



## One Hope Community Church

### Book of John Small Group Study: Chapter 9

#### How to effectively use this guide:

Always begin in prayer. Before opening your Bible, ask God to send His Holy Spirit to you and ask Him to reveal whatever wisdom and insights He wants you to learn.

Reflect on what you have read and take notes. The questions below are designed to help you examine the scriptures and provide discussion points for your meeting.

Each week, we suggest you hand out the next week's reading plan and questions (or show them where to find it online). This will help people be prepared to discuss the week's reading as a group.

Please remember to go over the agreement below as a small group each time a new person joins your group:

- We gather to grow in relationship with each other and God.
- We trust the Holy Spirit is our guide and the one who transforms our hearts.
- Our small group is an inviting place to discuss the Bible, share life, ask questions, and seek truth while we challenge and learn from each other.
- We commit to keep confidential all personal information shared during discussion and prayer time.
- We respect each other's backgrounds, and avoid negative discussions about politics and denomination differences. We will choose love over judgment.
- We commit to completing the personal study to the best of our ability as preparation, questions, and insights are a gift to the group.
- We listen, not fix. Fixing is God's job. We own our stories. It is okay to ask for help, but if not asked for, our job is to listen, support and pray.
- We will be brief with our answers so that all members have time to share.

Your group won't get through all these questions. Select which ones you find to be the most thought provoking. Or invite your small group to note which questions they would like to discuss.

#### Meeting Agenda

Gather / Socialize / Catch Up

Worship: Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone) Chris Tomilin

<https://youtu.be/Jbe7OruLk8I?si=HbE8OC2lnE9mD5PJ>

Read Scripture / Answer Questions

Closing prayer

**Week #9 Reading Plan (November 12 - 18)**

Day 1: John 9:1-6

Day 2: John 9:7-12

Day 3: John 9:13-31

Day 4: John 9:32-34

Day 5: John 9:35-41

**Day 1: John 9:1-6**

Ancient Jewish faith saw God as the source of health and illness, sickness being a punishment for sin. The prophets knew healing was both physical and spiritual. Some thought healing came if a person returned to God. They would ask for God's help through sacrifice, prayer, repentance, and fasting as well as purification rituals. They did not see sickness as a result of the world being broken by sin.

What is broken, God can redeem. Much like He redeems us through Jesus, He can redeem sickness "so that the works of God might be displayed in him" (John 9:3).

What has God redeemed in you so that His works might be on display?

Jesus healed a lame man at the Pool of Bethesda. This time he sent the man blind since birth to wash at the Pool of Siloam.

Looking at attached chart -

What prophecies do you notice fulfilled?

What beliefs do you notice which are challenged?

How did healing a man blind from birth point to Jesus as Messiah?

Learning the differences between the two pools and two miracles, how is your faith increased?

In literature day and night often mean life and death. In John 9:4-5, Jesus might have been thinking ahead (it was about 6 months after this that he was crucified). Isaiah 35:5 points to some of the work Jesus was sent to do (opening the eyes of the blind) which He had just done. Jesus also said "we must do the works of Him who sent me," including those He was speaking to. He later sends them (and us!) out (John 13:20, John 20:21).

What work has God sent you out to do?

Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." What gifts, talents and passions has He given you to complete His work?

## **Day 2: John 9:7-12**

The healed man said the One who healed him, "told me to go to Siloam and wash."

Looking at the attached chart -

If Jesus had sent the blind man to wash at the Pool of Bethesda, what might the man have believed?

The Jews believed sin caused sickness. Jesus told the lame man to not continue in his life of sin. One might think this aligns with Jewish thought. But Jesus did not tell the blind man to not continue in sin. What was the difference?

In Jeremiah and Ezekial there were three classes of religious teachers: prophets, priests and sages (wise men). Consider what the sages thought about who could heal someone blind from birth. What would people be considering of Jesus?

## **Day 3: John 9:13-31**

Jesus used spit to heal. In those days, spit was believed to be a remedy for diseases of the eye. But it was never used to treat blindness from birth. The use of spit as a medicine and the kneading of bread (or in this case dirt) were both forbidden on the Sabbath. Jesus once again showed that "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

How do you honor the Sabbath? Why do you think it was made for us?

John 9:22 says that it had been decided that anyone who "acknowledged Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue."

At first the healed man did not acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. Initially, he called Him a prophet (verse 17). A legal case was being built so his parents were called in as witnesses but did not reply, perhaps afraid of being put out of the synagogue. Next the healed man identified Jesus as his Rabbi / teacher ("do you want to be his disciples, too?" verse 27).

Often as a person comes to know Jesus, it is much like this healed man, understanding grows. When you first started learning about Jesus, who would you have said He was?

