





One Thing I Know

John 9

Life of Jesus: Miracles

The Gospel of John starts out showing that Jesus is Word of God, and that Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God. The whole gospel has a theme of the deity of Jesus, of Jesus as God.

Jesus is walking and he passes a man who has been blind since he was born.

We see in John 9:8 that he has been a beggar.

Jesus's disciples are with him, and they ask him who sinned to make this man blind.

They are trying to put a reason to why this man was born blind. It was common in the culture of the day to completely attribute sickness only to sin. So they ask, who sinned? Did he sin, or his parents? If he was born blind, would this mean that he had sinned before he was born?

Jesus doesn't really answer the question completely. He just says it was neither. It wasn't the man that sinned or his parents. But then he says that the works of God will be manifest in him. Now to clarify, we know that the parents and the man were sinners. (Romans 3:23) But it was not those sins that made this man blind.

Some people have used this to say that God made this man sick just so he would be healed to bring glory to God. But this is inconsistent with scripture. If God had made this man blind, it would be going against God to bring healing to him. Deuteronomy 28:28 says that blindness is a curse. Jesus came to redeem us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13). Acts 10:38 says that Jesus came to do good, and healing those who were oppressed of the devil.

Basically Jesus was saying, regardless of the cause, the works of God, or the power of God, would be seen in him.

The man was blind, not deaf. Imagine that he hears Jesus say this. He must have been expectant; hearing that something was about to happen.

Next Jesus does a strange thing. He spits on the ground, and makes clay, or mud, out of the dirt and spit. He spreads the clay on the man's eyes, then he tells the man to go wash in the pool of Siloam. This word Siloam means 'sent.'

The pool of Siloam was a manmade body of water that was fed by the Gihon spring. It is believed that this is the water source was a result of a series of tunnels and conduits built by King Hezekiah in 2 Kings 20:20, approximately 700 years before Christ. Some believe that it was used for purification at the time of Christ.

This man would have to walk about half a mile, or almost 1 kilometer to reach the pool of Siloam. He had mud all over his face, so it would have been an unusual sight.

Discuss: How he would have possibly got there?

He was blind; what would this have looked like? Did he have help?

Did he know how to get there? Did someone take him? Maybe one of the disciples walked with him?

All we actually know is that he DID get there, he washed the clay / mud off, and he could see.





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The people who had lived around him saw him and said, "Isn't this the man who was blind who sat and begged?" And some people said it was him, and others said it is like him, but he said, it is me.

This man was not only born blind, but it seems likely that he was born without eyes. This could be how they knew without a doubt that he was blind at birth, and also explain why people did not recognize him after he was healed; why they were astonished and reacted to it so strongly. This could help explain why Jesus made the clay.

People asked him, how were your eyes opened?

He told them that a man named Jesus made some clay, put it on his eyes, and told him to go wash. He went, he washed, and now he can see.

Then they asked where Jesus was, and the man did not know. Notice that Jesus did not stay to see what happened; he had already gone on his way.

The people took the man to the Pharisees. This man has just had the most amazing day of his entire life. But the people are acting as if he has done something wrong.

***These things happened on the Sabbath day.**

Now, the Pharisees asked him how he received his sight. Again, he tells them the story. Jesus put clay on his eyes, he washed them, and now he can see.

Discuss: Shouldn't the Pharisees be happy for this man? Are they happy for this man?

At this point, the Pharisees get into a disagreement. Some of them said that Jesus was not of God because he did not keep the Sabbath. They thought that when he made the clay, that was considered work, and he broke the Sabbath. Discuss.

But the other Pharisees said, how can someone who is a sinner do such miracles? This seems to be an absolutely amazing event, which is why many believe that he had no eyes. The Pharisees were divided over this issue.

Then the Pharisees asked the man what he thought about Jesus. He told them he thought Jesus was a prophet. What would you say?

But the Jews did not believe that this man used to be blind. They went to talk to his parents.

They asked the parents, is this your son? You say he was born blind? How can he now see?

The man was obviously an adult. We do not know his age, but his parents were still living.

The parents said, "**Yes, this is our son. We know this is our son. He was born blind. But, we don't know how he can see.**"

They weren't there when it happened. They said, "He's of age," meaning, he's grown, ask him.





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John gives us some insight into the situation. The parents were afraid of getting kicked out of the synagogue (basically liked getting kicked out of church.) The Jews had already said that if anyone confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, they would be put out of the synagogue. The parents did not want to risk this and seemed more concerned about what the Pharisees think than the miraculous healing of their son's eyes.

