

Glenview New Church Sunday Morning Program
Primary Lessons: Phase 1 – Lesson 22
The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-7)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. Afflictions are not punishments for sins, but they can be opportunities for the development of character.
- B. To be born blind spiritually means to have had no opportunity to learn and to understand the Lord's truth.

II. Story Circle

- A. Introduce the Story
 - 1. Do you remember the story about the man at the pool of Bethesda who had been sick for thirty-eight years and did not think he could help himself to become well? The Lord told him to try and then healed him when he obeyed.
 - 2. Today we have another story about Jesus' healing a man who did as Jesus told him to do.
- B. Tell/Read the Story
 - 1. Read aloud John 9:1-7.
- C. Ideas to Discuss
 - 1. What problem did the man in our story have? (He was blind.)
 - 2. How long had he been blind? (All his life - since birth)
 - 3. What did the disciples ask Jesus? ("Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?")
 - 4. What was Jesus' answer? ("Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him," that is, the man and his parents had done nothing wrong that caused the blindness. But the man's blindness was a chance for Jesus to show people His power and goodness by giving the man his sight.)
 - 5. What did Jesus do to heal the man? (He spat on the ground and made clay with His saliva, then put the clay on the blind man's eyes.)
 - 6. What did Jesus tell the man to do? ("Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.")
 - 7. Did the man obey? (Yes)
 - 8. What happened after he washed in the pool of Siloam? (He came back seeing!)

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D. Further Ideas

1. We've talked before about miracles that Jesus did while He was on earth. Did He ever perform miracles on people who didn't believe in Him or who didn't want Him to? (No) He always helped the people who believed He had the power to help them and who wanted His help.
2. But the blind man in our story didn't ask Jesus to heal him. How do we know that he wanted Jesus' help and believed that Jesus could heal his blindness? (Draw out children's ideas, then--] because the man cooperated with the Lord; he did as he was told and went to wash in the pool of Siloam as Jesus had commanded. If he hadn't wanted help, or if he hadn't believed that Jesus could heal him, he wouldn't have followed Jesus' instructions, would he?)
3. Some people believe that all sickness and misfortune are the Lord's way of punishing people when they're bad. But this is not what Jesus taught while He was on earth, and we know from the Writings that He loves us too much ever to punish us by hurting us or by making us sick or crippled in any way.
4. Did you know that a person's soul or spirit can be blind? If someone does not know about the Lord and never has a chance to learn from the Word, he is spiritually blind; he can't see what is true or what is good. But it is not his fault that he has this blindness, and the Lord will give him spiritual sight when he dies and goes to the spiritual world.
5. The worst kind of blindness is spiritual blindness that someone chooses to have. This blindness comes from refusing to see what's true because we are too selfish and evil to want to see. When we would rather do what is wrong, even though we've been told what is right, we're choosing to be spiritually blind. And the Lord can't heal that kind of blindness because we won't cooperate with Him and follow His instructions. He can heal only people who want to be healed.

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "Obey my voice".
2. "See the Savior in the temple," HYMNAL #166.

B. Activities

1. To let the children experience what it is like to be blind, have them take turns trying this: The teacher blindfolds one child and leads him to the center of the room. Let him try to find his way around. Or offer him a familiar object to try to identify, perhaps a pencil or a cup.

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Ask him to tell you what color it is! Let him experiment with his balance by trying to stand on one foot or sit down. Have another child come up quietly, and ask the blindfolded child to try to identify him.

2. When the children have experienced the helplessness of the blind man, they will better understand the man's joy at being healed.
(From the Family Lesson on John 9)

C. Project: THE BLIND MAN SEES!

1. Materials Needed

- a. Black construction paper
- b. White drawing paper (same size as black paper)
- c. Oil pastels
- d. Stapler

2. Motivation (To be read to the children)

- a. Shut your eyes and imagine that you are blind. You've been blind since you were born. You've never seen what your house looks like. You don't know what your mother and father look like. You've never seen any colors at all. Your world is all darkness and black.
- b. Now, open your eyes. For the first time in your life, you can see! What would you like to see most? Your parents? Your house? A field of flowers? Your own face? Everything is light and bright and beautiful! The world is such a colorful place!
- c. On your sheet of paper, draw what you would like to see first if Jesus had just healed your blindness.

3. Method

- a. Each child draws his picture on white drawing paper using oil pastels.
- b. When the picture is complete, cover it with a piece of black construction paper. Staple the two pieces together along the top edge.
- c. When the black cover is in place, this is the way the world looked to the blind man before he was healed. Lift the cover, and see what the healed man could see now.

IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Illustrations of Jesus healing the blind man (attached).

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's BIBLE STUDY NOTES, Vol. 6, "The Man Born Blind" (John 9), pp.79-94.