



signs of Jesus

in the first half of John's Gospel

Signs do not point to themselves, but to something greater. God showed them in powerful acts when he led his people out Egypt. Many later prophets also performed non-miraculous dramatic signs in their public preaching. Jesus follows both as redeemer and preacher, with even greater miraculous and symbolic signs. But to what do *they* point?

“Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of His disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:30-31)

Much more than the other Gospels, the language of “signs” shapes the first half of John (2-11). John records the following.

John 2:1-11	Water into Wine: Oenology	4/5 Mar 17 ¹
John 2:12-25	The Temple Cleaned: Garbology ²	11/12 Mar 17
John 4:43-5:15	The Sick Healed : Neurology ³	18/19 Mar 17
John 6	The Crowd Fed: Bromatology	25/26 Mar 17
John 3:1-18; 7:1-52	Responding to Signs: Reflexology ⁴	1/2 Apr 17
John 9:1-41	The Blind See: Ophthalmology	8/9 Apr 17
John 11:1-44	The Dead Rise: Thanatology	22/23 Apr 17

¹ Week preached at Jannali Anglican Church: Saturday and Sunday, God willing.

² Not often regarded as one of the signs, but as you will see it probably is a sign and begins the Jerusalem signs that people react to.

³ Two healing signs we've combined into one study.

⁴ This sermon won't be preached at Evening Church since they are having a confirmation service. It is technically not looking at a sign, but on people's responses to all the signs.

Water into Wine: Oenology

John 2:1-11



¹ On the third day a wedding took place in Cana of Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and ² Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding as well.

³ When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother told Him, "They don't have any wine."

⁴ "What has this concern of yours to do with Me, woman?" Jesus asked. "My hour has not yet come."

⁵ "Do whatever He tells you," His mother told the servants.

⁶ Now six stone water jars had been set there for Jewish purification. Each contained 20 or 30 gallons.

⁷ "Fill the jars with water," Jesus told them. So they filled them to the brim. ⁸ Then He said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the chief servant." And they did.

⁹ When the chief servant tasted the water (after it had become wine), he did not know where it came from—though the servants who had drawn the water knew. He called the groom ¹⁰ and told him, "Everyone sets out the fine wine first, then, after people have drunk freely, the inferior. But you have kept the fine wine until now."

¹¹ Jesus performed this first sign in Cana of Galilee. He displayed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

1. **Thinking before reading.** If an unbeliever heard that Jesus turned water into wine, what kind of things would they say? What about conservative Church goers?

2. **Pray for understanding. Read the passage.**

3. **Weekly "sign" questions:**

- Find and circle the word "sign". Is anything drawn attention to with this sign? Do we learn anything about signs in general?
- Find and highlight the location. What do you know about it? Is it significant in the story of Jesus?
- Find and highlight any times mentioned: a festival or celebration? What can you find out about this festival? Is there any significance in this?

- Are any unusual details mentioned? What might these refer to?
- Who was present at this sign? What significance is there in this?
- If you were a member of the crowd, what would you have seen of Jesus? If you were someone in-the-know, what would you have seen of Jesus? Is it different?
- What responses are shown? What should we imitate? What should we avoid?
- What questions are raised by this passage?

4. Digging deeper into this sign.

- Only the servants knew the water had turned into wine and even they might not have seen it happen. The sign that makes people astonished is the that the best wine was brought out last. Are there hints in the passage as to what this is referring to? (eg. 2:4, 6, 10, 11 and the type of festival)
- Read John 1:14-18. How might this help us understand the first sign in Galilee.

The Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John testified concerning Him and exclaimed, “This was the One of whom I said, ‘The One coming after me has surpassed me, because He existed before me.’”) Indeed, we have all received grace after grace from His fullness, for the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The One and Only Son—the One who is at the Father’s side—He has revealed Him. (John 1:14-18)

- Even though God set up the Old Covenant for the people of Israel, in what ways are each of the following more amazing when Jesus came to bring in the new:
 - knowing God and having access to him
 - patterns of worship
 - joy, peace and community

5. Talk/think about what impact this has on you and pray.

The Temple Cleansed: Garbology

John 2:12-25



¹² After this, He went down to Capernaum, together with His mother, His brothers, and His disciples, and they stayed there only a few days.

