

Week Three: 'I am the light of the world.'

OPENING PRAYER

READ | *John 8:12; 9:1-11*

¹When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

¹As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

³"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. ⁴As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

⁶Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. ⁷"Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

⁸His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some claimed that he was.

Others said, "No, he only looks like him."

But he himself insisted, "I am the man."

¹⁰"How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded.

¹¹He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

DISCUSS

1. In verse 12 Jesus calls himself 'the light of the world' and promises that anyone who follows him 'will never walk in darkness.' What do you think he means by 'darkness'? Is there a specific need that people have that he's referring to when he contrasts 'darkness' and the 'light of life'?
2. What is the 'work of God' that Jesus refers to in verse 3, which 'might be displayed' in the blind man's life? Jesus makes mud with spit to heal the blind man. What can this man 'who used to sit and beg' see now that couldn't before? Can any parallels from this account be drawn to your own life and/or encounter with Jesus?
3. In the Old Testament the motif of light is used to refer to God's presence, his salvation, and his revelation. The psalmist writes, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Psalm 119:105). What, then, is the claim Jesus is making about himself? How might this have sounded to his first-century, Jewish hearers?

APPLY

1. Verses 2-3 point to the futility of trying to figure out the source of suffering in an individual's life, given our limited understanding beyond knowing that the world is simply not as it should be. But the blind man is one in whom Jesus can manifest God's works and reveal something of God himself and his purposes on earth. How is this miracle a sign that Jesus is indeed the light of the world? How does this sign reveal the Father's glory, i.e. his love and mercy (in the midst of suffering)? Try to draw from personal experience as you discuss.

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer suggestions: > that Jesus, 'the light of the world', would illumine our hearts and minds to more readily rely on God's love and mercy (grace) in seasons of darkness and suffering and joy