



NOW I SEE

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U7# 2 1st-3rd Grade • Jan.28, 2024

Concept

Jesus gives spiritual sight to those who believe in Him.

Goal

Students will learn that those who believe Christ receive spiritual sight. They will be encouraged to believe and follow Christ so they can see more and more like He does.

Passage

John 9:13-41

Key Verse: "... One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see." John 9:25

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>3 blindfolds</i> • <i>3 paper grocery bags, each w/a pine cone, pencil, clothespin, craft pompom, sandpaper (or other various items for the kids to identify)</i> <p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppets from Activity Station <p>Optional Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Read Aloud Bible Stories Vol. 1, Ella K. Lindvall</i> 	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Paper lunch bags, 1/student</i> • <i>Small paper plates, 1/student</i> • Markers • Yarn • <i>Black construction paper (for "sunglasses"), 5-6 sheets/class</i> • <i>Masking tape</i> • Braille cards, 1/student • Pencils, 1/student

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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In the lesson this week we see another example of the growing hostility toward Christ. As the shadow of the cross loomed, Jesus did not shy away from acts that would further polarize the unbelievers and the believers. By healing the blind man, Jesus agitated further, but He also let His “light” shine into the dark world around Him for anyone who would see.

We will see, however, that the Pharisees, villagers and even the man’s parents were unwilling to accept God’s gift of healing because doing so would make their spiritual blindness visible.

Jesus healed this man, not because of his faith but to illustrate for the disciples that Jesus was sent to show God’s power and grace. Jesus gave this man directions and sent him to wash. By doing what he was commanded, the man developed faith in Jesus. His faith not only withstood the inquiry of the Pharisees, villagers and his parents but also was strengthened by their opposition. The opposition at the same time became more entrenched in doubt the more they focused on Jesus’ lack of credentials, the uniqueness of the healing, and the fact that Jesus worked on the Sabbath. When faced with the perfect logic of the healed man in vs.30 - 33, the Pharisees sent him away. If they saw him no more, they could ignore their blindness to the truth they had witnessed. In vs. 32, the healed man points out that no one ever healed someone blind from birth. It was evident for all to see that Jesus had God’s authority. Even the Pharisees could see that this was from God and His ways did not match theirs. Only denial of the truth could explain their blindness to Jesus’ obvious act of power.

This is why Jesus said He came “for judgment” in verse 39. He came to expose wrong thinking about God and offer forgiveness based on a humble response. The man born blind (like us) chose to see, while the Pharisees who say “We see” (vs. 41) remained blind to their need for God’s forgiveness. They refused to recognize the forgiveness that is offered only through the death of the Messiah.

In Jewish culture, suffering was directly attributed to actions unfavorable to God. Those in hardship were assumed to be in sin or suffering the effects of their “father’s sins (Lev. 6:39,40; Ps. 9:8; Is. 65:7; Jer. 2:18; Dan. 9:16). The laws of purification could perhaps cleanse such people but suffering was viewed as failure to make the effort or to be the result of unforgivable sin. No wonder the man blind from birth was despised and ignored. People presumed that only a horrible sin could be responsible for blindness from birth. No one interested in staying on the right side of the legalistic Pharisees would interfere with God’s punishment by helping the man.” [1]

[1] The Life & Times of Jesus the Messiah, Edersheim, 1993, Hendrickson Publishers, p. 604.

Activity stations

- **Do You See?**
 - **Instructions:** Have blindfolds available so students can experiment with being “blind.” Have them walk three steps, turn around three times and walk back three steps. Do they end up at the same place they started? This illustrates how much we depend on sight to orient ourselves. Have them think of tasks they can try that would be difficult if they can't see.
- **Do You See?**
 - **Instructions:** As students sit at a table have them try to identify the objects by feeling them without looking in the bag. (Blindfolds can be used.)
- **Craft – Puppets to be used for the Lesson**
 - **Instructions:** Let students pick which person they want to make a puppet of (Jesus, Blind Man, or Pharisee). Make faces, hair, etc., on the paper plates, students could make a pair of sunglasses from paper for the blind man. Tape the plate to the bottom of the paper bag (or staple) to make a flap for a puppet. Tell the children that the puppets will be used later and ask if any would like to be in the skit.
- **Craft – Braille Card**
 - **Instructions:** Pass out a pencil and a card with Braille dots to each student. Instruct the students to place their cards with the words face down on the carpeted floor and poke through the dots with their pencil. The message can be felt with their fingers when they turn the card over. Use the following as an introduction to the craft. Did you know that blind people can read? They use a system called Braille. Raised dots make the letters that are read by feeling with the fingers. Today we are going to learn about a man who was born blind. We're going to make a Braille card of the key verse, "... One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see" (John 9:25), so a blind person can read it.