Being "put out of the synagogue" did not just mean you could not come to synagogue (church).

This was a big deal. It would be saying that you were a heretic, or a pagan. You would be shunned and banned.

Discuss: Talk about this. What would this look like? What would this mean?

You would be hated. You would be cut off from your family. You could lose your job.

If you had a business, people would stop shopping at your store, or stop doing business with you. This would affect you financially and socially.

And in some cases there could be extreme persecution or even death.

The Jews went back to the man who had been healed. It almost appears to be like a court trial; he is being called back again and asking to give witness.

The Jews told the man he needed to give God the praise, because they said they knew that Jesus was a sinner. But the man responded,

"Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. *One thing I know is that I was blind, and now I see.*"

They continued with their questioning, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" The man now seems to be exasperated with them. He says, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to be his disciples?"

This made them very angry. They began cursing the blind man and insulting him. They said, "You are his disciple! But we are disciples of Moses." They said, We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this guy, we do not know where he came from.

The man begins defending Jesus. He said, "This is an amazing thing. You don't know where he is from, but he opened my eyes." He tells them if any man is a worshipper of God, then God hears him.

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

Discuss: Discuss what this would have been like.

This man has just had the biggest thing in his life happen to him, and people are angry at him.

He seems to have some knowledge of the scriptures.

He knows that there has not been a documented case like this before.





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Then he says, "If this man were not of God, he could do nothing."

This man, who was blind, can now see spiritually, as well as physically. He is no longer blind to the self-righteous doctrines of the Pharisees, and he sees how they are trying to make this about whether or not the law was obeyed by their interpretation and are failing to see the greater miracle here. The eyes of the Pharisees are blinded to the compassion of Jesus, and the heart of the law which includes doing good on the Sabbath. (Mark 3:4; Luke 6:9)

Now, the Pharisees are very angry. They tell the man that he was born in sins; they believe he sinned greatly since he was born blind. They are insulted that he is correcting them and challenging their theology; then they cast him out of the synagogue.

Discuss: What would his life be like as a blind man?

It might have been that being cast out of the synagogue was not a significant change in his life.

According to the culture of the day, he had been living as an outcast.

As a blind man, he was a beggar, and would have been living outside of the city.

Jesus heard that they cast the man out of the synagogue and he went and found him. He asked the man if he believed on the Son of God. The man asked who he was, so that he might believe on him.

Jesus told the man he had seen Him, and he had been talking with Him. The man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Jesus.

Then Jesus said,

"I came into this world for judgment; that those which do not see might see, and those who see might be made blind."

Some of the Pharisees were with him, and they heard him say this. They asked him, "Are we blind also?"

Jesus responds by telling the Pharisees that if they were blind, they would have no sin. They would have been oblivious and therefore not held accountable. (Romans 5:13) But since they said they could see, their sin remains.

"Therefore to him that knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it is sin." James 4:17



Jesus in the Story



Until Jesus came into the earth, there is not a record of anyone who was blind receiving their sight.

However, it was prophesied that the Messiah would restore sight and open the eyes of the blind.

Psalm 146:8; Isaiah 29:18; 35:5; 42:7, 16, 18; 43:8.

The recurring theme of the gospel of John is to illustrate that Jesus is God. There are theories about why Jesus used spit to make clay, or mud, to put on this man's eyes. The Lord formed man out of the ground. (Genesis 2:7)

Isaiah 64:8 refers to the Lord as the potter, and us as the clay.

Jesus could have been using this clay to re-create the man's eyes; also showing Jesus as God, or Creator.

