in need?

NOTES

COMPASSION

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WEEK 5

WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

READ

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DISCUSS

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THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!

BLINDSPOTS

BIG IDEA

Jim Elliott was a missionary to the Auca tribe in Ecuador, known for it's savagery and violence, especially to outsiders. He wrote the following in his journal: "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." Little did he know that a few years later, he would indeed give his life for the sake of the Gospel. In their efforts to share Christ with the people of this tribe, he and four other missionaries were killed.

While many had tried to convince Elliott to serve elsewhere, he had a passion to tell others about God, wherever He may lead. When he was 20, he wrote in his journal, "Lord make my way prosperous, not that I achieve high station, but that my life may be an exhibit to the value of knowing God." He knew that knowing God was more important than anything else and that true worship was more than just mere rituals routines: it be outward and was to an expression of the inner state of the heart, in awe of and reverence to God for who He is and all He has done.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!

BLINDSPOTS

On Sunday, we encountered the Pharisees once again. Rather than marvel at the miracle Jesus had performed and give Him the glory He deserved, they chose to ignore His work and stay blinded to the saving grace that Jesus offers. Today, we will look more at why people are blind to the message of Christ and how His Light can penetrate this darkness in which so many live.

Passages we'll review:

2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Isaiah 29:13-14

OPENING

What stood out to you from the message this week? What led you to really think? Did anything challenge you?

What are some views in our society today that may seem unbelievable? What are some views that society "chooses" to ignore?



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!

BLINDSPOTS

WATCH

Make sure everyone can see the screen and the audio is at a comfortable level.

What jumped out at you from the video in this session?

READ Read 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

Think back to our opening question. Why do people choose to believe the things they do while sometimes ignoring the truth?

(The secular worldview that we see engulfing our society reflects the values of this world. Those who follow this worldview are blinded to the Truth. They find it easier to believe the lies of this world rather than grasping the Truth of God. What is common sense to those who follow Christ may even seem absurd or unbelievable to those who don't know Him.)

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BLINDSPOTS

Who is the "god of this age," and why is he so determined to blind those who don't know Christ?

(Satan is the god of this age. He does not want people to know Christ and be saved. As a result, he will do whatever it takes to keep them from discovering the Gospel of Christ. If he can brainwash or deceive people, he can prevent them from finding Truth in Christ.)

Read 2 Corinthians 4:5-6

Why was Paul able to continue on, in spite of the suffering and persecution he faced? How did he find confidence in the trials and suffering?

(Paul reminds us that it isn't about us at all, but it is ALL about Jesus! The true Gospel message focuses on Christ alone, not on man's efforts. Paul's only goal and purpose was to lead people to Christ and strengthen their faith in Him, and as a result, to bring glory to God. As he faced trials and suffering for doing the work of Christ, he knew that Christ was at work in his life, and he pressed on to do His work.)

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How should this encourage us today?

(When we see the opposition to the Gospel message and understand the enemy's tactics to blind people to the Truth, it can be discouraging! We can't let this distract us. We have to remember to see ourselves as Paul did - a useful vessel to carry His message and do His work. We have the assurance that God is with us and will supply what we need in order to bring glory to His name!)

Why did Paul compare God making His light shine in our hearts to the creation story in Genesis 1? How are God's actions in salvation similar to His actions in creation?

(In both of these stories, the light breaks through the darkness! In the creation story, God created light and then later created man to be able to live by the light supplied to him. In the salvation, or re-creation, story, God first sent the Light of the World, Jesus Christ, and made His light shine in our hearts so that we could walk in Him. We can't truly live without Him!)



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!

BLINDSPOTS

When we begin to follow Christ, we become a new creation! Just as when He created everything in Genesis 1, we become His new creation when we follow Him. He forms us in His image and fills us with His light so that we can bear fruit for Him!

Since Satan has blinded people's eyes to the truth, is there any hope for them? How can we help the light pierce through their souls?

(There is hope! Jesus is the only hope for all mankind. He is the only one who can pierce the darkness of their souls. Our part in this is to live in a manner that displays the glory of Christ, reflecting His light to those in darkness. As they resist the Gospel, we can pray for God to work and move in their lives to remove the veil that blinds them from the truth.)

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

BLINDSPOTS

DIGGING DEEPER Read Isaiah 29:13-14

NOTES

What problems did the people of Israel have in this passage? How would God respond? How does this relate to what we read in John 9 with the Pharisees and also in 2 Corinthians? (The people of Israel went to church, but it was only a ritual based on their heritage and traditions, not because of a real relationship with God. They went to the Temple, but it was because this was the popular thing to do. They put on an outward "show" of their devotion. but there was no inward response or worship. God would respond by rocking their world and showing them that He was the only one worthy of praise, and that by ignoring Him, they missed the mark and were blinded to the truth. The Pharisees and people in Corinth were like this, too. They could talk the talk, but there was no effort to walk down the path Christ had laid out for them. They chose other loyalties over God. They didn't have a personal relationship with God, but instead based everything on their own wisdom and efforts.)

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!

BLINDSPOTS

In 1 Samuel 16:7, as Samuel was in search of the next King that God had chosen, God reminded Samuel of a very important reality. What is that reality? How will it guide us as we seek to serve Him?

(God reminds us that He doesn't look for appearance or stature as man does, but He looks inside, to the heart. In the same way, as we serve Him, we must remember to look beyond the outward appearance and circumstances to what Christ is doing in and through us. We will not always see the immediate fruit, but He changes people from the inside out!)

PRAY

Consider the following as you pray together:

 As you examine your life, do your actions and priorities reveal more of a concern for Christ's reputation or your own reputation? How do you know?

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!

BLINDSPOTS

Our response to the Gospel isn't based on our knowledge or abilities, but on our spirit and the state of our heart. Remember as you share with others that we are servants of Christ, sharing the Gospel for the sake of Christ! Only He can reach those in darkness. Pray for those who don't know Him, that He would do a work in their lives and remove the blind spots. Then be ready to share as they are exposed to the Light of the World.

• Who or what do you worship? Does your worship resemble or differ from the worship we see in Isaiah 29?

William Temple wrote: To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God. As you go through this week, choose to respond like the man born blind. Live a life that is focused on worshiping Christ for who He is and what He has done, and reflect His light to the world around you!



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