

## Discussion Questions

### Preparation

I know it's very early into this missional series but have you served in some way so far? What happened, why did you volunteer, how hard was it to sacrifice your time and convenience, how did you feel during and afterwards, and what were the results?

### Passage John 9 The Story of the Man Born Blind

1. Go through each of the characters in the story. What did each of them see? What did each of them do? What's the relationship between seeing and doing? And by seeing, what does the story mean when it says *"he (Jesus) saw the man blind from birth?"*
2. *"As he (Jesus) went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?'"* John 9:1-2

Apply what the disciples saw and did to current situations. Are there issues or situations that spark debate rather than action?

3. What do you think about the concept of "karma?" Is there any truth to the belief? Does it run parallel or perpendicular to Christian teaching? What's the secular version of karma and does it influence Christian compassion?
4. *"His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, 'Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?' Some claimed that he was. Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' But he himself insisted, 'I am the man.'" John 9:8-9*

Apply what the neighbors saw and did to current situations. Are there situations that cause people to become blind to the problem? Who are the "invisibles" today?

5. *"They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. 'He put mud on my eyes,' the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see.' Some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.'" John 9:14-16*

Apply what the Pharisees saw and did to modern situations. Are there situations that cause people to notice the sin or to become judgmental towards others rather than show compassion?

6. *"We know he is our son,' the parents answered, 'and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself.'*

# Ripple Effect: Compassion

## John 9

4/30/23

*His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. That was why his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'*" John 9:20-23

Apply what the parents saw and did to current situations. What causes people to wash their hands of certain situations or problems?

7. How can long-term illnesses or disabilities affect a person's relationship with God? Can they cause a person to become harder towards God or softer towards God? Do you have an example of both?

8. *"But this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him"* (vs. 3)

Is this a new causal that Jesus is introducing as to why God allows suffering in the world? What is Jesus telling us about how to respond to people's pain and suffering?

9. *"While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, 'Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.' Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!' And immediately the leprosy left him."* Luke 5:12-13

*"When Jesus saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven.'"* Luke 15:20

Take these examples of Jesus showing compassion along with the story of the man born blind. What do they teach us about compassion?

10. Apply Jesus' example of how to treat those with a physical need to the problem of homelessness. How are we to show compassion to the homeless? How can we balance compassion with accountability so the homeless don't remain stuck in their homelessness?

(This is a hot topic so hear each other out and keep the debate civil and respectful!)

11. What do you think about American compassion? In what ways does it mirror the teachings of Jesus and in what ways does it not? What changes do you think we need to make in order to show compassion in a way that restores people instead of merely offering relief?

12. Final comments?

Perhaps the best way to apply this passage to our lives is to, instead of merely talking about it, go out and do something to alleviate a person's suffering. In response to the disciples' response to the man, Jesus shuts down the "bible study" and did something about the man's blindness, both physical and spiritual.