

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 6TH-7TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

SIGNS (JOHN 9:1-7) SIGNS EVERYWHERE

Jesus has revealed who He is in multiple ways with multiple signs, but they still don't see. This is the sixth of seven signs covered in the Gospel of John. John calls each of these miracles "signs" because he wants his readers to understand Jesus is the Messiah. He is not just a prophet; this is the one for whom they've been waiting.

MORE EVIDENCE

In chapter 8, Jesus makes some powerful statements, saying, "Before Abraham was, I am." "I am the light of the world." Still, there is a spiritual blindness in the people. John has proclaimed Jesus to be God since the beginning (John 1:1-14).

- **The things of God don't make sense when we're spiritually dead.**

THE BLIND MAN

John wants us to see beyond the fact that this man is physically blind because we need more than just physical healing.

- He tells each of these stories to help us see the deity of Jesus and how we respond will change our life.
- **We have to decide if we will believe Jesus is who He says He is.**

WHO SINNED?

Jesus looks beyond their question. A common belief among Jews would have been that his blindness was a result of sin. Jesus contradicts their beliefs. God allows suffering to ultimately bring about His glory.

- **If God took away our suffering whenever we asked, we wouldn't follow Him out of love and devotion.**

WE'RE INCLUDED

Jesus moves to contrast blindness and sight to night and day. Jesus knew His time on earth was limited, and He wants His disciples to know we're included in the work with Him. For now, Jesus is the light in the world; soon, it will be His followers.

- **God put the continued work of making disciples on His followers.**

THE HEALING

Jesus makes some mud and rubs it on his eyes. Then He sends him to wash in a specific pool. The blind man would've understood where he was being sent to wash. He responded in obedience to what Jesus asked.

- **Our first step needs to be obedience to what God asks of us. Then, we can experience the powerful work of God.**

INTERROGATION (JOHN 9:8-34)

NEIGHBORS

Those who knew him couldn't believe it and tried to explain it away. They end up arguing with him even though he tells them what happened. Even after his own testimony, they don't believe him. They can see he's different, they just don't understand how.

- **Even when there's evidence, we sometimes struggle to see.**

THE PHARISEES

The neighbors don't get the answer they want, so they take him to the Pharisees. The Pharisee's questioning was not about his healing, but that He did it on the Sabbath. To them it was about the law, not about caring for the needs of another.

- **Acts of righteousness can never supersede a relationship with Jesus.**

THE SABBATH ISSUE... AGAIN

This was an issue earlier in John 5. The Pharisees are upset not because the man was healed, but because it was done on the Sabbath. Jesus is revealing His deity right in front of them, but they just can't see it. They're so stuck on their own rules and thoughts about God they can't see that He is actually among them (John 1:26).

"WHAT DO YOU SAY ABOUT HIM?"

The healed man finally makes a statement as he's forming his belief and says, "He's a prophet." Here's a simple-hearted believer exhibiting more spiritual truth than unsaved theologians. This humiliates the Pharisees.

- In their prejudice, they didn't believe the sign so they tried to discredit the miracle.
- **What more does God have to do?**

THE PARENTS

The Pharisees don't believe it's the same guy, so they summon his parents. His parents are afraid of being excommunicated, so they don't want to answer. Even though their son is healed, they're not willing to risk social status and relationships. **This was their chance, and they missed an incredible opportunity to give glory to God.**

WHAT NOW?

The parents confirmed he is their son. Now, everyone is aware this was the blind man, and he can now see. This is a huge dilemma.

- The neighbors, parents, and Pharisees all have physical sight, but by contrast, can't see spiritually. **Faith comes through believing.**
- **We need to recognize our own spiritual blindness.**

MORE QUESTIONING

As if the blind man hadn't been truthful before, the Pharisees give him a strong warning by telling him, "give glory to God." Now the faith of the blind man grows, and he answers with a simple testimony, "One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I can see!"

- **We don't have to know everything to share what God has done.**

A SARCASTIC RESPONSE

The Pharisees ask him the same question again, and the blind man responds with a question of his own, "Do you want to become his disciples too?" The blind man knows he's on the verge of being

excommunicated, yet his faith is growing.

- **Too often, we shrink back and hide in the face of persecution.**

"THIS IS AN AMAZING THING"

What is amazing to him is the fact that everyone to whom he has told this story refuses to believe. It would've been easy for him to avoid the controversy, but he stood his ground.

- He may not have had all the theological knowledge, but he knew the difference Christ had made in his life, and he could not deny it.

A LESSON

The Pharisees explain they follow Moses, yet they don't follow the one of whom Moses wrote.

- The blind man gives the lesson of his life, sharing his explanation of the miracle. If God doesn't listen to sinners and God listened to Jesus—Jesus cannot be a sinner. "If this man were not from God, he wouldn't be able to do anything."

BLINDNESS (JOHN 9:35-41)

THE SEARCH

Jesus heard they threw him out, so He goes searching for him. We can't miss the fact that Jesus went looking for the man rather than the other way around. We don't have to "find" God; He's not lost.

- **God created us. He knows everything about us and is in constant pursuit of us (Psalm 139).**

THE TURNING POINT

Jesus reveals who He is, and the man responds, "I believe, Lord!" and he worships Him. **Belief leads to worship.**

- I love the progression of the man's faith. First, he proclaims Jesus is a prophet, then he confesses Him as Lord. It isn't the method or the ritual that helped him see, it was believing in Jesus.

"I CAME INTO THIS WORLD FOR JUDGMENT"

In the Gospel of John, Jesus has called the Pharisees: slaves, sons of the devil, told them they needed to hear the truth, and now He calls them blind. **They believed in their own self-righteousness.**

- **We can never be good enough to become righteous (Romans 3:10). We need the truth of God to open our eyes.**

TWO KINDS OF BLINDNESS

There was only one physically blind man. It was the stubbornness of the Pharisees, the fear of the parents, and unbelief of the neighbors that caused their spiritual blindness.

- **God gives understanding to those who recognize how our own sin blinds us. He rejects those who are complacent or satisfied with their own righteousness.**

SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

- Do we believe Jesus is who He says He is? What more does God have to do?
- Are we willing to acknowledge our own spiritual blindness?
- We are not here by accident. He is pursuing us. Do we have eyes to see the truth? **Are we willing to say, "Lord, I believe"?**

WHAT WE'RE SAVED FROM

- When we experience healing, we are excited to tell others. **Too often we forget what we've been saved from (Luke 7:47).**
- Are we relying on our doctrine or religious knowledge to save us?
- When we understand where we could have been without Christ, it should cause us to rejoice in worship.

WHO DO YOU SAY HE IS?

- The way we live matters. **How are we representing Christ to a watching world?**
- Do those closest to me know I'm a Christ follower?
- Are we willing to give up our preconceived notions and allow God to help us see?
- **Am I willing to stand for Christ in the face of persecution?**