¹³ The Jewish Passover was near, so Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple complex He found people selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and He also found the money changers sitting there. ¹⁵ After making a whip out of cords, He drove everyone out of the temple complex with their sheep and oxen. He also poured out the money changers' coins and overturned the tables. ¹⁶ He told those who were selling doves, "Get these things out of here! Stop turning My Father's house into a marketplace!"

¹⁷ And His disciples remembered that it is written: Zeal for Your house will consume Me.

¹⁸ So the Jews replied to Him, "What sign of authority will You show us for doing these things?"

¹⁹ Jesus answered, "Destroy this sanctuary, and I will raise it up in three days."

²⁰ Therefore the Jews said, "This sanctuary took 46 years to build, and will You raise it up in three days?"

²¹ But He was speaking about the sanctuary of His body. ²² So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this. And they believed the Scripture and the statement Jesus had made.

²³ While He was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many trusted in His name when they saw the signs He was doing. ²⁴ Jesus, however, would not entrust Himself to them, since He knew them all ²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify about man; for He Himself knew what was in man.

1. **Thinking before reading.** What are some contemporary examples where people twist a God's way to make lots of money and/or hide in their sin?
2. **Pray for understanding. Read the passage.**
3. **Weekly "sign" questions:**
 - Find and circle the word "sign". Is anything drawn attention to with this sign? Do we learn anything about signs in general?
 - Find and highlight the location. What do you know about it? Is it significant in the story of Jesus?

- Find and highlight any times mentioned: a festival or celebration? What can you find out about this festival? Is there any significance in this?
- Are any unusual details mentioned? What might these refer to?
- Who was present at this sign? What significance is there in this?
- If you were a member of the crowd, what would you have seen of Jesus? If you were someone in-the-know,, what would you have seen of Jesus? Is it different?
- What responses are shown? What should we imitate? What should we avoid?
- What questions are raised by this passage?

4. Digging deeper into this sign.

- The first sign was about the “fine wine” that God was bringing in with Jesus. This the New Covenant was to be much better than the Old. What does the cleansing of the temple also say was wrong with the Old Covenant?
- How can we be in danger of doing the same thing as they did in our worship of God?
- Read the Psalm Jesus’ disciples remembered. How does this give us an insight to the emotions and loneliness of what Jesus did at the temple complex? How do Jesus’ followers sometimes feel those same emotions and loneliness?

I have become a stranger to my brothers and a foreigner to my mother’s sons because zeal for Your house has consumed me, and the insults of those who insult You have fallen on me. I mourned and fasted, but it brought me insults. I wore sackcloth as my clothing, and I was a joke to them. Those who sit at the city gate talk about me, and drunkards make up songs about me. (Psalm 68:8-12)

- In what ways is Jesus the New Temple in this passage? (There may be significance in the references to the third day in 2:1 and 20) What does this mean to us?

5. Talk/think about what impact this has on you and pray.

The Sick Healed: Neurology

John 4:43-5:15



⁴³ After two days He left there for Galilee. ⁴⁴ Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honour in his own country. ⁴⁵ When they entered Galilee, the Galileans welcomed Him because they had seen everything He did in Jerusalem during the festival. For they also had gone to the festival.

⁴⁶ Then He went again to Cana of Galilee, where He had turned the water into wine. There was a certain royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and pleaded with Him to come down and heal his son, for he was about to die.

⁴⁸ Jesus told him, “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe.”

⁴⁹ “Sir,” the official said to Him, “come down before my boy dies!”

⁵⁰ “Go,” Jesus told him, “your son will live.” The man believed what Jesus said to him and departed.

⁵¹ While he was still going down, his slaves met him saying that his boy was alive. ⁵² He asked them at what time he got better. “Yesterday at seven in the morning the fever left him,” they answered. ⁵³ The father realised this was the very hour at which Jesus had told him, “Your son will live.” Then he himself believed, along with his whole household. ⁵⁴ This, therefore, was the second sign Jesus performed after He came from Judea to Galilee.

^{5:1} After this, a Jewish festival took place, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² By the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a pool, called Bethesda in Hebrew, which has five colonnades. ³ Within these lay a large number of the sick—blind, lame, and paralysed.

