

MARCH 17, 2024

1.3

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God's miracles
reveal His glory.

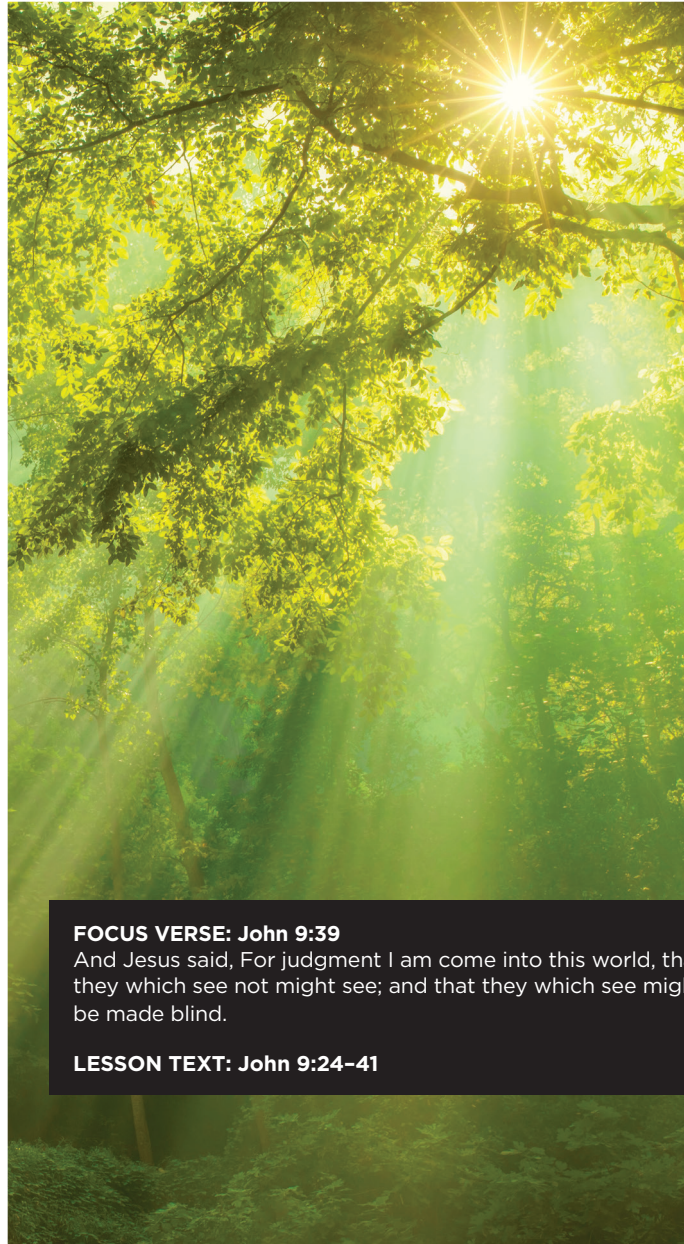
TRUTH FOR MY LIFE

I will submit my life
for the glory of God.



SERIES 1: JOHN

WHEN THE LIGHT SHINES



FOCUS VERSE: John 9:39

And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

LESSON TEXT: John 9:24-41



Lesson Title: When the Light Shines

Icebreaker: What is your favorite work of art?

- I. JESUS SAW A NEED
 - A. Why Needs Arise
 - » *How do you respond when someone asks you a question like the disciples asked Jesus?*
 - B. I Will Trust God, Especially When I Face a Need
- II. RESPONDING TO THE MIRACULOUS
 - A. Jesus Healed, But Some Did Not Believe
 - » *Why didn't people believe the man who saw was the same as the one born blind?*
 - » *What do you think of the man's boldness toward the religious leaders?*
 - B. Personal Experience with Jesus Brought Illumination
 - C. Jesus Revealed His Identity and the Identity of Believers
 - » *See yourself in the story. Which character are you: the disciples, the neighbors, the parents, the Pharisees, or the believers?*
 - D. I Will Submit My Life for the Glory of God
 - » *How will you submit your life for the glory of God?*

Prayer Focus

- To look for the glory of God to be displayed
- To submit our lives to be used for God's glory

BIBLICAL OVERVIEW

Lesson Text: John 9:24-41

Jesus' healing of the blind man in John 9 reflects many themes present throughout the body of John's writing. The religious elite and their conventional wisdom were befuddled by the testimony of the simple and unlearned. Jesus' light overcomes darkness. Moreover, Jesus is positioned as the supreme, central agent of change in the world. Despite Pharisaical charges and doubts, Jesus demonstrated His power as not only a miracle worker (vv. 32-33), but also as the only worthy recipient of belief and worship (v. 38).

