

# Once I Was Blind

JOHN 9:1-25 (BSB) · TEACHER GUIDE · DIGDEEPER.AI

## THE BIG IDEA · SAY IT AT LEAST FIVE TIMES

Jesus, the light of the world, gives sight to those who never had it.

Open with it, bring it back after every section, close with it. By the end they should be able to finish the sentence for you.

- Before this passage (day 13): John 8:31-59, Before Abraham Was, I Am. Its big idea: Jesus is the eternal I AM, and only the Son sets us free.
- After this passage (day 15): John 9:35-41, Now I See. Its big idea: Jesus finds us, and admitting we can't see is how we see him.

## Open

Recall: last time Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am." The crowd picked up stones, and he slipped out of the temple. Now, 'passing by,' he stops for a beggar. Ask: When something goes badly wrong in someone's life, what is the first question people ask? Read John 9:1-3. Big idea: Jesus, the light of the world, gives sight to those who never had it. Ask one person what stuck from last time.

## Run Sheet

### 1. The Light Stops for a Beggar (John 9:1-7, about 13 min)

The one thing: Jesus refuses the blame question and shows himself as the light.

Ask: Why do we reach for someone to blame when suffering comes?

### 2. "I Am the One" (John 9:8-17, about 12 min)

The one thing: The man tells what happened, and each time he sees Jesus more clearly.

Ask: Why is a changed person so hard for others to accept?

### 3. One Thing I Do Know (John 9:18-25, about 12 min)

The one thing: Under pressure, the man doesn't argue theory. He tells what Jesus did.

Ask: What makes the man's plain answer in v25 so strong?

## Close (never cut it)

Land on who Jesus is: the light of the world, who stopped for a beggar no one else stopped for and gave him eyes he never had. Read v25 slowly. Then leave the question the leaders put to the man, 'What do you say about Him?', in the room without pressing for answers.

## PROTECT THE ENDING

If section three starts late, summarize the parents in one sentence and go straight to v25 and the close.

## KIDS SIDE ANSWERS

Story order: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 (top to bottom) · Feelings: The man before Jesus came sad, The man after washing happy, His parents worried, The Pharisees worried · Code: LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Act it out: Kids close their eyes as the blind man. The teacher 'puts mud' on with a tap, they walk to a 'pool' and open their eyes, shouting 'Now I see!'

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# 1. The Light Stops for a Beggar

JOHN 9:1-7 · ABOUT 13 MIN · SECTION 1 OF 3

## THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- The disciples ask who is to blame.
- Jesus answers with God's purpose.
- Mud, a pool called 'Sent', and new eyes.

Jesus said this happened so that the WORKS OF GOD would be displayed in him.

"While I am in the world, I am the LIGHT of the world."

Discuss: Why do we reach for someone to blame when suffering comes?

Jesus refuses the blame question and shows himself as the light.

## MUST COVER

- v2-3: Jesus says neither the man's sin nor his parents' caused this.
- v5-7: 'Light of the world', then he sends the man to wash, and the man comes back seeing.

## IF THERE'S TIME

- v7: At a recent festival (John 7), priests carried Siloam's water to the temple. John translates the pool's name: 'Sent.'
- v6: Mud from the ground. Many hear an echo of Genesis 2, where God forms the first man from dust.

Illustration idea: A power cut at night: you can't find the switch, even in your own kitchen, until someone brings a torch.

## RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: We want suffering to make sense.
- Listen for: Blame feels like control: if it's someone's fault, it can be avoided.

If it drifts: If talk turns to all suffering everywhere, come back to v3. Jesus doesn't explain everything. He speaks about this man, then acts.

## TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

The disciples saw a puzzle. Jesus saw a man, and brought light.

Short on time? Skip the Siloam festival background; keep 'which means Sent.'

Bridge → The man can see now, but not everyone wants to see him.

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## 2. "I Am the One"

JOHN 9:8-17 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 2 OF 3

### THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- Neighbours can't agree it's him.
- The Pharisees split over the Sabbath.
- The man tells what happened, and it grows clearer.

The man kept saying, "I am the ONE."

Asked about Jesus, he replied, "He is a PROPHET."

Discuss: Why is a changed person so hard for others to accept?

The man tells what happened, and each time he sees Jesus more clearly.

### MUST COVER

- v9-11: 'I am the one.' He first calls his healer 'the man they call Jesus.'
- v16-17: The Pharisees divide over the Sabbath. The man says, 'He is a prophet.'

### IF THERE'S TIME

- v12: 'I do not know' where Jesus is. He has never actually seen him yet.

Illustration idea: Someone returns from rehab, and old friends keep treating them like the person they used to be.

### RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: People like others to stay in the box they know.
- Listen for: If he changed, maybe I'm meant to change too.

