

## Week 5: John 9 – Jesus: Healer

### CONTEXT

Spend a few minutes reviewing the big picture of John from previous weeks.

What kind of literature is the gospel of John? Who wrote it? What is the book's main purpose? How is the book organized? Where are we in the large story of Scripture? What do you remember from Chapter 1? What did we learn from the Samaritan woman about God's invitation to the outsider?

One of John's primary goals in his gospel is to **show** that Jesus is God, often through signs and miracles like the healing in today's passage. Similar to the Samaritan woman at the well last week, today we meet another unlikely disciple- a blind, uneducated, no name beggar who becomes a witness for Jesus. John loves to play with opposites in his gospel- especially the idea of light/darkness or sight/blindness- which we will see in this story. Interestingly, today's passage follows Jesus' declaration in Chapter 8: "I am the light of the world." This story asks us to determine who actually **sees**

3. Look at the details of the man's healing (which he repeats LOTS of times in these verses). How does Jesus choose to heal him? Why do you think Jesus heals in this way?
4. The passage describes the reactions of lots of bystanders. Discuss how each group responds: neighbors (vs 8-12), Pharisees (vs 13-17), parents (vs 18-23).
5. The Pharisees reject Jesus because "they do not know where he came from" (vs 29). How does John pre-answer this question in John 1: 14?
6. The blind man makes 4 statements about Jesus in this story (vs 11, 17, 33, 38). What do you notice about the progression of his statements? How is Jesus becoming "clearer" to him as the story progresses. How does this contrast with the other characters in the story?

## APPLICATION

- Many characters in this story want to connect suffering and disease with sin, but Jesus clearly rejects this connection. Have you ever encountered this connection in conversations or faith settings? Have you ever experienced hurt because others have assumed this connection in your life or the life of someone you love?
- One of the tensions in Scripture and in our own lives is that we have a God who can heal, but who sometimes heals in ways we hope for and sometimes does not. And yet we cling to the truth that God is somehow lovingly in the midst of both scenarios.
  - Have you ever experienced healing in your life or in the life of someone close to you? How did you sense God in that experience?
  - Have you ever experienced a longing for healing that did not come? How did you sense God in that difficult place?
- What does it mean for you to encounter a God in this story who seeks us even when we are not seeking him?
- The problem in this story doesn't seem to be blindness. The problem is those who don't **admit** that they are blind- who don't see the need for the loving touch of Jesus in their lives.
  - What are practices that might help us name our blindness?
  - How does the intimacy in this story (the spit, the dirt, the touching of the face) sit with you? What does it teach you about how God interacts with us in our blindness?

## PRAYER

- Use words/images/themes from the passage to guide your prayer.
- Raise up your "wonderings" from the