



## *The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John*

### Chapter 9

1 On His way out, Jesus walked by a man begging near the entrance to the Temple. He had been blind since birth, and had no prospects for a real job.

2 His students noticed the man, too, and asked Him “Teacher, was this man born blind as a punishment for the sin to come, or was he cursed because his parents committed some foul deed?”

3 “Neither,” replied Jesus. “If anything, it's an opportunity for God to show how great He is. And He will in this man.

4 “You can only work while it's light out. And it's shining brightly right now, so follow My example. Work hard just like I do when the Father commands Me. Without the 'sun' you're just as blind as this man and it's impossible to do anything productive.

5 “Whenever and wherever you find Me in the world, there is plenty of light, and there's no excuse to remain idle.”

6 When the teaching words were finished, the teaching action followed. Jesus spat on the ground, enough to make mud out of the dust. He coated his thumb with it and carefully but firmly rubbed it into the man's eyes, not unlike the prophets of old anointing the forehead of the special chosen.

7 Jesus said to the man “Go now! Wash yourself thoroughly at the pool called Siloam” (which means 'sent.')

The man obeyed, and in that obedience, his eyes were opened, literally and figuratively.

8 Folks on the street, who had known the man for years, said after his return “What's happened to our blind beggar? Who's this bright-eyed man in his place?”

9 Others said “Oh, it's the same guy!” “Couldn't be,” replied the first group. “He may look like him, but there's no way he just started to see like the rest of us.” The man stuck up for himself, and they recognized his voice. “It's me, alright!” he said with a big smile. “And I can see you just as well!”

10 “How in the world did **this** happen?” they demanded. “Where did you get your good eyes?”

11 The man excitedly explained. “That man called Jesus stopped where I was and touched my eyes with wet clay then said to me “Go wash yourself at the pool of Siloam.” I did as He instructed and WHAM! I could see!!”

12 Now the crowd was just as excited. “Where is this man? We want to talk to Him.” Looking around the crowd, the man said “I'm not sure.”

13 Uncertain whether this was a miracle or some magical trick, the crowd summoned the Fundamentalists, those judgmental 'experts' in the scriptures. They interrogated the man.

14 This was the second time Jesus had abused the Sabbath laws and had healed somebody on Saturday, and they were in no mood to ignore such an egregious transgression.

15 "How did your eyes suddenly light up?" the Fundamentalists demanded. The healed man repeated his story for these spiritual professionals. "Just what I've been telling them - that man rubbed wet clay in my eyes and instructed me to wash completely. When I was clean I could see."

16 The Sabbath, apparently, was set aside for judging others harshly, and some of the Fundamentalists were happy to exercise their obligation. "Ah-HA! What have we been telling you? This Jesus works for the Devil, that's for sure! God would *never* instruct anyone to break the Sabbath laws!" Others among them weren't willing to go that far. "Doing miracles is the Devil's work? We think not!" Over this point a huge division arose among the Fundamentalists.

17 Unable to resolve it themselves, they mocked the healed man and asked his opinion. "What do you think about the man who did this to you?" The man simply said "He must be a prophet."

18 The religious experts disregarded the man's opinion, of course, though they had nothing better to offer. They still suspected it was a trick of some sort. They summoned the man's parents, who were still living.

19 The Fundamentalists put the parents on the hot seat. "So, is this - in fact - your son? Yes? The people say he was born blind. Is that so? Answer carefully here. Yes, you say? Then how could he possibly have regained his sight?"

20 After nodding for a while, the parents spoke up. "Yes, this is our son and yes, he was born blind.

21 "But how he gained his sight we cannot explain, or who is responsible. We weren't here when it happened. Why do you treat us like criminals? He's of legal age. It's his story - ask him!"

22 The parents quickly passed this hot potato, for they knew how good the Fundamentalists were at trapping people with their own words. These religious leaders had already decided to shun anyone who gave any indication that they believed Jesus was the Messiah. Anyone saying such a thing would forever be banned from religious meetings, just as if they weren't Jewish at all.

