



# April 19 – Jesus the Light

Weekly Reading – John 5-9 // Today's Passage – John 9:1-41

## Main Point

When the power of Jesus brings light to dark places, the healed have the opportunity to share what they've experienced with others.

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### MAIN PASSAGE – JOHN 9:1-41

#### *Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind*

[1] As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.

[2] And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

[3] Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

[4] We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.

[5] As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

[6] Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud

[7] and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

[8] The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?”

[9] Some said, “It is he.” Others said, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.”

[10] So they said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?”

[11] He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed and received my sight.”

[12] They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

[13] They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

[14] Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

[15] So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.”

[16] Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them.

[17] So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”

[18] The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until

they called the parents of the man who had received his sight

[19] and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”

[20] His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.

[21] But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.”

[22] (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

[23] Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

[24] So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.”

[25] He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

[26] They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

[27] He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?”

[28] And they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

[29] We know that God has spoken to

Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”

[30] The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.

[31] We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.

[32] Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

[33] If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” [34] They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out. (ESV)

[35] Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

[36] He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?”

[37] Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.”

[38] He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

[39] Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”

[40] Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?”

[41] Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains. (ESV)

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## Background

John 9 takes place within a Jewish cultural and theological framework where physical suffering—especially conditions present from birth—was often assumed to be the result of personal or generational sin (see Exodus 20:5). This assumption shaped how people viewed both the man born blind and the nature of God’s justice. The setting also highlights the significance of the Sabbath, as Jewish leaders had developed detailed regulations about what was permissible, including restrictions on healing. Jesus’ act of healing on the Sabbath directly challenges these man-made interpretations and exposes a deeper issue: the religious leaders’ inability to recognize God’s work when it did not fit their expectations. The contrast between physical blindness and spiritual blindness becomes central, as those who claim to see—particularly the Pharisees—demonstrate a hardened resistance to the truth, while the one physically blind comes to see both physically and spiritually.

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## Christ Connection

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## Life Group – The Flow

- 15 minutes – Conversation and relationship-building
- 15 minutes – Year of Prayer guided prayer time
- 5 minutes – Introduction (icebreaker, activity, or illustration)
- 35 minutes – Study and apply the Bible
- 5 minutes – Optional activity

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## Year of Prayer (15 min)

**Always pause and ask the Holy Spirit to guide your time of prayer.**

Father God, we come this morning to worship You. We acknowledge that You alone are Holy, Holy, Holy. You are Yahweh Nissi—the Lord our Banner—You go before us, able to overcome any foe. You are the Good Shepherd as we read in John 10:11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”

**Lift your words of adoration at this time. (pause)**

Psalms 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Now take a moment and let God search our heart. May we be quick to repent of any sin He brings to our minds. Thank you, Lord, that as we confess and repent, You are faithful to forgive and remember our sin no more. (pause)

We are desperate, God, for You to move in the hearts and lives of the people who will gather in our worship service today who’ve yet to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior. We pray in agreement that God would fill our Pastor with the Holy Spirit and bless him in the preaching of the sermon so that the Word of God would come “not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction” (1 Thessalonians 1:5). We pray for an anointing on the worship pastor and all others who will lead.

**In a moment, I'm going to ask you to speak the name of at least one person for whom you are praying because they've yet to receive Christ as their Lord and Savior. Say their names aloud now. (pause) Now offer a silent prayer for the barriers keeping them from coming to Christ to be removed.**

Lord, we know you've heard their names and the prayers lifted in faith, believing for their salvation. Forgive us when we doubt that You hear our prayers. We pray for every member of (name/designation) to have a heart for serving within the Body of (church name). Raise up committed men and women to serve in our children's, youth, . . . all areas of our church - individuals with a passion for discipling others. We will now take a few moments to allow you to offer up words of thanksgiving to the Father, remembering that God's mercies are new every morning.

**Lift up your words of thanksgiving to God at this time.**

We pray in agreement and faith, in the name of Jesus and for His glory.

Amen

**Do you have petitions or intercessions to share? If so, offer them up to the Lord now. (pause)**

Have group members start with those we are Asking God to Save:

- Friends
- Family
- Co-workers
- Others

Then have group members share Prayer Requests

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## Introduction (5 min)

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

John Newton, the man who wrote "Amazing Grace," didn't grow up as a pastor or a good man.

