



Open Eyes

Since we're all human beings with an inherently limited perspective on reality, it's okay to be wrong, and it's okay not to know. But it's not okay not to look if there is something to be seen. John, an early follower of Jesus, recorded his experiences with somebody worth seeing in order to invite us to experience something that he believed we could not ignore.

Start Talking

What's something so obvious that you initially overlooked it? (examples: the noise your refrigerator makes, the "smell" of your house, parents' weird conversational tics that weren't obvious until you brought a date home to meet them)

Have you ever found yourself willfully ignoring something because you didn't want to confront it? (examples: person being loud in a restaurant, someone telling a joke that's inappropriate for the context)

Looking Back

Over the past week, when were you tempted to slip back into the old habit of trying to manipulate Jesus into granting all your requests, favorably re-arranging your circumstances? How did you respond to the temptation to do this?

When it comes to our goal of being in a genuine (rather than manipulative) relationship with Jesus, how would you characterize your past week?

What About You?

1. When you see suffering in the world, what kinds of explanations for it do you find yourself creating?
2. Have you ever experienced or seen someone else navigate an unexpected, inexplicable life change? What happened? What did you think about it?
3. Have you ever had to believe something and take action without being able to visually



verify the facts for yourself, first? Describe that experience.

4. Andy talked about a “god box,” our mental categories— whether received in youth or created ourselves— by which we attempt to contain the Almighty, limiting Him to that which we can easily explain. How would you describe your own “god box?” What rules and categories have you tried to fit God into?
5. When have the muddy complications of life in the real world stretched against the tidy definitions of your box? Have you ever had an experience that led you to conclude that God may be bigger than the box?

Look It Up

Read the Following Passages: John 9: 1-34

1. Andy classified the Pharisee’s reaction to the healing of the blind man as, “willful ignorance.” Why do you think they reacted to this miraculous sign in such an obtuse way? What was at stake?
2. The religious institutions condemned Jesus for healing on the sabbath, since his action constituted “work.” Given this fact, what was wrong with the pharisees’ definition of the “sabbath?”
3. In the ancient world, mistreatment of the sick was often justified by the belief that they had done something wrong to warrant the illness. In light of this, what do you make of Jesus’ explanation for why the man in this passage was actually born blind?

Putting It All Together

1. Andy says that the religious leaders missed Jesus because there wasn’t room within their theology for the truth that was right in front of their eyes. How might that dynamic be playing out in your own life?
2. The blind man’s interaction with the Pharisees makes it clear that while he did not know *everything*, he had nonetheless taken the step to believe *something*. What questions, doubts, or confusing aspects of life are keeping you from truly surrendering to Jesus?
3. What tangible actions would you take this week if you were to put those lingering questions aside and believe in spite of the fact that you will never be able to know everything (about the future, about your current circumstances, about the nature of life)?
4. Andy says that as Christians, the confidence that we’ve been equipped for life by a loving God should allow us to “fearlessly confront the frontiers of our own ignorance” and act as healers in all aspects of life. How might your worldview change if you were truly able to set aside fear of anything that threatens your “god box” in order to embrace the messy nature of life in all its muddy complication?
5. How could open-minded confidence change the way you treat people who are not like you?

