

the gospel of

# JOHN

he is the one

This Winter, our hope is to see Jesus in chapters 5-10 of John's Gospel. John shows us that He is the One. As God, He is the One with the right to judge, the power to provide soul food, who gives eternal life, and who can save and keep until the end. He is the One with real authority, who can give the Spirit and grant mercy. He is the One with the truth, sent from the Father who can truly see and grant sight. And He is the One who is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep. For everything we need, He is the One. For everything we want, He is the One. Jesus is the One sent from the Father to be for us all that we have ever hoped and longed for.

## **PART 10: THE ONE WHO CAN SEE**

Read the text: John 9:1-41 (vs. 1-7; 35-41 included below)

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." He said,

“Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.

The blind man is not the only one who cannot see. In fact, he has the best sight in the story because he can see his need. And it is in seeing his need that he gradually begins to see Jesus for who he really is. The way that everyone else responds to the blind man’s healing reveals four different kinds of blindness. The disciples had a **humanistic blindness**, only able to see things on a human level and not aware of what God might be doing. The neighbors experienced a **paradigmatic blindness**, preventing them from seeing anything new; showing that we only see what we are ready to see, expect to see and even desire to see. The Pharisees experienced a **systemic blindness**, most committed to the preservation of the religious system and their place of power within it. The blind man’s parents experienced a **fearful blindness**, fearing the consequences of speaking the truth.

How might we still be blind to Jesus? Jesus has come to show us our blindness if we are open to see it and then see him more clearly as a result.

### **Discussion Questions:**

*These questions are written for DNA groups, but you can use them in any setting, including missional communities. Because they were written for the intimacy of DNA friendships, you may need to adjust for larger groups.*

1. **Humanistic Blindness** attaches prime importance to human activity over the possibility of the divine. It loses sight of what God may be doing and focuses instead on human action and

human results. *When you make decisions, do you seek to understand first what God is doing and how you can join His work? Or, do you think first on a human level? Why do you think that is?*

2. **Paradigmatic Blindness** means we can't imagine God doing a new thing...we have no paradigm for it. We only know what we've known. So, anything that doesn't fit our paradigm is questionable. *Can you think of times in your life you were blind in this way, not expecting God to work because you didn't even have a paradigm for Him working in that way?*
3. **Systemic Blindness** willfully denies or ignores the truth because the truth may mean you lose something, such as power and privilege. *Can you think of ways you have avoided pursuing the truth or lived in some kind of denial because the truth would cost you in some way?*
4. **Fearful Blindness** willingly avoids the truth because you fear the consequences. You're not sure you can handle the truth, so you avoid it. Maybe it will challenge your sense of identity or what you've built your life on. *Are there ways you avoid the truth out of fear of what it will mean for you? Are you honest about your life, your most important relationships, and your spiritual and emotional health? Or, do you avoid real honesty in these areas because it will be too hard?*
5. Which is the one kind of blindness you most struggle with today? Will you admit your blindness so that you can truly begin to see? What is the next step the Spirit would have you take?