

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

John 9

Opening

- Gathering: Do bad things happen to us as punishment for the bad things we do? If so, what might the World Trade Center victims have done to deserve such punishment?
- Today's Focus: Jesus healed a man born blind to show that God can reveal His glory through our troubles.
- Key Verses: *"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." John 9:3*
- Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped Him. John 9:38*

Opening Prayer

Lesson

In the Temple Among Friends (*John 8*)

- Where is Jesus in John 8? = Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2)
John 8:1-2 = Teaching in the temple in Jerusalem, A half-year before His final trip
- Was it easy for Jesus to teach in the temple without challenge?
John 8:3-6 = No, the Jewish leaders were trying to trick and discredit Him before the people
- Were the leaders just trying to test Him or were they already trying to get rid of Him?
John 7:32 = They were already trying to arrest Him to get rid of Him
- Why were they unable to arrest Him?
John 7:30 = *His time had not yet come*

The Tension Mounts (*John 8:12-59*)

- Unable to trap Jesus in any way, what tactics did the Jewish leaders resort to?
John 8:48 = They started calling Him names
- How did Jesus respond to this name calling?
John 8:49-51 = He said He was pointing people to the Father and the Way to life
- How did the Jews respond to Jesus' claim to have the Way to eternal life?
John 8:52-53 = Even the most righteous of all time weren't good enough, how are you better?
- How did Jesus basically say that He was the fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham?
John 8:54-56 = *Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing My day; he saw it and was glad*
- How did Jesus drive this claim even stronger after the Jews took this as proof that He was crazy?
John 8:57-58 = Before Abraham was born, I am!
- How would the Jews interpret what Jesus said?
Exodus 3:13-14 = He was claiming to be God
- How did the Jewish leaders respond to Jesus claiming to be God? = Leviticus - Punish by stoning
John 8:59 (Leviticus 24:16) = They tried to kill Him immediately for blasphemy

Healing the Blind (*John 9:1*)

- What did Jesus and His disciples see as they walked away from the temple?
John 9:1 = A man blind from birth, Only thing such people could do was beg on the street
- Notes: This is the only miracle in the gospels where the sufferer was afflicted from birth
Jesus gave sight to the blind more than any other type of miracle (Isaiah 29:18; 35:5; 42:7)

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

Page 2

An Opportunity for Teaching (*John 9:2*)

How did this man create an opportunity for Jesus to teach?

John 9:2 = Disciples asked what sin had caused this man's blindness

Note: Some rabbis taught that man can sin in the womb, or even in a pre-existent state

Why did the disciples believe his blindness was the result of some horrible sin?

Job 8:1-4 = Job's friends spoke common belief that bad things are punishment for sins

Note: Not everything in the Bible is true, but everything is true to what God wanted written

Sins of the Parents (*Exodus 34:7*)

Why did rabbis teach that you could be punished for the sins of your parents?

Exodus 34:4-7 = God said He would punish the guilty to the 4th generation

What fuller meaning do we get of this from the original context? = Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:4-5 = He will punish those who hate Him to the 3rd and 4th generation

What is the important contrast given in the next verse?

Exodus 20:6 = He will show love to 1000 generations of those who love Him

What is an example of God punishing those who hate Him to the 4th generation?

Numbers 16:31-33 = Earth swallowed households of those who rebelled against God's leader

Note: Households usually consisted of 3, sometimes 4, generations

What is another way that the sin of parents can affect their children and later generations?

Matthew 18:6 = Parent's acceptance of evil often results in descendants accepting evil

Does sinning only affect the sinner, or does it affect others as well?

Notice the many aspects of society that have resulted from past generations going astray

What are some examples of God blessing those who love Him to 1000 generations?

Genesis 17:5-7 = God promised to bless Abraham and his descendants forever

2 Samuel 7:11c-13, 16 = God promised David's dynasty would last forever

What is another way that the faithfulness of parents can affect their children and later generations?

Deuteronomy 4:9 = Faithful parents teach God's ways to their children and grandkids

The Wages of Sin (*Ezekiel 18*)

Had anyone before Jesus challenged the teaching that children are punished for their parents' sins?

Job 21:19 = Job did; Probably around the time of the judges

Did anyone else address the situation more directly?

Ezekiel 18:1-4 = God spoke through Ezekiel that their understanding was wrong

What did God say was the correct understanding of the result of sin?

Ezekiel 18:19-20 = The soul who sins is the one who will die

How did Paul contrast the results of living in sin versus living in the righteousness of faith?

Romans 6:23 = *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus*

Who Sinned? (*John 9:3*)

How did Jesus answer the question of who sinned?

John 9:3 = Neither, the man is blind to show God's power

Does God sometimes allow bad things to happen so His glory will show through?

John 11:1, 4, 11, 43-44 = Lazarus died so Jesus could raise him

Note: Heavy publicity from this miracle led Jewish leaders to find a way to get rid of Jesus

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

Page 3

Who Knows the Cause? (*Job*)

What did Job's friends believe was the cause of his disasters?

Job 36:5-12 = He must have sinned horribly and strongly needs repentance

Were the friends correct?

Job 42:7 = No

Although Job never learned the reason, why had these things happened to him?

