

HOME CHURCH OR SMALL GROUP/CLASS QUESTIONS

1. **“Breaking the Ice” question:** (group facilitator)
2. **Check-ins:** What’s been happening in your week(s) since last meeting? Introduce yourself if new/new people in group, check in with each other
3. **Care:** Needs in the group; name needs and sentence prayers (short sentences/ open ended, not long-winded) at end
4. **Compassion:** What compassion work is the group planning? Are you inviting your neighbors to join?
5. **Group Announcements** (church-wide and group-only)
6. **Dig in:** Any reflections, discernments, disagreements from last week’s teaching (or since you last met)? Look at the Bible passage(s) again and read some of them out loud in the group (and other verses that may have been mentioned). What jumps out at you? (3)These questions are only guides. You may go other directions based on the Bible passage and teaching as well!

+ Close your eyes and imagine what it would be like to be completely blind. How would blindness change your work and relationships?

+ Have you ever been spooked by something in the darkness? Was there a need to be afraid?

+ Reread John 9 around the group. Take note of verses that leap out to you. Discuss.

+ How did each group in John 9 have doubts? What kinds of doubts do you see in the text and that may be implied by it? How did they respond to their doubts?

+ The physical blindness and healing is contrasted with spiritual blindness and our need for healing. What does spiritual blindness mean to you? What does it mean in John’s gospel?

“The synagogue was the focus of the whole community. If you were put out of it, you’d probably be better off leaving the area altogether. The man’s parents are afraid, because they know the threat against anyone saying Jesus is the Messiah. They are anxious for their social standing, their livelihood, perhaps their lives” (Wright).

+ How does their response reflect their fear?

+ What fears have you had about speaking plainly regarding your beliefs in Jesus because of social consequences?

+ Throughout this chapter, faith is developing and a journey is happening in the blind man. What does this look like? What about the religious leaders’/pharisees’ spiritual journey?

+ If you are a Christian, sticking to the simple truth of what Jesus has done for you in the face of mockery, opposition, and even persecution is costly. But denying it is also costly. What must you do to stick with “I used to be blind, but now I can see”?

7. **End and Homework:** Final questions, prayer huddles for personal requests. Consider breaking into small groups (huddles) of 2-4, by gender, if large enough.

PILGRIM
CHURCH

GET IN THE MUD

JOHN 9: JESUS + MUD = SIGHT

Tough Mudder is a series of hardcore 10-12 mile obstacle race - mud run events designed by British Special Forces to challenge the toughest of the tough.

BIG IDEA: Healing spiritual sight is the greater miracle. Jesus’ works in mud (the messiness of life) to bring us sight.

SECONDARY: Sin and physical disease

BIG QUESTION: What mud does Jesus need to put on my eyes so that I might see spiritual truths and reality of who he is?

Swartley, 245. Early catacomb art depicts the stories of the Samaritan woman (John 4), the healed paralytic (Ch. 5), and the blind man (ch. 9) to exemplify conversion and baptism. Water is the agent of regeneration. At least as early as the third century John 9 was read aloud as the third test in the examination preparing candidates for baptism, usually celebrated on Easter Sunday (Burge 2000: 279). The reading climaxes with the emphatic I do believe (9.38). The candidate’s confession witnesses to the Christian faith.

Outline (Swartley) :

1-5: Jesus and His disciples discuss why the man is blind, “who sinned?”

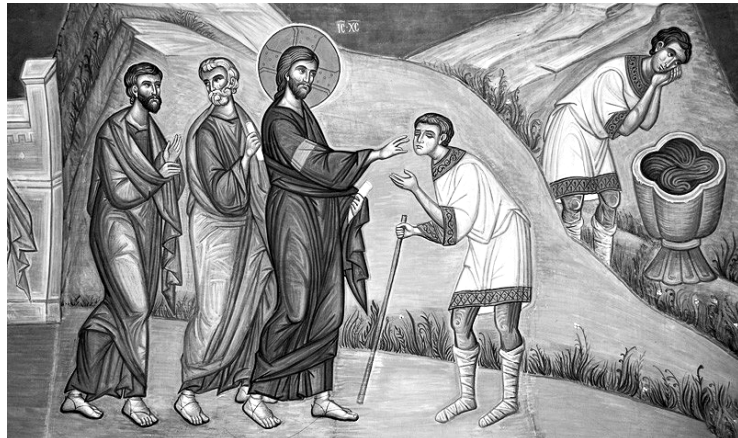
6-7: Jesus heals the blind man

8-17: The neighbours and pharisees quiz the blind man

18-23: Religious powerbrokers interrogate the blind man’s parents

24-34: “They” grill the blind man a second time: Jesus “a sinner”?

35-39: Jesus leads the blind man to spiritual sight



40-41: Jesus and the pharisees on blindness: “Your sin remains”



Takes Outs:

ACT I: JESUS' SEVEN SIGNS AND HIS REJECTION BY THE JEWS (1:19-12:50)	
Transitional sections:	Final sign, week (11:1-12:50)
Major literary units or cycles:	Conclusion of public ministry (chs. 11-12): Jesus withdraws (11:53-54)
Inclusion markers (related to signs):	Judean sign (11: 1-44; 12:1-2, 9-11, 17-18)
	The Baptist (10: 40-42)
	Festival cycle (chs. 5-10): Increased hostility, elusive movements
	Judean sign (5:1-15)
	Galilean and Judean signs (chs. 6; 9)
	Moment of major crisis (6:60-71)
	Cana sign (4:46-54)
	Ministry cycle (chs. 2-4): various responses, elusive language
	Cana sign (2:1-11)
	Judean sign (2:13-22)
	First week, sign (1:19-2:11)
	Start of public ministry (1:19-51)
	The Baptist (1:19-34)
Midpoint crisis:	