⁵ One man was there who had been sick for 38 years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and knew he had already been there a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to get well?”

⁷ “Sir,” the sick man answered, “I don’t have a man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I’m coming, someone goes down ahead of me.”

⁸ “Get up,” Jesus told him, “pick up your mat and walk!” ⁹ Instantly the man got well, picked up his mat, and started to walk.

Now that day was the Sabbath, ¹⁰ so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “This is the Sabbath! It’s illegal for you to pick up your mat.”

¹¹ He replied, “The man who made me well told me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’”

¹² “Who is this man who told you, ‘Pick up your mat and walk’?” they asked. ¹³ But the man who was cured did not know who it was, because Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

¹⁴ After this, Jesus found him in the temple complex and said to him, “See, you are well. Do not sin anymore, so that something worse doesn’t happen to you.” ¹⁵ The man went and reported to the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

1. **Thinking before reading.** What do you imagine it is like to have a long term or life threatening illness? What is like caring for someone like this?
2. **Pray for understanding. Read the passage.**
3. **Weekly “sign” questions: (these will be the bulk of the study this week)**
 - Find and circle the word “sign”. Is anything drawn attention to with this sign? Do we learn anything about signs in general?
 - Find and highlight the location. What do you know about it? Is it significant in the story of Jesus?
 - Find and highlight any times mentioned: a festival or celebration? What can you find out about this festival? Is there any significance in this?
 - Are any unusual details mentioned? What might these refer to?
 - Who was present at this sign? What significance is there in this?
 - If you were a member of the crowd, what would you have seen of Jesus? If you were someone in-the-know,, what would you have seen of Jesus? Is it different?
 - What responses are shown? What should we imitate? What should we avoid?
 - What questions are raised by this passage?

4. Digging deeper into this sign. (if it wasn't covered above)

- The Jewish Sabbath command was about rest. Notice how this command above all others has care and concern for all who fall under your roof. How does Jesus actually keep the commandment in his healing rather than breaking it? How Jesus the opposite of the religious leaders.

You are to labor six days and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. You must not do any work—you, your son or daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or donkey, any of your livestock, or the foreigner who lives within your gates, so that your male and female slaves may rest as you do. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. That is why the LORD your God has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. (Deuteronomy 5:13-15)

5. Talk/think about what impact this has on you and pray.

The Crowd Fed: Bromology

John 6



^{6:1} After this, Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). ² And a huge crowd was following Him because they saw the signs that He was performing by healing the sick. ³ So Jesus went up a mountain and sat down there with His disciples.

⁴ Now the Passover, a Jewish festival, was near. ⁵ Therefore, when Jesus looked up and noticed a huge crowd coming toward Him, He asked Philip, “Where will we buy bread so these people can eat?” ⁶ He asked this to test him, for He Himself knew what He was going to do.

⁷ Philip answered, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread wouldn’t be enough for each of them to have a little.”

⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, ⁹ “There’s a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish—but what are they for so many?”

¹⁰ Then Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.”

There was plenty of grass in that place, so they sat down. The men numbered about 5,000. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, and after giving thanks He distributed them to those who were seated—so also with the fish, as much as they wanted.

¹² When they were full, He told His disciples, “Collect the leftovers so that nothing is wasted.” ¹³ So they collected them and filled 12 baskets with the pieces from the five barley loaves that were left over by those who had eaten.

¹⁴ When the people saw the sign He had done, they said, “This really is the Prophet who was to come into the world!” ¹⁵ Therefore, when Jesus knew that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He withdrew again to the mountain by Himself.

... (Jesus walks on the water!)

²² The next day, the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea knew there had been only one boat. They also knew that Jesus had not boarded the boat with His disciples, but that His disciples had gone off alone. ²³ Some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they ate the bread after the Lord gave thanks. ²⁴ When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

²⁵ When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You get here?”

²⁶ Jesus answered, “I assure you: You are looking for Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate the loaves and were filled. ²⁷ Don’t work for the food that perishes but for the food that lasts for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal of approval on Him.”

²⁸ “What can we do to perform the works of God?” they asked.

²⁹ Jesus replied, “This is the work of God—that you believe in the One He has sent.”