Job 2:2-6 = To reveal his faithfulness, even through deep adversity

How should we respond when we have trouble understanding why bad things happen to good people?

Job 26:14 = Recognize with Job that we can barely begin to understand His great ways

The Light of the World (*John 9:4-5*)

How did Jesus explain to His disciples that giving God's vision to this man was part of His calling?

John 9:4-5 = While He was in the world, He was to be the light of the world

How is Jesus the light of the world?

John 8:12 = He brings people out of the darkness of sin into the light of life

If Jesus is the light of life, why don't all people fly to Him like June bugs on a window screen?

John 3:19-20 = *Men loved darkness instead of light* - More like roaches

Why do men love the darkness and hate the light?

Ephesians 5:11-14 = The light exposes everything, including all evil deeds

How should we conduct ourselves when living in the light of the Lord?

Ephesians 5:8-10 = As children of light, bearing the fruit of light that pleases the Lord

Why is it important to bear the fruit of the light?

Matthew 5:14-16 = So others can see our light and praise our Father in heaven

See the Faith (*John 9:6-7*)

How did Jesus deal with the man's blindness?

John 9:6 = Made mud with spit and rubbed it in the man's eyes

Was this Jesus' magical way to repair a bad eye? Maybe a first century radial keratotomy?

Matthew 9:27-31 = The magic was faith, not the method

How did Jesus call upon the man's faith to complete the healing?

John 9:7 = He sent him with instructions and he went

Did Jesus' approach help people focus on the message rather than the method?

John 9:10, 15, 19, 26 = Everyone wanted to know how - human explanations instead of faith

Neighbors and Friends (*John 9:8-17*)

Did the fact that this man who had been blind since birth could see bring his neighbors to faith?

John 9:8-9 = They disbelieved so much that they decided he wasn't the same person

How did they respond when they couldn't dispute that this really was the blind man?

John 9:10-12 = Tried to find a logical explanation or ask this Jesus how He did it

Unable to find a logical explanation on their own, to whom did the neighbors turn?

John 9:13 = The smartest religious leaders - the Pharisees

What issue concerned the Pharisees when they heard what Jesus had done?

John 9:14-16 = Healing on the Sabbath proves He is not from God; how can He do it then?

Unable to figure it out, where did they turn for insight?

John 9:17 = Asked the man who had been blind what he thought about it

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

Page 4

Investigation by the Pharisees (*John 9:18-34*)

With this man appearing to be a liar or in cahoots with this Jesus, what did they investigate next?

John 9:18-21 = They checked out the man's parents, they confirmed he had been born blind

Why did the parents avoid responding to how their son received their sight?

John 9:22-23 = They were afraid of being accused of siding with Jesus & excommunication

Note: The synagogue was the center of Jewish community life, membership was important

Realizing that a significant miracle had really happened, what did the Pharisees do next?

John 9:24-26 = They tried again to get the facts from the blind man

How did they respond when the man questioned their motives?

John 9:27-29 = They accused the man of being a disciple of a prophet of who knows what

How did the man respond that showed his understanding of Jesus and his growing faith in Him?

John 9:30-33 = Said that this miracle proved that Jesus was from God

How did the Pharisees respond to this claim that reflected an erroneous belief they had?

John 9:34 = Said the man's blindness proved he was evil, even very evil before birth

The Blind Man Sees (*John 9:35-38*)

How was the man who had stood up for Jesus before the Pharisees even further blessed?

John 9:35 = Jesus came and found him

Note: *Son of Man* was a term recognized by the Jews to refer to the Messiah (Daniel 7:13-14)

How did the man respond to Jesus' inquiry of his faith in the Messiah?

John 9:36 = He had faith and trust in Jesus to guide him truthfully

How did the man respond when Jesus pointed him to the Messiah?

John 9:37-38 = He confessed his faith in Jesus and worshipped Him

How did the man grow in faith and understanding of Jesus through this story?

John 9:11, 17, 33, 35-38 = From *man called Jesus* to *prophet* to *man from God* to *Messiah*

The Seeing Go Blind (*John 9:39-41*)

What other lesson does this story have for us besides gaining sight through faith?

John 9:39 = Those without faith are really blind, even if they think they see

What does Jesus tell the Pharisees that warns us of the blindness of sin without the sight of faith?

John 9:40-41 = Relying on yourself and not faith in Jesus will not save from guilt of sin

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. What sins have blinded me for a long time?
(*Job 5:14; 24:13-17; Proverbs 4:18-19; Romans 7:15-25; 13:12-14; 1 John 2:9-11*)
2. Why do I continue to repeat and accept certain sins?
(*John 1:4-5; Psalm 52:1-4; Ecclesiastes 2:13-14; Matthew 6:22-23; Luke 16:8; 1 John 2:15-17*)
3. How do I react when my sins are revealed?
(*John 3:19-21; 9:25b, 39-41; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:5-10; 2:1-2*)
4. How can I gain control and victory over temptations that Satan has found effective against me?
(*John 8:12; 12:46; Luke 11:33-36; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:11-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:4-11*)
5. How do I intend to live as a child of the light of God?
(*John 9:4-5; 11:9-10; 12:35-36; Matthew 5:14-16; Ephesians 5:8-10; 1 Peter 2:9*)