He was a slave trader. He made his living buying and selling human beings. And at the time, he didn't just tolerate it—he justified it. He believed he was fine.

Spiritually, he was completely blind and didn't even know it.

Then one night, in the middle of a violent storm at sea, his ship was being torn apart. Waves crashing, wood splitting; he was convinced he was about to die.

And in that moment, for the first time in a long time, he cried out:  
"Lord, have mercy on me."

That night didn't fix everything instantly, but it was the beginning of something. Over time, God began to open his eyes.

He started to see his sin.

He started to see the evil he had been part of.

He started to see God's grace.

And eventually, he left the slave trade, became a pastor, and spent the rest of his life pointing people to Jesus.

Years later, looking back on his life, he wrote these words:

*“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound... that saved a wretch like me. I once was blind, but now I see.”*

Ask the Group

- What do you think it means to be spiritually blind like that?
- Why is it so dangerous to be blind and not even realize it?

**Transition to Passage 1:**

In John 9, we’re going to see a man who was physically blind from birth – but the bigger story is about people who *thought* they could see, but were actually blind.

And just like John Newton, when Jesus opens someone’s eyes, it changes everything.

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## Study and Discuss (40 min)

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says about a particular topic.*

### Teaching Toolbox Tip

#### The “Go First” Method

*People are much more likely to share personally if the leader creates a safe and honest environment first.*

##### Step 1 – Lead by Example

Before asking a personal question, briefly share your own response.

Example:

“For me, one way Jesus has opened my eyes is...”

Keep it:

- short
- real
- not overly polished

##### Step 2 – Ask the Question

Then invite the group:

“What about you?”

or

“Where have you seen this in your own life?”

##### Step 3 – Create Space

Give a few seconds of silence. Don’t rush to fill it.

##### Step 4 – Affirm Responses

When someone shares, respond with:

“Thank you for sharing that.”

This builds trust for others to open up.

*Tip: You don’t have to share something dramatic—simple and honest responses often create the safest environment for others to follow*

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## Passage 1 - John 9:1-7

**READ THE PASSAGE - Have a volunteer read John 8:12 and John 9:1-12.**

John 8:12

*I Am the Light of the World*

[12] Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (ESV)

John 9:1-12

*Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind*

[1] As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.

[2] And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

[3] Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

[4] We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.

[5] As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

[6] Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud

[7] and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

[8] The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?"

[9] Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man."

[10] So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?"

[11] He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight."

[12] They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." (ESV)

### Commentary

**Leader Prep: Use the following commentary to prepare ahead of time. As you lead, feel free to summarize key insights rather than reading it word-for-word.**

John 8:12

Here we find the second of seven "I Am" passages in John's Gospel. Like water (ch. 4) and bread (ch. 6), light is necessary for life. And the Lord wasted no time in explaining that spiritual light comes to those who willingly follow Him. Since light is one of John's major themes, several assumptions arise from this verse. One is that the world needs light, something John has already told us in chapter 1. There are conditions for seeing and knowing the light—following Jesus. Finally, walking in the light can be permanent. The light of life can change a person so that he or she need never again walk in darkness.

Chapters five, six and seven of John's Gospel have picked up three major Old Testament wilderness reminders of how God dealt with His people: the comparison between manna and the bread of life in chapter 6; the comparison between water in the desert and the water of the

Holy Spirit in chapter 7; and here in chapter 8 a comparison with the pillar of fire which led the people through the wilderness and Jesus, the light of the world.

The Feast of Tabernacles was also known as the Feast of Lights because of the many ceremonies that involved various kinds of lighting. From the earliest verses of the first chapter in this Gospel, John has been fascinated with the link between light and life. Here, however, we do not have a statement about everyone participating in the light, but the exclusion of all who do not follow the true light.

Some interpreters have suggested that Jesus may have drawn His illustration from the great candlestick (Menorah) which cast its light over the room in which He was teaching. Everyone there knew the Menorah would be extinguished after the feast. But Jesus indicated that His light would remain forever.

### John 9:1-41

**9:1-41.** Jesus' identity as "the light of the world" was illustrated in His sixth and penultimate "sign" recorded in John's Gospel—the healing of a man born blind. As in chapter 5, Jesus healed on the Sabbath and thus suffered persecution from the Jewish leaders. But in contrast to the lame man of chapter 5, who showed no faith and reported Jesus to the authorities, the formerly blind man showed a progression of faith and ended up worshiping Jesus (9:38). Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their spiritual blindness (vv. 40-41).