Much discussion occurs in John 9 about what is "known" versus what is "not known." The healed man's parents knew he was their son, that he had been blind and now saw, but they did not know how the transformation happened. The healed man did not know if Jesus was a sinner, but the man knew with certainty that he had been healed. By contrast, the Pharisees claimed to "know" that Jesus had to be a "sinner" and "not of God" because He performed miracles on the Sabbath (v. 16, 24). The Pharisees also knew that God spoke to Moses, but they did not know where Jesus came from, just like the healed man didn't know where Jesus currently was. This theme climaxes when the healed man challenged all that the Pharisees knew and did not know in verses 31-33. They asserted what they "knew:" God does not listen to willful sinners, but does listen to the righteous. (See Psalm 34:15-16.) Since the man's eyes were opened—an objectively good act—the Healer must be righteous and good.

The theme of light and darkness is also present in this passage. The healed man was formerly in literal darkness being blind, but now lived in the light. Even more, the healed man now existed in spiritual light through relationship with Jesus Christ. However, the Pharisees remained in darkness because they could not see the truth of who Jesus was.

Many themes from this healing story have their introduction in John's Prologue (John 1:1-18). According to John 1:11, Jesus came to the Jews, of whom the Pharisees were religious elite, and they received Him not. Despite the objections from the darkness and blindness of the Pharisees, they could not overcome the light Jesus offered. The healed man entered into the light and came to believe in Jesus. Despite the miracle, the Pharisees were obsessed with Moses and the Law, and they could not see the grace and truth Jesus offered.

DESPITE PHARISAICAL CHARGES AND DOUBTS, JESUS DEMONSTRATED HIS POWER AS NOT ONLY A MIRACLE WORKER, BUT ALSO AS THE ONLY WORTHY RECIPIENT OF BELIEF AND WORSHIP.

DAY 1

John 9:24–25

²⁴ Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

²⁵ He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

Biblical Insight

The healed man's response to the Pharisees was surprisingly resilient given the fact that many in those days feared and revered the Jewish religious elite, including his own parents. The healed man refused to cave to the Pharisees' pressure; rather, he stated the facts of what he did and did not know. He could neither confirm nor deny that the One who healed him was a sinner, but he did know his blindness had been healed (*Apostolic Study Bible*, commentary on John 9:25). The healed man demonstrated simple faith and refused to complicate his healing with theological speculation.

Daily Devotion

Any teacher at an elementary level could wax eloquent on the importance of this basic activity: ask simple questions and state simple facts. This is one of the first activities a child in school learns to do. When questioned, we learn to respond without embellishment, stating the unadulterated answer.

The healed man put this strategy into practice during the Pharisees' interrogation. Without pomp, circumstance, drama, embellishment, or fear, he stated the simple facts. He did not know much about the One who had healed him, nor could he speak to His level of purity or spirituality. He did not know how Jesus did what He did, but he did know he had been healed. Simple fact: he was blind earlier, but he was seeing now.

Let's follow his example because, more often than not, the simple truth speaks for itself. I once was (we can all fill in the blank), but thanks be to God, I'm not anymore.

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 2

John 9:26-29

²⁶ Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

²⁷ He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

²⁸ Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

²⁹ We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

Biblical Insight

The healed man asked the Pharisees, "Will ye also be his disciples?" We can read his question as sincere questioning because of the Pharisees' insistence or as playful taunting knowing that he now had the upper hand in this interchange. Unfortunately, the healed man's tone when asking this question is not recorded. By invoking their adherence to Moses, the Pharisees tried to appeal to their spiritual heritage and downplay the status of Jesus. However, their appeal to Moses was a distraction and a weak argument against the main point; the Pharisees still could not explain how the man born blind was miraculously seeing.

