

Week Beginning: 26th March 2017

Worship Series: #5 in series **NO SHORTCUTS**

living sharing growing



lifegroups
live life abundantly

Theme Verse

One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see! John 9:25

Remember This Week

Our life is always shaped by what our eyes see. If this is true of the physical eyes, how much more is it true of the eyes of the heart? What you seek with the eyes of your heart, or what you allow yourself to see and believe, will radically impact everything about your life. When you see Jesus, your present and future will open up and light up like never before.



This is what God the Lord says—

the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it:

"I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand.

I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people

and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

Isaiah 42:5-7

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world, who gives sight to the blind. Open our eyes to see the wondrous things that you have done, and continue to do in the world today. Come and reveal the blindspots in our lives that we may see you with clarity and believe in you with certainty. Bless this time that we share together in your precious name. Amen.



1. *Share your highs and lows for the past week.*
2. *Accountability time! How did you go with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *Who is the most fanatical sports fan you have ever met?*
4. *If you had to give up a hand, a foot, or an eye, which would you give up and why?*

'Don't forget to check your blindspot.' It's a statement that every learner driver will hear repeatedly. Failure to check your blindspot can be dangerous and costly. The truth is, we all have blind spots in our lives. Gaps in our perception that keep us from seeing the truth about others and ourselves. Prejudice and pride which blind us to seeing what Jesus is doing in the world and in individual lives. Today Jesus shows us that there are no shortcuts to belief, but when you come into the presence of the light, everything will become clear.



Read John 9:1-41

First thoughts/reflections

5. *What part of this reading spoke to/touched or challenged you the most?*
6. *What questions did this passage raise for you?*
7. *What blindspots do the man's parents have? The Disciples? His neighbours? The Pharisees?*
8. *What beliefs that you held as a child have changed as you have become older and what made you/influenced you to change those beliefs?*
9. *When in your life have you felt invisible, overlooked or unnoticed?*
10. *When has someone said something to you that lacked compassion or made for any awkward conversation and when have you been insensitive in a situation?*
11. *It was common in Jesus' day to believe people experienced trials because they had sinned (see Luke 13:1-5). In this case, the disciples attribute blindness to either the man or the parent's sin. To what degree do people today see handicaps, suffering and trials as a result of a person's sin/poor choices in life?*



12. *Jesus doesn't answer the 'cause' question but turns the disciples' focus to the purpose of the blindness. What did Jesus say was the purpose for the man's blindness and how does what we read in this whole account, achieve that purpose?*
13. *How has God used a trial/weakness/disability in your own life to reveal his glory to others?*
14. *Jesus said that while he was in the world, he is the light of the world? What do you think he is implying about when he is no longer on this earth and what other verses from Scripture might support that?*
15. *The blind man was not healed immediately. Why do you think that Jesus did not give sight instantly and what life lesson can we learn from that?*
16. *In what ways does the healing make the man born blind's life even more difficult?*

There is a real contrast in the story between the blindman who gains both physical and spiritual sight and the growing blindness or unbelief of the Pharisees who think they see but do not. Merrill Tenney writes:

The Pharisees blindness began with misunderstanding both of the law and of the person of Jesus. The law was for them a tradition to be kept, a dead letter, not a living voice. The result of this attitude was a prejudice that blinded the Pharisees to anything but their own preconceived opinion and so made them ignorant of the full truth...Pride prevented their learning any more..."

The Pharisee's blindspot and focus on the law became a shortcut which that prevented them, from seeing with ever increasing clarity. The man born blind, however, becomes clearer and clearer about who Jesus is, courageous in his confession of faith against dangerous adversaries and ultimately belief which resulted in worship. As Jesus goes on to tell his disciples in the next chapter, belief/seeing comes from being in a relationship with Jesus and listening to his voice and going where he sends us (notice...he told the man born blind to go to the pool of Siloam which means 'sent'.) *"I know my sheep and my sheep know me... My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand (John 10:14, 27-28).*



17. *When the man born blind was excommunicated because the Pharisees just couldn't see, Jesus went and found the man. What confidence/assurance does this give you in your life when people struggle with or refuse to accept the truth of what you believe?*
18. *Charles Swindoll (Come before Winter) wrote: "The skeptic may deny your doctrine or attack your church but he cannot honestly ignore the fact that your life has been changed." Share with your group, how Jesus has changed your life? How has he led you on a journey to see him more and more clearly?*
19. *What blindspots in your life currently, are stopping you seeing Jesus and what he is doing in your life clearly? How could your LifeGroup help you with those blindspots?*
20. *Some people are spiritually blind by choice & some because they have not heard the gospel. Who needs to hear the gospel from you this week?*



- * Praise God for his gift of faith calling you into his kingdom. Thank Jesus for showing us clearly how much he loves us. Ask the Holy Spirit to be his light shining brightly in the world for eternity.
- * Ask God to reveal the blindspots in your life which are stopping you from seeing what he is doing in the world and your own life clearly.
- * Pray for a growing courage to give voice to your belief in Jesus Christ in a world that is in darkness.
- * Pray for the person that you need God's help to share the Gospel with in the coming week, that as you share the good news of Jesus, their vision may become brighter and their blindness removed.

Turn to the person next to you and make the sign of the cross on the palm of their hand or forehead as you say:

Name, may you see and believe in Christ alone. Amen.