³⁰ “What sign then are You going to do so we may see and believe You?” they asked. “What are You going to perform? ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written: He gave them bread from heaven to eat.”

³² Jesus said to them, “I assure you: Moses didn’t give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the real bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is the One who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

³⁴ Then they said, “Sir, give us this bread always!”

³⁵ “I am the bread of life,” Jesus told them. “No one who comes to Me will ever be hungry, and no one who believes in Me will ever be thirsty again. ³⁶ But as I told you, you’ve seen Me, and yet you do not believe. ³⁷ Everyone the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will never cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of Him who sent Me: that I should lose none of those He has given Me but should raise them up on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of My Father: that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

⁴¹ Therefore the Jews started complaining about Him because He said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” ⁴² They were saying, “Isn’t this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can He now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?”

⁴³ Jesus answered them, “Stop complaining among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets: And they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has listened to and learned from the Father comes to Me— ⁴⁶ not that anyone has seen the Father except the One who is from God. He has seen the Father.

⁴⁷ “I assure you: Anyone who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”

1. **Thinking before reading.** If you didn’t have to work for the food and drink you need, but it was all for free, what difference would it make to you?
2. **Pray for understanding. Read the passage.**
3. **Weekly “sign” questions: (these will be the bulk of the study this week)**
 - Find and circle the word “sign”. Is anything drawn attention to with this sign? Do we learn anything about signs in general?

- Find and highlight the location. What do you know about it? Is it significant in the story of Jesus?
- Find and highlight any times mentioned: a festival or celebration? What can you find out about this festival? Is there any significance in this?
- Are any unusual details mentioned? What might these refer to?
- Who was present at this sign? What significance is there in this?
- If you were a member of the crowd, what would you have seen of Jesus? If you were someone in-the-know,, what would you have seen of Jesus? Is it different?
- What responses are shown? What should we imitate? What should we avoid?
- What questions are raised by this passage?

4. Digging deeper into this sign. (if they weren't covered above)

- How does knowing about the Israelites, wandering in the wilderness and being fed by God, help you understand what Jesus is doing and how people respond to him?
- What claims is Jesus making of himself as the bread of life?
- What mistakes do we make in responding to him? And how are we like the Jews of Jesus' time?
- How then should we respond to him?
- While this sign does not mention the Lord's Supper, how does it help us understand what we do then and do every day?

5. Talk/think about what impact this has on you and pray.

Responding to Signs: Reflexology

John 3,7 (choose one passage to study or do both which is preferable)



1. **Thinking before reading.** Can you think of any ways that road signs can be ignored or misunderstood? Are there any tragic or funny examples you know of?
2. **Pray for understanding. Read one or both of the following passages before answering questions in (3):**
 - A. **Nicodemus responding to Jesus' signs in Jerusalem (cleansing of temple etc..)**

^{2:23} While He was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many trusted in His name when they saw the signs He was doing. ²⁴ Jesus, however, would not entrust Himself to them, since He knew them all²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify about man; for He Himself knew what was in man.

^{3:1} There was a man from the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Him at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher, for no one could perform these signs You do unless God were with him."

³ Jesus replied, "I assure you: Unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁴ "But how can anyone be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked Him. "Can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born?"

⁵ Jesus answered, "I assure you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be amazed that I told you that you must be born again. ⁸ The wind blows where it pleases, and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

⁹ "How can these things be?" asked Nicodemus.

¹⁰ "Are you a teacher of Israel and don't know these things?" Jesus replied. ¹¹ "I assure you: We speak what We know and We testify to what We have seen, but you do not accept Our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about things that happen on earth and you don't believe, how will you believe if I tell you about things of heaven? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the One who descended from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in Him will have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world that He might condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸ Anyone who believes in Him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the One and Only Son of God.

B. Jews responding to Jesus' signs in Jerusalem (healing on the Sabbath etc.)

^{7:1} After this, Jesus traveled in Galilee, since He did not want to travel in Judea because the Jews were trying to kill Him. ² The Jewish Festival of Tabernacles was near, ³ so His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go to Judea so Your disciples can see Your works that You are doing. ⁴ For no one does anything in secret while he's seeking public recognition. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." ⁵ (For not even His brothers believed in Him.)