23 The healed man was already an outcast for his disability. He would have to bear the Fundamentalists' heat by himself.

24 The inquisitors pressed the man from a new angle. "Don't mock God with your silly stories. We already know what a charlatan and deceiver this Jesus is. Tell us what really happened."

25 The man simply answered "Whether He is way off track or hell-bound I don't know. But this I know for sure: Yesterday I was blind as a bat. Today I see you clearly enough. You figure it out!"

26 The tables had turned, so the Fundamentalists backtracked. "So what, exactly, did this man do to you so that your sight was restored?"

27 The man rolled his eyes, which said plenty. "Haven't we already covered this? Or maybe you were just deaf earlier. No wait, you want to hear the amazing details again because you're starting to believe like me and want to follow this teacher. Do you want to be His students?"

28 To the crowd's muted laughter, the Fundamentalists just spat at the ground in front of the healed man and gave them all dirty looks. "We can see He's already poisoned your mind. Go ahead and follow Him. We follow Moses, the true prophet!"

29 "We know Moses talked directly with God; as for this impostor, we have no idea where He gets His ideas, or what hole he crawled out of."

30 "Well that's just amazing!" replied the healed man. "What a marvelous thing has happened to me. Even I - a 'blind' man - can see that! So, who are the blind ones here? You really can't figure out where this prophet comes from?"

31 “Blah, blah, blah,” the Fundamentalists mocked. “You're talking to a brick wall. God doesn't listen to people born into sin, so He's certainly not listening to **you**. Only really good people get His ear. If He won't give you the time of day, neither will we.

32 “What you say is impossible. Since the beginning of time there's never been such a miracle performed by any prophet. No one who was born blind has **ever** been healed of it.”

33 The man countered “Then if He wasn't sent from God, He would not have been able to heal me, for He certainly **did**.”

34 The Fundamentalists' faces were screwed up pretty tight by this time, their pride deeply bruised. “Oh, so **you** - the one so obviously cursed by God with blindness - are going to lecture **us** on spiritual things??” They excommunicated him on the spot, grabbed him by the shirt collar, threw him in the alley and stormed away.

35 Jesus heard later that the man had been cut off from his community by the vengeful Fundamentalists. He went looking for the man. When He found him, Jesus asked “Do you believe that God has finally sent his Son to the world?”

36 “If He's finally come, Teacher, tell me where I can find Him so I can follow Him!”

37 Jesus said firmly “God gave you new eyes for a reason. God's Son is looking you in the eye. Get the picture? And it's His voice you hear.”

38 It was so very, very clear to the man. He said “I believe!” He fell to his knees and bowed in deep gratitude.

39 Jesus said “It's time to sort the lies from the Truth. I make the Truth clear to those who were blind, and those who think they see will be shown for how blind they really are.”

40 There were still some Fundamentalist spies keeping tabs on the healed man. They just weren't very good at hiding. Especially when they spoke up. “Oh, so **we're** the blind ones, is that it?”

41 Jesus answered “If you had just admitted that you didn't have all the answers, it would have been the honest truth. But no. You go proclaiming yourselves perfect and infallible. You can't wash that kind of sin off.”

## ***Explain the Context:***

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

<b>What</b> is the theme of this chapter?	<b>What</b> is the BIG Idea?
<b>What</b> is something that surprised you?	<b>What</b> is this chapter <i>not</i> saying?

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) Sometimes we “see” the misfortunes of others as a consequence of sin in their lives. How does the story of the man born blind challenge that view?
- 2) On the broadcast, Sandi talked about how legalism and rule-following affected her ability to see others as Jesus followers if they didn’t act a certain way. How has legalism or rule-following affected your view of others? What are some ways you can change your thinking?
- 3) While rules and laws are meant to guide and protect us – how can legalism and rule-following keep us from being a Jesus follower?
- 4) Why do you think the man’s neighbors did not recognize him after he had been healed?



## ***Apply the Scripture***

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

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How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

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### **For further study:**

- Ezekiel 18:20
- Isaiah 35:5
- Romans 5:19
- Joshua 7:19 (a charge to tell the truth)
- Psalm 66:18
- James 5:16
- Isaiah 66:5