When you came in to class, how many of you tried to identify objects while you were blindfolded? Was it difficult to figure out what some of the items were? It is definitely easier to know what something is when you can see it, isn't it? Can you imagine what it would be like to be blind? If you had never been able to see, you wouldn't know what people meant when they talked about flowers or stars or mountains or the ocean. If you were blind you wouldn't know what your mother or father or friends looked like. Today we are going to learn about a man who had always been blind. One day Jesus saw him and decided to heal him.

Let's get our puppets and have a puppet show to learn about what happened with this blind man.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Drama - "Now I see... and You Don't" performed by the class

Instructions: You will need three puppeteers, a teacher to narrate, a teacher to prompt the audience (Pharisees), and a teacher to prompt the puppeteers. Have the audience (Pharisees) be seated together while the puppeteers wait off to the side. As the narrator tells the story, the puppeteers will listen for their puppet name, step to the center and move their puppet as the narrator speaks the puppet's line.

Narrator: For ages people have misunderstood many things about God. One of the biggest misunderstandings is that people think they can make a list of good rules to follow and God will be happy with that. This is what the Pharisees did. This is what many people do today. But God doesn't want us to make up our own list of rules to follow. He wants us to ask Him to forgive our sins, to talk with Him, and love Him and other people. Jesus liked to teach people about God. It made Him angry when people like the Pharisees acted like they had all the answers and were good enough to get to heaven without asking for forgiveness. Jesus called the Pharisees "hypocrites." A hypocrite pretends to believe one way, but acts a different way. For example, the Pharisees said they knew and loved God, but their actions showed they didn't. Instead of loving people they made and followed their rules. So they were blind to God's truth.

One day Jesus saw a way to teach his disciples about God. He was walking down the street in Jerusalem and saw a blind man. He decided to heal this man. He put clay on the man's eyes and told him to wash off the clay in the Pool of Siloam. The man did as Jesus said and was healed. The man's neighbors didn't know what to think when they saw that the blind man was healed. They decided to take him to the Pharisees and let them figure it out. After all, they were the experts about God, weren't they?

Now it was on the Sabbath that Jesus healed the blind man. Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath day. The Sabbath is the day of the week that the Jewish people were to rest and worship God. Because this was supposed to be a day of rest, and they decided that healing isn't resting, it was against the Pharisees' religious rules to heal anyone on the Sabbath.

The **Pharisees** said to the blind man, "How did you get your sight back?"

The **blind man** replied, "Jesus put clay on my eyes, I washed it off, and now I see."

The **Pharisees** said, "This Jesus can't be from God because he doesn't keep the Sabbath."

Learning Activity#1 Continued

The **blind man** said, “Well I think Jesus must be someone special because he opened my eyes.”

The Pharisees didn’t believe the blind man so they asked his parents the same questions. The blind man’s parents were afraid to answer because the Pharisees had made a new rule that anyone who said Jesus was the Christ would be kicked out of the Jewish synagogue. For this reason his parents told the Pharisees that their son was old enough to answer their questions himself.

So the **Pharisees** asked the man who had been blind again: “Tell us the truth; this man Jesus is a sinner.”

The **man who had been blind** replied, “All I know is that I used to be blind, and now I see.”

The **Pharisees** asked him again, “Well, how did He heal your eyes?”

The **blind man** said, “I told you already. Why do you ask me again? Do you want to become his disciples too?”

This made the Pharisees angry. The **Pharisees** replied, “We are disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke through Moses. Who knows where Jesus is from?!”

The **man who had been blind** said, “No one has ever heard of anyone healing a blind man. If Jesus wasn’t from God He couldn’t have done it.”

This made the **Pharisees** really mad and they all said, “What do you know? Get out of here!!” And they stomped off in anger.

Jesus found the blind man and said, “Do you believe in Christ?”

The **blind man** said, “I would believe in Him if I knew who He was.”

Jesus said, “I am Christ, the Son of God.”

The **blind man** said, “Lord, I believe in you.”

—The End—

Transition

Let’s give our puppeteers a round of applause! Let’s sit here a moment longer and talk about what happened to that blind man.

Well, not only was this amazing to the man, but his neighbors were so amazed that they took him to the Pharisees. Were the Pharisees amazed and really excited that the man could finally see? No! The Pharisees were mad because Jesus broke one of their rules and healed the man on the Sabbath, the day of rest.