⁶ Jesus told them, "My time has not yet arrived, but your time is always at hand. ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it does hate Me because I testify about it—that its deeds are evil. ⁸ Go up to the festival yourselves. I'm not going up to the festival yet, because My time has not yet fully come." ⁹ After He had said these things, He stayed in Galilee.

¹⁰ After His brothers had gone up to the festival, then He also went up, not openly but secretly. ¹¹ The Jews were looking for Him at the festival and saying, "Where is He?" ¹² And there was a lot of discussion about Him among the crowds. Some were saying, "He's a good man." Others were saying, "No, on the contrary, He's deceiving the people." ¹³ Still, nobody was talking publicly about Him because they feared the Jews.

¹⁴ When the festival was already half over, Jesus went up into the temple complex and began to teach. ¹⁵ Then the Jews were amazed and said, "How does He know the Scriptures, since He hasn't been trained?"

¹⁶ Jesus answered them, "My teaching isn't Mine but is from the One who sent Me. ¹⁷ If anyone wants to do His will, he will understand whether the teaching is from God or if I am speaking on My own. ¹⁸ The one who speaks for himself seeks his own glory. But He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. ¹⁹ Didn't Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law! Why do you want to kill Me?"

[...]

²⁵ Some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Isn't this the man they want to kill? ²⁶ Yet, look! He's speaking publicly and they're saying nothing to Him. Can it be true that the authorities know He is the Messiah? ²⁷ But we know where this man is from. When the Messiah comes, nobody will know where He is from."

²⁸ As He was teaching in the temple complex, Jesus cried out, "You know Me and you know where I am from. Yet I have not come on My own, but the One who sent Me is true. You don't know Him; ²⁹ I know Him because I am from Him, and He sent Me."

³⁰ Then they tried to seize Him. Yet no one laid a hand on Him because His hour had not yet come. ³¹ However, many from the crowd believed in Him and said, "When the Messiah comes, He won't perform more signs than this man has done, will He?"

The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, so the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple police to arrest Him.

[...]

³⁷ On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone is thirsty, he should come to Me and drink! ³⁸ The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him.” ³⁹ He said this about the Spirit. Those who believed in Jesus were going to receive the Spirit, for the Spirit had not yet been received because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

[...]

⁴⁵ Then the temple police came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, “Why haven’t you brought Him?” ⁴⁶ The police answered, “No man ever spoke like this!”

⁴⁷ Then the Pharisees responded to them: “Are you fooled too? ⁴⁸ Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed in Him? ⁴⁹ But this crowd, which doesn’t know the law, is accursed!”

⁵⁰ Nicodemus—the one who came to Him previously, being one of them—said to them, ⁵¹ “Our law doesn’t judge a man before it hears from him and knows what he’s doing, does it?”

⁵² “You aren’t from Galilee too, are you?” they replied. “Investigate and you will see that no prophet arises from Galilee.”

3. Questions from this passage(s)? (some are from one passage more than the other)

- What references are there to “signs”? What do you learn about these signs?
- What things are done in public and what is done in the secret in this passage?
- What kind of belief does Jesus not accept? Do you find that unusual? Who has this kind of believing unbelief in this passage?
- What does real belief look like? What role does the death of Jesus have in this? (in John 3) Why is this different to just believing in the “signs”? What role does the Holy Spirit have in a right response?
- What do you need to learn and put into practice from this? How does it change the way you speak the message about Jesus?
- (If you have read both) What development can you see in Nicodemus? How is he a model for us? See also John 19:38-40

“After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus—but secretly because of his fear of the Jews—asked Pilate that he might remove Jesus’ body. Pilate gave him permission, so he came and took His body away. Nicodemus (who had previously come to Him at night) also came, bringing a mixture of about 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes. Then they took Jesus’ body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the aromatic spices, according to the burial custom of the Jews.”

4. Talk/think about what impact this has on you and pray.

The Blind See: Ophthalmology

John 9:1-41



¹ As He was passing by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples questioned Him: “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

³ “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” Jesus answered. “This came about so that God’s works might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must do the works of Him who sent Me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

⁶ After He said these things He spit on the ground, made some mud from the saliva, and spread the mud on his eyes. ⁷ “Go,” He told him, “wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means “Sent”). So he left, washed, and came back seeing.