**9:2.** The disciples' question reflected the assumption, customary in ancient Judaism, that suffering could be traced to specific sins (cp. Job 4:7). The underlying concern of this assumption is to clear God of wrongdoing against innocent people (Ex 20:5; Num 14:18; Dt 5:9). Yet the NT makes it clear that suffering is not always a direct result of a person's sin (Lk 13:2-3; 2Co 12:7; Gal 4:13). We should not speculate about the cause of a person's suffering but realize that even evil can contribute to the greater glory of God (esp. the crucifixion; cp. Jn 12:28,37-41; 17:1,5).

**9:7.** Jesus' sending the man to wash in the pool of Siloam is reminiscent of Elijah's sending Naaman to wash in the Jordan River (2Ki 5:10-13). The words which means "Sent" may echo the messianic reference in Gen 49:10 (cp. Isa 8:6). After 9:7, Jesus is not heard from again until verse 35.

## Guide Discussion

**Leader Note:** You do not need to cover every question. Use the questions that best help your group engage with the passage.

1. **Good for Students.** What changed in the man's life after he encountered Jesus?
2. **Discuss.** The man's life changed so much that people barely recognized him. What are some ways you've seen Jesus transform people's lives—including your own?
3. **Deeper Dive.** If this man's blindness points to life apart from Christ, what does this passage teach us about the true condition of people who don't know Him—and how should that shape the way we see others?

### Transition to Passage 2:

"So we've seen how Jesus brings light and completely changes this man's life—but not everyone responds the same way. Let's see what happens when others are confronted with what Jesus has done."

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## Passage 2 - John 9:13-34

**READ THE PASSAGE - Have a volunteer read John 9:13-34**

[13] They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

[14] Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

[15] So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

[16] Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.

[17] So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

[18] The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight

[19] and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

[20] His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.

[21] But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."

[22] (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

[23] Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

[24] So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."

[25] He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

[26] They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

[27] He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"

[28] And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. [29] We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from."

[30] The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes.

[31] We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.

[32] Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.

[33] If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." [34] They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out. (ESV)

### Commentary

**Leader Prep: Use the following commentary to prepare ahead of time. As you lead, feel free to summarize key insights rather than reading it word-for-word.**

**9:14.** The mention of the Sabbath here (cp. 5:9) resumes the earlier Sabbath controversy in chapter 5. Jesus had moistened clay with His saliva and then kneaded it to make mud. Kneading dough, and by analogy kneading clay, was included among the 39 classes of work forbidden on the Sabbath by Jewish rabbinic tradition ( m. Shabb.7:2).

**9:16.** The division among the Pharisees follows the differing ways of reasoning observed by the schools of Shammai and Hillel. The former argued from foundational principles (“anyone who breaks the law is a sinner”), the latter from the established facts of a case (“Jesus has performed a good work”).

**9:24.** The Pharisees’ exhortation to the healed man, Give glory to God, was a solemn warning for him to tell the truth (Jos 7:19; 2Ch 30:8; Jer 13:16).

**9:28.** The Pharisees’ claim of being Moses’ disciples was undermined by their failure to listen to the One of whom Moses wrote.

**9:29.** The Pharisees’ assertion, We know that God has spoken to Moses, harks back to God’s giving Moses the law at Mount Sinai (Ex 33:11; Num 12:2-8; cp. Jn 1:17).

**9:31-33.** The healed man’s major premise, that God doesn’t listen to sinners, is borne out by the OT (Ps 34:15; 66:20; 109:7; 145:19). His minor premise, that there was no precedent for opening the eyes of a person born blind, is also confirmed by the absence of such instances cited in OT or extrabiblical sources. The man’s conclusion, If this man were not from God, He wouldn’t be able to do anything (cp. 3:2), fit with the common Jewish view that miracles were performed in answer to prayer.

**9:34.** The Pharisees’ charge against the healed man may allude to Ps 51:5. Threw him out refers to expulsion from the synagogue. The way this was done suggests an impulsive action rather than excommunication based on a formal procedure.

### Guide Discussion

**Leader Note:** You do not need to cover every question. Use the questions that best help your group engage with the passage.