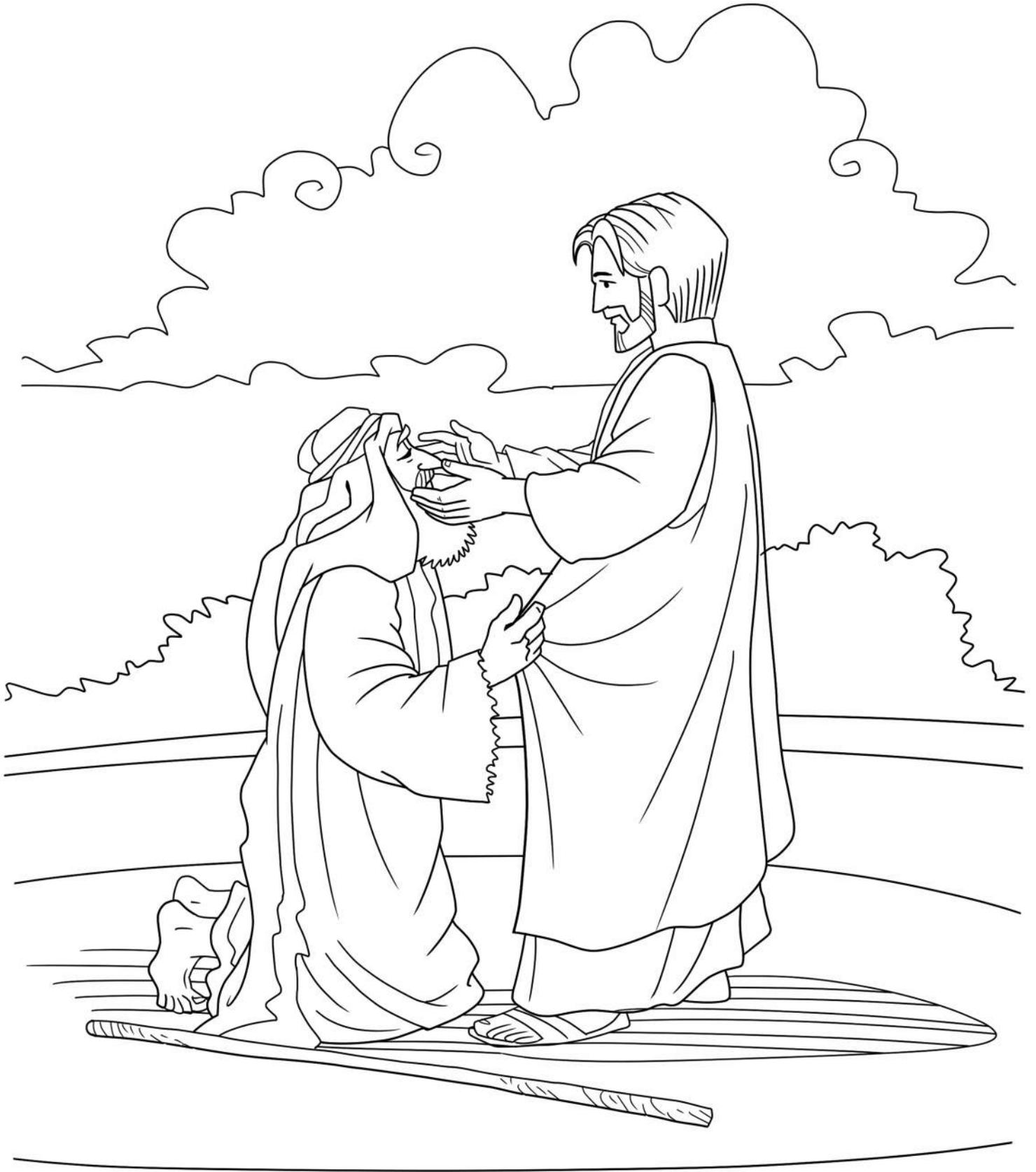
Job 10:9, 33:6; 45:9; Jeremiah 18:6; Lamentations 4:2

The irony is that the man's eyes were opened to the hypocrisy of the Pharisees as well. They were seemingly blind, but Jesus calls them out. He tells them that if they were truly blind, they would be without sin. But they say that they see, and their sin remains.

The Pharisees were upset because Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath. They were still making this all about what they believed to be the letter of the law; but completely missing the intent of the heart of the law. The heart of the law was always about people; doing good to others and treating them the way you would want to be treated.

Matthew 7:12; Matthew 15:3; Matthew 22:36-40; Mark 12:28-31; John 13:34-35; John 15:12





Lesson Questions & Memory Verses

17. One Thing I Know

Read Isaiah 64:8

1. What is a potter?
2. Who is the potter?
3. What are we compared to in this verse?
4. What does it say about God's work?

Isaiah 42:16

And I will bring the blind by the way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, and not forsake them.

18. If You Believe

1. What does Mark 9:23 say is possible to those who believe?
2. John 12:44 says if you believe on Jesus you actually believe on who?
3. Luke 8:12 says if they believe they would be?

John 20:30-31

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing you may have life in His name.

19. Giving Thanks

1. When does Ephesians 5:20 say that we should give thanks?
2. Who should we give thanks to?
3. Colossians 3:17 says that we should do everything in the name of Jesus and then give what to God?

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

20. Have Mercy

1. Where did God meet with people? (Exodus 25:22; 30:6)
2. When you walk with Jesus, what will follow you? (Psalm 23:6)
3. What surrounds you when you trust in the Lord? (Psalm 32:10)

Psalm 147:11

The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his mercy.