⁸ His neighbours and those who formerly had seen him as a beggar said, “Isn’t this the man who sat begging?” ⁹ Some said, “He’s the one.” “No,” others were saying, “but he looks like him.” He kept saying, “I’m the one!”

¹⁰ Therefore they asked him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹ He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and told me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So when I went and washed I received my sight.” ¹² “Where is He?” they asked. “I don’t know,” he said.

¹³ They brought the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ The day that Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵ So again the Pharisees asked him how he received his sight. “He put mud on my eyes,” he told them. “I washed and I can see.”

¹⁶ Therefore some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for He doesn’t keep the Sabbath!” But others were saying, “How can a sinful man perform such signs?” And there was a division among them.

¹⁷ Again they asked the blind man, “What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?” “He’s a prophet,” he said.

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe this about him—that he was blind and received sight—until they summoned the parents of the one who had received his sight.

¹⁹ They asked them, “Is this your son, the one you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”

²⁰ “We know this is our son and that he was born blind,” his parents answered. ²¹ “But we don’t know how he now sees, and we don’t know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he’s of age. He will speak for himself.” ²² His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews, since the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him as Messiah, he would be banned from the synagogue. ²³ This is why his parents said, “He’s of age; ask him.”

²⁴ So a second time they summoned the man who had been blind and told him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner!”

²⁵ He answered, “Whether or not He’s a sinner, I don’t know. One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I can see!” ²⁶ Then they asked him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”

²⁷ “I already told you,” he said, “and you didn’t listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You don’t want to become His disciples too, do you?” ²⁸ They ridiculed him: “You’re that man’s disciple, but we’re Moses’ disciples. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses. But this man —we don’t know where He’s from!”

³⁰ “This is an amazing thing,” the man told them. “You don’t know where He is from, yet He opened my eyes! ³¹ We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He listens to him. ³² Throughout history no one has ever heard of someone opening the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, He wouldn’t be able to do anything.”

³⁴ “You were born entirely in sin,” they replied, “and are you trying to teach us?” Then they threw him out.

³⁵ When Jesus heard that they had thrown the man out, He found him and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

³⁶ “Who is He, Sir, that I may believe in Him?” he asked.

³⁷ Jesus answered, “You have seen Him; in fact, He is the One speaking with you.”

³⁸ “I believe, Lord!” he said, and he worshiped Him.

³⁹ Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, in order that those who do not see will see and those who do see will become blind.”

⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and asked Him, “We aren’t blind too, are we?”

⁴¹ “If you were blind,” Jesus told them, “you wouldn’t have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see’ — your sin remains.

1. **Thinking before reading.** Some people who see are blind to some things. What are some real life examples you’ve seen? domestic blindness, political blinkers, believers, unbelievers etc..
2. **Pray for understanding. Read the passage.**
3. **Weekly “sign” questions:**
 - Find and circle the word “sign”. Is anything drawn attention to with this sign? Do we learn anything about signs in general?

- Find and highlight the location. What do you know about it? Is it significant in the story of Jesus?
- Find and highlight any times mentioned: a festival or celebration? What can you find out about this festival? Is there any significance in this?
- Are any unusual details mentioned? What might these refer to?
- Who was present at this sign? What significance is there in this?
- If you were a member of the crowd, what would you have seen of Jesus? If you were someone in-the-know,, what would you have seen of Jesus? Is it different?
- What responses are shown? What should we imitate? What should we avoid?
- What questions are raised by this passage?

4. Digging deeper into this sign. (if they weren't covered above)

- How do you see the belief of the blind man developing? Can you retell his story of from a blind person to someone who believes and worships Jesus?
- How does the blind man give his own testimony? It is obviously behind John Newton's, Amazing Grace. 'was blind but now I see'. What can you learn about how to give a testimony from this blind man? Try giving it with each other in the group or with someone you see today.
- What do we learn about Jesus from this sign?
- Even though the Pharisees can see, in what ways are they blind? What warning can we learn? What does this teach us about reaching out to our friends? (see last week's study on the Spirit)

5. Talk/think about what impact this has on you and pray.

The Dead Rise: Thanatology

John 11



¹ Now a man was sick, Lazarus, from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, and it was her brother Lazarus who was sick. ³ So the sisters sent a message to Him: “Lord, the one You love is sick.”