If it drifts: If it becomes a debate about Sabbath rules, point to v16. They argued rules while a seeing man stood in front of them.

### TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

Jesus gave him eyes, and now he's starting to see who Jesus is.

Short on time? Cut the neighbours' 'he just looks like him'; go straight to v15-17.

Bridge → Now the questions turn to the people who knew him longest: his parents.

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### 3. One Thing I Do Know

JOHN 9:18-25 · ABOUT 12 MIN · SECTION 3 OF 3

#### THEIR PAGE, WORD FOR WORD (ANSWERS FILLED IN)

- The leaders doubt he was ever blind.
- His parents confirm it but hedge out of fear.
- The man holds to what he knows.

His parents said this because they were AFRAID of the Jews.

"I was blind, but now I SEE!"

Discuss: What makes the man's plain answer in v25 so strong?

Under pressure, the man doesn't argue theory. He tells what Jesus did.

#### MUST COVER

- v18-23: The parents confirm 'born blind' but won't say more. Anyone confessing Jesus could be put out of the synagogue.
- v24-25: 'Whether He is a sinner I do not know... I was blind, but now I see!'

#### IF THERE'S TIME

- v18: 'The Jews' here means the religious leaders questioning him. His parents were Jews too.

Illustration idea: A witness in court who can't explain the law but says, 'I was there. This is what I saw.'

#### RUNNING THE DISCUSSION

- Listen for: No one can argue with what happened to him.
- Listen for: He's honest about what he doesn't know.

If it drifts: If people start swapping stories of family pressure, honour that briefly, then return to v25: what did the son say?

#### TRY SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

He couldn't answer every question. He could say: I was blind, now I see.

Short on time? Summarize the parents in one line; spend the time on v25.

Bridge → Let his words lead us into the close.

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## With One Friend, Over Coffee

ABOUT 30 MINUTES · FOR A FRIEND WHO IS CURIOUS, OR NOT SURE

1. Start with blame. Ask when they've heard someone ask 'Why did this happen to me?' Read v1-3 together.
2. Read the healing. Read v5-7. Note what Jesus claims ('light of the world') and what he does.
3. Face the doubt. Read v18-20. The leaders doubted he was ever blind too. His parents, who were afraid, still confirmed it.
4. Hear the man. Read v24-25. He admits what he doesn't know and holds to what he does.
5. Leave the question. Share the leaders' question from v17: 'What do you say about Him?' Let them sit with it. No answer needed today.

### QUESTIONS YOU MAY HEAR

"How do I know he was ever blind?"

The passage raises that very doubt. Hostile officials checked, and his frightened parents confirmed 'born blind.' They had no reason to help Jesus.

"So is suffering never anyone's fault?"

Jesus doesn't say that. He says this man's blindness wasn't a punishment, and he refuses to make blame the first question.

"Why doesn't Jesus heal everyone now?"

Honestly, this passage doesn't answer that. It shows who Jesus is: the one who brings light.

"Do I have to believe it all to keep reading?"

No. The man himself only knew one thing at first. You can start with what you see.

# Evergreen Principles

Four standards every week. The rest rotate: each lesson brings the few that fit its passage best.

## EVERY LESSON

### 1. Pray before you prepare

Teaching the Bible is spiritual work first (John 15:5).

If you're new: Pray for your class by name during the week.

If you've taught for years: Pray for the one person you find hardest to reach.

### 2. Study the text first

Understand the passage yourself before any help.

If you're new: Read it in two translations; write your own questions first.

If you've taught for years: Don't lean on old notes. What did you miss last time?

### 3. Teach one big idea

People remember one sentence, not four points.

If you're new: Write it in 12 words or fewer before anything else.

If you've taught for years: Test every story against it. If it doesn't serve it, cut it.

### 4. Point to Christ

All of Scripture points to him (Luke 24:27).

If you're new: Ask: what does this show about Jesus?

If you've taught for years: Show grace as the reason for obedience, not just the rule.

## FOR THIS LESSON

### 1. Plan for the skeptic and the grieving

The passage holds both a blame question and a 'was he really blind?' doubt.

If you're new: Have one line ready for each: v3 for the grieving, v18-20 for the doubter.

If you've taught for years: Invite the skeptic to notice that John records the doubts himself.

### 2. Admit what is hard

Many in the room carry illness that has not been healed.

If you're new: Say plainly: this passage doesn't explain all suffering.

If you've taught for years: Let the man's 'I do not know' model honest faith for the group.

### 3. Let the passage land the way it lands

It shows who Jesus is; it doesn't hand out homework.

If you're new: End on Jesus and v25, not on a task.

If you've taught for years: Resist adding a 'go testify' charge; let the leaders' question hang.