What do you say to those who are learning who Jesus is? How do you help them gain understanding?

#### **Day 4: John 9:32-34**

Even though the healed man had not yet confessed Jesus as the Messiah, he was now thrown out. This would have been excommunication, pronounced by the court of Sanhedrin, who had been building their case. There were two kinds of excommunication.

The Niddui was excommunicated for 7 days. During this time, no one but family could sit or eat with the person who was to be in mourning (no bathing, no wearing shoes...). The person's children could be banned from school and his wife from synagogue. If the person wasn't repentant, it could increase to 30 or 60 or 90 days.

The healed man echoed what the sages believed, only someone sent from God could heal him (verse 32). Niddui could have been handed down as a warning.

Consider what the healed man has gained. And also consider what his words of belief are costing him. Are you ever tempted to be thankful for blessings but silent in talking about them because of the perceived or real cost?

#### **Day 5: John 9:35-41**

Jesus heard the healed man had been thrown out. Given the man had not yet acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, perhaps the man was not far away when Jesus found him and asked, "Do you believe?" to which the man replied, "Lord, I believe" (verse 38). This would cost the man much!

The Herem was the second form of excommunication and was more harsh. It was for an indefinite time. No one was permitted to teach, work for, nor help the person other than the bare needs. A person was completely banned from the Jewish community. The first appearance of the term was in Exodus 22:19: "Whoever sacrifices to a god other than the LORD alone shall be proscribed (herem)."

The Pharisees and Sadducees would have believed in the Lord. They knew what Exodus said. Because they did not believe Jesus was the Messiah, their new law was built on what they understood and believed even though Jesus was teaching and showing them who He was.

Jesus is also showing you who He is. If asked, who would you say He is?

The blind man could point to his healing as to why he believed. 1 Peter 3:15 says, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." What do you point to as to why you believe? What is your answer when someone asks you why you believe in Jesus?

	Bethesda in John 5	Siloam in John 9	Biblical Reference
Meaning	House of Mercy / House of Grace	Sent	Jesus was sent and offered mercy & grace.
Location	Outside of temple walls during Jesus's time	Inside temple walls, fed by the Gihon Springs, also called the Virgin Spring	Jesus was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:23 and Luke 1:27, 34).
Building History	It was built over the Asclepion, an ancient pagan healing center. There was an upper and lower pool.	King Hezekiah built it, creating a tunnel about 2,000 feet long through solid rock to provide water to Jerusalem (2 Kings 20:20).	Jesus was the rock in the wilderness that gave water to the Hebrews (1 Corinthians 10:1-4).
Cultural	The Asclepion was dedicated to the Greek god of health, Asclepius. His daughters included the goddesses Hygeia and Panacea.  "When the Devil brings forward Asclepius as the raiser of the dead and healer of all diseases...likewise he has imitated the prophecies about Christ?" - Justin Martyr, 2nd Century Apologist	The water was used during the Feast of Tabernacles. Every morning during the Feast a priest would take a golden pot to the pool, fill it with water and bring it back to the altar.  The crowd would chant the <i>Hallel</i> (a Jewish prayer, verbatim from Psalms 113—118).	The waters of Siloam were used to anoint kings of the House of David (1 Kings 1:45). The anointing was symbolic of the Holy Spirit coming upon an individual (1 Samuel 16:13).  Siloam became associated with an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
How Did the Water Move	When the priests of Asclepius would open the connection, it would cause the waters to bubble.	The natural spring was soft and gentle, it was associated with the House of David and the Kingdom of God.	"The Lord spoke to me again: 'Because this people has rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah...'" Isaiah 8:5-6)
Beliefs	When the water bubbled, people would jump in hoping for healing.	The water was used during the Feast of Tabernacles. Every morning a priest would take a golden pot to the pool, fill it with water, and bring it back to the altar as the people shouted.	Isaiah 12:3 "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation"
Shows Trust In	The occult and the pagan religion of the Roman gods	The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob	"You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).
Jesus Healed	A man who was lame - and brought him out of his life of idolatry. Telling him to not continue in his life of sin would mean a turning from the pagan / cult worship.	A man blind from birth	The sages long believed that only the Messiah (the "sent" one of the Father) could heal a man born blind. John 9:4 says, "I must work the works of Him that sent me ..."
Jesus Said	"Get up! Pick up your mat and walk" (John 5:8) not to go wash in the Pool of Bethesda, where another god healed.	"Go wash in the Pool of Siloam." (John 9:7)	The blind man was <i>sent</i> to a pool called " <i>Sent</i> " by the One who was Himself <i>sent</i> by God into the world (John 3:17; 10:36).