1. **Good for Students.** What did the man say when people kept questioning him about what happened?
2. **Discuss.** Why were the Pharisees unable to refute the man’s story, and what does that show about the power of personal experience with Jesus?
3. **Deeper Dive.** What makes you hesitant to share your experience with Jesus, and how does this man’s simple, honest testimony challenge that hesitation?

### Transition:

“Even as the opposition grows, the man’s confidence in what Jesus has done continues to grow. Now let’s look at what happens when he comes face to face with Jesus again.”

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## Passage 3 – John 9:35–41

**READ THE PASSAGE – Have a volunteer read John 9:35–41.**

[35] Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

[36] He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?”

[37] Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.”

[38] He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

[39] Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”

[40] Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?”

[41] Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains. (ESV)

### Commentary

**Leader Prep:** Use the following commentary to prepare ahead of time. As you lead, feel free to summarize key insights rather than reading it word-for-word.

**9:35–38.** Jesus seeks out the man after he has been cast out, showing His care for those who are rejected for their faith. Jesus reveals Himself as the Son of Man—a title connected to divine authority and messianic identity (Daniel 7:13–14). The man responds with belief and worship, demonstrating that his physical healing has led to true spiritual sight. This is the intended outcome of Jesus’ work—not just outward change, but inward transformation and faith.

**9:39–41.** Jesus explains the deeper meaning of the event: He has come so that those who are blind may see, and those who claim to see may become blind. This statement exposes the spiritual condition of the Pharisees. Their confidence in their own understanding keeps them from recognizing their need, and therefore they remain in their sin.

True sight begins with humility—acknowledging our need and receiving what Christ reveals. Giving sight to the righteous blind (Ps 146:8; Isa 29:18; 35:5; 42:7,18) and blinding unrighteous persons who can see (Isa 6:10; 42:19; Jer 5:21; cp. Mt 13:13–15; Jn 12:40) are common OT themes. Elsewhere, Jesus called the Pharisees “blind guides” (Mt 23:16; cp. 15:14; 23:26).

### Guide Discussion

**Leader Note:** You do not need to cover every question. Use the questions that best help your group engage with the passage.

1. **Good for Students.** How did the man respond when he realized who Jesus was?
  2. **Discuss.** What are some attitudes or mindsets that can keep people from truly “seeing” Jesus?
  3. **Deeper Dive.** What can cause us to become spiritually prideful, and how does remembering the grace of God and responding in worship help guard our hearts?
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# Optional Activity (5 min)

*Choose one of the following activities if time allows.*

## Option 1: Blindfold Challenge

**Transition from Passage 3:** “We’ve been talking about blindness and sight—let’s actually experience that for a moment.”

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Supplies:** Blindfold (or have someone close their eyes)

### Instructions

Ask for a volunteer.

Have them close their eyes (or use a blindfold)

Then give them a simple task:

- walk a few steps
- find a chair
- grab an object

**But:**

- no talking from the group at first

**Next:**

Have them do the task again, and now allow one person to guide them with their voice.

Watch how much easier it becomes.

### Debrief

**Ask:**

- What was that like when you couldn’t see?
- What made the difference in the second round?

Then connect it:

In John 9, the man was physically blind—but others were spiritually blind.  
What’s more dangerous—physical blindness or spiritual blindness?

**Ask final question:**

- What does it look like to actually *listen* to Jesus’ voice instead of trying to navigate life on our own?

## Option 2: Song Reflection – “Amazing Grace” by John Newton

**Transition from Passage 3:** “The man in this passage—and even John Newton—both experienced the same thing: they were blind, and then they could see. As we listen to this song, think about what that looks like in your own life.”

**Time:** 5–6 minutes

**Supplies:** None

### Instructions

Play the song as a group (or read a portion of the lyrics).

Then ask 1-2 of the questions below:

- What line from the song stood out to you the most, and why?
  - The song says, “*I once was blind, but now I see.*” How does that connect to the man’s story in John 9?
  - What would your version of “*I once was blind, but now I see*” be?
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## Final Takeaway and Prayer

After discussion concludes, read the takeaway statement:

**Jesus opens our eyes, and those who truly see Him can’t help but share Him.**

Either pray something like the guide below, or invite someone in the group to close in prayer.

Lord, thank You for opening our eyes to see who You are and what You’ve done for us. Help us to walk in the light, trust You fully, and boldly share our story so that others may come to know You. In Jesus’ name, amen.