Even though the Pharisees had proof that Jesus had healed a blind man, they wouldn't believe Jesus. In fact, the Pharisees had decided that anyone who said Jesus was Christ, or the Messiah, would not be allowed in their church. But Jesus did things they couldn't explain, so they couldn't just ignore him. After all, when they talked with the blind man and told him that they knew Jesus was a sinner, he answered with our key verse, "... one thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see" (John 9:25). So they grew to hate him. Do you think Jesus knew they hated him? Yes, he did. Do you think he was afraid of them? No, he kept right on doing miracles and teaching because he wanted people to know his love and the power of God. Jesus knew that his teaching made a lot of people really mad at him, but he never stopped teaching the truth. Eventually the people got so angry that they killed him. Today there are still many people who don't believe in God or Jesus.

Before the skit we tried to imagine what it would be like to be blind. What happened to the blind man in the puppet show? (Jesus healed him.) After being blind all his life, the man was able to see. He saw what people meant when they talked about flowers or stars or mountains or the ocean. And he knew what his parents and friends looked like. Can you imagine how exciting that would be, having lived a whole life in darkness and then in one moment you are able to see everything?!

Good News

We all know how dangerous it can be to be physically blind. A blind person can bump into things, could walk off a cliff or out in front of a speeding car. But do you know that it is even more dangerous to be spiritually blind? The bad news is that the Bible tells us that everyone is born spiritually blind. We are all born sinful and selfish and separated from God. We don't understand anything about God or the way He thinks. We don't want to follow Him because we want to have our own way. God loves us and wants us to know Him and follow Him because that is always what is best for us. He shows us what He is like and that He wants to be our friend. He loves us so much that He sent Jesus to earth to take the punishment we deserve for our sins. While Jesus was on earth the people who chose to believe in Him received spiritual sight, while those who chose not to believe in Him remained spiritually blind. It is the same with us. If we choose to believe Jesus we become God's children and we have the Holy Spirit in us to give us spiritual sight and to help us love, trust and follow God.

Lesson Continued

The Holy Spirit helps us understand what the Bible says and how God thinks. We learn to “see” the way God sees. We each have a choice to make, just like the blind man and the Pharisees. We have to decide if we believe Him or not. If we don’t believe Him we will never choose to ask Jesus to forgive our sins and we will be separated from God forever. If you believe Jesus died for your sins, but have never told God that you believe He loves you and wants to forgive your sins, you can do that as we pray. You can tell Him that you want Him to forgive you. Then, like the blind man, you will be able to say, “... One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see” (John 9:25).

Transition

Let’s get into small groups to talk about this and to pray.

Learning Activity# 2 Sm. Groups

- What is the key verse? Who was the blind man answering when he said that? What was the question the Pharisees asked him? What do you think the man meant?
- Who remembers why Jesus called the Pharisees “hypocrites”? (Said they loved God, but didn’t act like it. It was more important to them that Jesus didn’t rest on the Sabbath than that He healed a blind man.)
- Can you think of some things you say you believe, but don’t act that way? Are you ever more worried about rule-keeping or getting what you want than being kind? How about when you say you love your mom, but you won’t help her when she asks?
- Do you know when you are being a hypocrite? What can you do when you know you are being a hypocrite, but want to spiritually see? (Choice to listen to God or not determines our spiritual sight / blindness.)

Mission Prayer: Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign.

Let’s pray and thank God that Jesus loves us so much that He was willing to come to this earth to show us His love. And thank Him that He showed us love and forgiveness rather than make us live by rules like the Pharisees

Transition

Let’s play a game called blind man’s bluff.

Learning Activity# 3 Lg. Group

Game - Blind Man’s Bluff

Instructions: Begin this game by having the players introduce themselves to each other. Make sure that every player knows every other player’s name. One player is blindfolded, turned around three times and told to move until he runs into another player. The rest of the players will move around while the player is turning around, but must stand in place while the blind player moves toward them. When the blind man runs into another player he must identify the name of the player. He can ask others for clues or go on to someone else. The one he identifies is the next blind man.

Optional Activity

Story – “The Man Who Couldn’t See,” Read Aloud Bible Stories Vol. 1, Ella K. Lindvall, p. 35.

Instructions: Read the story, but don’t use the questions at the end.

Braille Alphabet Chart

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k
⠁	⠃	⠉	⠙	⠑	⠋	⠗	⠈	⠊	⠛	⠅
l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v
⠇	⠍	⠝	⠕	⠏	⠑	⠞	⠎	⠄	⠥	⠦
w	x	y	z							
⠪	⠭	⠽	⠵							

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N O W I S E E