Daily Devotion

In II Samuel 12 the prophet Nathan appeared before King David, offering a fictional scenario. A man with several sheep of his own took the only sheep another man possessed. David was outraged, saying that the man who did this must surely pay. Nathan responded with his famous words: "Thou art the man" (II Samuel 12:7).

Nathan provided irrefutable evidence that David had done far worse than the man in the fictional scenario, forgetting all the Lord had done for him and taking the only wife of one of his men. The whole affair culminated in David committing murder to cover up his crime. When faced with hard evidence, David was forced to deal with what he'd done.

Hard evidence is difficult to argue with. It redirects our thinking, demands to be dealt with, and forces us to change whether change suits us or not. Facts are facts. They were for David. They were for the Pharisees. They are for us.



Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 3

John 9:30-34

³⁰ The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

³¹ Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

³² Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

³³ If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

³⁴ They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

Biblical Insight

Even though the Pharisees tried to portray the healed man as an uneducated sinner, his final challenge to the Pharisees demonstrated the foolishness of their criticisms. The Pharisees could not explain who Jesus was, despite the fact He healed blind eyes. The Pharisees had accused Jesus of being a sinner, but the healed man proclaimed that no sinner could do such a positive, miraculous work. Interestingly, this proclamation by the healed man reflected the same conclusion some of the Pharisees had already reached: "Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" (John 9:16).

Daily Devotion

An old English adage goes like this: "The proof is in the pudding." The *Oxford Dictionary* explains the whole phrase is actually "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." It means the real value of something can be judged only from practical experience or results, not from appearance or theory. How good pudding is cannot be judged from how it looks or how we might guess it would taste.

In order to know how good something tastes, we have to actually taste it. The taste test is the true test. The Pharisees were attempting to judge Jesus on looks and theories alone, something we must never do. Let us heed the psalmist's wise words: "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8).

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 4

John 9:35-38

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

³⁶ He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

³⁷ And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

³⁸ And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

Biblical Insight

Jesus, being all-knowing, surely knew about the healed man's resilience in the face of the Pharisees' questioning. Jesus provided not only an opportunity for healing, but also an opportunity for relationship. This interaction demonstrates an important example for modern believers in Christ to follow; just because the formerly blind man had received a miracle didn't mean he was in right relationship with God. The response of the publicly healed man in John 9 exists in stark contrast to the publicly healed man in John 5:1-16, who neither believed in nor worshiped Jesus (*Apostolic Study Bible*, commentary on John 9:37-38).

Daily Devotion

Suppose you married the love of your life. The date was set, the wedding planned, the vows exchanged, commemorative pictures taken, and marriage license signed. What if, after this, your spouse looked you in the eye and said, "All right. You are now on my insurance and have access to our joint bank account. I'll see you next Sunday at church."

That would be a disaster of a marriage. Marriage is so much more than a business transaction. It is companionship, experiences shared, time spent together. The life of a marriage is so much more than the surface benefits you receive.

Our journey with Jesus is like that. It's so much more than a soul saved and sins forgiven; it's companionship, help, and comfort of the Holy Spirit for the rest of our days. It's being in right relationship with the One who died for us so we could live.



Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 5

John 9:39–41

³⁹ And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

⁴⁰ And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

⁴¹ Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

Biblical Insight

At the end of the passage, the theme of blindness shifted from the healed man to the Pharisees, who were still spiritually blind. Jesus desires to open the eyes of those who sincerely seek Him. The only ones who remain spiritually blind are they who have chosen blindness by deceiving themselves into thinking they can see. Jesus had come into the world “for judgment”; therefore, His presence has caused some to choose blindness, making it clear who has accepted Him and who has not.

Daily Devotion

During a Sunday school object lesson, Kole was chosen as a volunteer. His task was to walk from one side of the room to another, blindfolded. He would navigate the treacherous terrain of desks, chairs, and other students by listening to his teacher’s voice.

After Kole successfully navigated all the obstacles by listening, he was given the opportunity to cross the room without his blindfold, to see how much easier it was. To his teacher’s surprise, Kole began stumbling and tripping over absolutely everything. Even though the blindfold was removed, Kole was still navigating the room without vision; he still had his eyes shut.

How often do we continue to navigate life in blindness, shutting our spiritual eyes willfully, when Jesus has already given us His vision? Follow the command of the writer of Hebrews: “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2).

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*