## BEFORE CLASS

- ☐ Read the passage three times
- ☐ Big idea in one sentence
- ☐ Opening and close chosen
- ☐ Know what you'll cut
- ☐ Handouts, pens, extra Bibles
- ☐ Prayed for the class by name

## Openings, Closings & Hard Moments

Pick one opening and one close; rotate so class doesn't get predictable.

## OPENINGS

- ask a real-life question: When something bad happens, what's the first 'why' people ask?

- use an object: Turn off the lights briefly, then switch them on: 'I am the light of the world.'
- start in the text: Read v2 cold and ask: what's behind the disciples' question?

### **CLOSINGS**

- restate the big idea: Jesus, the light of the world, gives sight to those who never had it.
- allow quiet reflection: Read v25, then give thirty seconds of silence.
- call back to the opening: We began with 'who is to blame?' The passage ends with 'I was blind, but now I see.'

### **WHEN CLASS GETS HARD**

- Someone living with a disability or illness asks why Jesus hasn't healed them.: Don't explain it away. Admit the passage doesn't answer that, point to v3: they are not being punished. Offer to talk after.
- Someone's family has rejected them over faith (v22).: Name that the parents' fear was real and costly. Don't shame the family. Point to the son's honest words.
- Silence after a question: Wait. Then rephrase simpler, or ask them to talk to a neighbor first.
- One person dominates: "Thanks. Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet." Talk privately if it continues.
- A question you can't answer: Say so, write it down, bring an answer next week.
- A tangent takes over: "Great question. Let's catch it after class so we can finish the passage."

### **READ THIS WEEK**

- Isaiah 35:5
- Genesis 2:7
- 2 Corinthians 4:6

Free at [digdeeper.ai/devotionals/john/9-1-25/lesson](https://digdeeper.ai/devotionals/john/9-1-25/lesson)

# Once I Was Blind

JOHN 9:1-25 (BSB) · WHO DO YOU SAY I AM? · DIGDEEPER.AI

Key verse: "There is one thing I do know: I was blind, but now I see!" John 9:25

## THE BIG IDEA

Jesus, the light of the world, gives sight to those who never had it.

### 1. THE LIGHT STOPS FOR A BEGGAR · JOHN 9:1-7

- The disciples ask who is to blame.
- Jesus answers with God's purpose.
- Mud, a pool called 'Sent', and new eyes.

Jesus said this happened so that the \_\_\_\_\_ would be displayed in him.

"While I am in the world, I am the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world."

Discuss: Why do we reach for someone to blame when suffering comes?

### 2. "I AM THE ONE" · JOHN 9:8-17

- Neighbours can't agree it's him.
- The Pharisees split over the Sabbath.
- The man tells what happened, and it grows clearer.

The man kept saying, "I am the \_\_\_\_\_."

Asked about Jesus, he replied, "He is a \_\_\_\_\_."

Discuss: Why is a changed person so hard for others to accept?

### 3. ONE THING I DO KNOW · JOHN 9:18-25

- The leaders doubt he was ever blind.
- His parents confirm it but hedge out of fear.
- The man holds to what he knows.

His parents said this because they were \_\_\_\_\_ of the Jews.

"I was blind, but now \_\_\_\_\_!"

Discuss: What makes the man's plain answer in v25 so strong?

Read this week: Isaiah 35:5 · Genesis 2:7 · 2 Corinthians 4:6

# For Kids: Once I Was Blind

JOHN 9:1-25 · NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Big idea: Jesus is the light who helps us see.

## 1. PUT THE STORY IN ORDER! NUMBER THE BOXES.

- ☐ He says, 'Now I see!'
- ☐ Neighbours ask, 'Is this him?'
- ☐ The man washes and can see!
- ☐ Jesus puts mud on his eyes.
- ☐ Jesus sees a man born blind.

## 2. HOW DID THEY FEEL? CIRCLE ONE.

The man before Jesus came: happy · sad · worried

The man after washing: happy · sad · worried

His parents: happy · sad · worried

The Pharisees: happy · sad · worried

## 3. WORD SEARCH

Y P R N O Y P F S  
R O M W K P R P P  
G S U A S S D R A  
G K D S G I B O R  
C O V H C L L P E  
J E S U S O I H N  
P H N D O A N E T  
F N B H Y M D T S  
U L I G H T S H V

JESUS · BLIND · MUD · WASH · SILOAM · LIGHT · PROPHET · PARENTS

## 4. SECRET CODE

1=D 2=E 3=F 4=G 5=H 6=I 7=L 8=O 9=R 10=T 11=W

7 6 4 5 10    8 3    10 5 2    11 8 9 7 1

## 5. DRAW IT!

Draw the man's face before and after he washed in the pool.

## 6. MEMORY VERSE

"I was blind, but now I see!" John 9:25 Say it to a grown-up: ☐ ☐ ☐

Jesus is the light of the world because... \_\_\_\_\_