

“BLIND” – Sermon Discussion Guide
March 17, 2024
John 9

As you open in prayer, ask that God would open your eyes to see him and yourselves in a new way through this discussion.

Opening question:

- Do you have a disability, or know someone close to you with one, such as vision or hearing impairment, or limited use of the body or mind? What are some ways that life is different? How does it impact your or their faith?

Sin is mentioned several times in this story. **1)** The disciples’ question (v2). **2)** Jesus’s response to the disciples (v3). **3)** The Pharisees’ discussion about whether Jesus is from God or “a sinner” (v16, 24-25) **4)** The Pharisees insult of the healed man (v34) **5)** Jesus’s statement about spiritual blindness (v 41).

- What does each example suggest about sin?
- Jesus’s response in v3 suggests God working through otherwise tragic situations.
 - o If you haven’t already talked about this during this sermon series, have you ever seen a person miraculously healed by God?
 - o If not healed, are there other ways that you have seen “the works of God displayed in (someone)?”
- Think of the lyric to “Amazing Grace”, which comes from this story: “I once was blind but now I see!” What meaning does this have in your faith journey?

Read John 9, verses 13-16 and verses 24-25. As the Pharisees argued with the healed man, they continue to argue from their theological preconceptions, while the healed man simply argues from his story.

- Have you ever been involved in an argument like this, where you were on one side or the other. *(That is, have you ever argued against someone who claimed something happened to them that is contrary to your understanding of Scripture; or, conversely, have you ever argued your story with someone who argued back from a Biblical perspective?)*
 - o Describe what this interaction felt like? How did it resolve? Did things change at all with time?
 - o What do you think we are to make of this? If someone claims an experience that contradicts our understanding of a Biblical teaching, what should we do?
- Loved ones who may be skeptical of Christianity are often more willing to hear you tell about what God has done in your life than they are of Bible passages, history, apologetics, or certainly anything deemed “political”. Your story, your experience, and your feelings are not debatable. If you’re comfortable, talk about the impact that telling your Christian story has made on someone.

- *(If you haven't had these kinds of conversations yet, let this be a reminder to, sometime in the next week or so, take the time to write out your personal story of faith (one page or less – something you can comfortably tell in 5 minutes), and how you would tell that to someone you know. If you want help with this, see Pastor Andy.)*

Discuss the meaning of the following two related sayings from Jesus:

- “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.”
 - Who are the blind? Who are those who see?
 - What spiritual significance does the change in each one indicate?
- “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.”
 - When Jesus says “guilty of sin”, what sin might he be referring to?

For the following questions, rather than have the group answer out loud, you might just ask them and allow one minute of silence after each question for your group to reflect on silently, and listen to God. (If someone feels burdened and wants to share what they notice inwardly, that's ok too!)

- Do you recognize any bit of the Pharisees' posture in your own heart? Is there a way God might be speaking to a sinful area in your life through this story?
- Where in your faith is there room to confess your own blindness and ask for God to reveal himself?

Close by confessing our tendency to “claim that we can see” and thank God that if we who are otherwise spiritually blind come to him through Christ, our guilt no longer remains!