⁴ When Jesus heard it, He said, “This sickness will not end in death but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶ So when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. ⁷ Then after that, He said to the disciples, “Let’s go to Judea again.”

⁸ “Rabbi,” the disciples told Him, “just now the Jews tried to stone You, and You’re going there again?”

⁹ “Aren’t there 12 hours in a day?” Jesus answered. “If anyone walks during the day, he doesn’t stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ If anyone walks during the night, he does stumble, because the light is not in him.” ¹¹ He said this, and then He told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I’m on My way to wake him up.” ¹² Then the disciples said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well.”

¹³ Jesus, however, was speaking about his death, but they thought He was speaking about natural sleep. ¹⁴ So Jesus then told them plainly, “Lazarus has died. ¹⁵ I’m glad for you that I wasn’t there so that you may believe. But let’s go to him.” ¹⁶ Then Thomas (called “Twin”) said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s go so that we may die with Him.”

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem (about two miles away). ¹⁹ Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. ²⁰ As soon as Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet Him. But Mary remained seated in the house.

²¹ Then Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died. ²² Yet even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You.”

²³ “Your brother will rise again,” Jesus told her.

²⁴ Martha said, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in Me, even if he dies, will live. ²⁶ Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die—ever. Do you believe this?”

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she told Him, “I believe You are the Messiah, the Son of God, who comes into the world.”

²⁸ Having said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, saying in private, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”

²⁹ As soon as she heard this, she got up quickly and went to Him. ³⁰ Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met Him. ³¹ The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw that Mary got up quickly and went out. So they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to cry there.

³² When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw Him, she fell at His feet and told Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died!”

³³ When Jesus saw her crying, and the Jews who had come with her crying, He was angry in His spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴ “Where have you put him?” He asked. “Lord,” they told Him, “come and see.”

³⁵ Jesus wept.

³⁶ So the Jews said, “See how He loved him!” ³⁷ But some of them said, “Couldn’t He who opened the blind man’s eyes also have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸ Then Jesus, angry in Himself again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ “Remove the stone,” Jesus said.

Martha, the dead man’s sister, told Him, “Lord, he’s already decaying. It’s been four days.” ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?”

⁴¹ So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You heard Me. ⁴² I know that You always hear Me, but because of the crowd standing here I said this, so they may believe You sent Me.” ⁴³ After He said this, He shouted with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out bound hand and foot with linen strips and with his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him and let him go.”

⁴⁵ Therefore, many of the Jews who came to Mary and saw what He did believed in Him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

⁴⁷ So the chief priests and the Pharisees convened the Sanhedrin and said, “What are we going to do since this man does many signs? ⁴⁸ If we let Him continue in this way, everyone will believe in Him! Then the Romans will come and remove both our place and our nation.”

1. **Thinking before reading.** How do people avoid death? What are the ‘winning’ tactics?
2. **Pray for understanding. Read the passage.**
3. **Weekly “sign” questions:**
 - Find and circle the word “sign”. Is anything drawn attention to with this sign? Do we learn anything about signs in general?
 - Find and highlight the location. What do you know about it? Is it significant in the story of Jesus?

- Find and highlight any times mentioned: a festival or celebration? What can you find out about this festival? Is there any significance in this?
- Are any unusual details mentioned? What might these refer to?
- Who was present at this sign? What significance is there in this?
- If you were a member of the crowd, what would you have seen of Jesus? If you were someone in-the-know,, what would you have seen of Jesus? Is it different?
- What responses are shown? What should we imitate? What should we avoid?
- What questions are raised by this passage?

4. Digging deeper into this sign. (if they weren't covered above)

- How would you describe the emotional journey of each of the major people in the story? Are any of them surprising?
- What verses in this passage help you in the face of:
 - Your own sickness (don't forget the wonderful way 11:3 is written)
 - The death of those around you
 - Your own death
- Like many of the other signs Jesus performed, raising Lazarus led to God's glory. Remember all the signs of Jesus you have looked at. What have they all shown about who Jesus is, and what he is bringing about? How do they bring God glory?

4. Talk/think about what impact this has on you and pray.