

John 9

ENGAGE FELLOWSHIP

“When Jesus learned they had thrown him out, he went to find him and said to him, ‘Do you believe in the Son of God?’” (John 9:35)

MY JOURNAL

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■ ■ This chapter describes the best day of this man's entire life, yet no one – not friends, family or the religious community – was willing to celebrate with him. The people of the neighborhood ignored him. The religious leaders accused him. His family rejected him. But when Jesus heard all of this, he went to find him.

Has this ever happened to you? On one of the best or worse days of your life have you been left alone to either grieve or celebrate...alone?

Jesus gave the church a profound example to follow. Romans 12:15 says, “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep”.

Take a moment right now to recall a friend or loved one that is experiencing life alone. The Lord is calling you to simply walk alongside and encourage.

Pause with your small group or partner and ask God to “send” you: “*Send me Holy Spirit to _____ who at times is alone, struggling with _____.*”

Today, make a phone call, send a text or have a cup of coffee and do what Jesus did. When he heard that the man was alone, His first response was not to preach to him, pray for him or give a pep talk but simply to be with him.

Your friend needs the same today.

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ENCOUNTER JESUS

“Teacher, whose sin caused this guy’s blindness, his own, or sin of his parents?” Jesus answered, “Neither. It happened to him so that you could watch him experience God’s miracle.” (John 9:2-3)

MY JOURNAL

Who sinned? The entire ninth chapter of John holds many great insights for the followers of Jesus. As Jesus and His disciples are going to Jerusalem, they come upon a man beside the road blind from birth. The Bible records that Jesus heals the man, prompting a lot of trouble subsequently. The man is called before the religious leaders. His family is brought in to try to explain what has happened to him. Finally because he continues to testify that Jesus was responsible for his receiving his sight, they throw him out of the synagogue. When Jesus hears about it, he goes out and finds the man and reveals more of Himself to him (see John 9:35).

Of specific importance to us becoming people who love as Jesus loved is the issue of grace. Surely He has looked beyond our faults to see our needs (Romans 5:8 and Luke 19:7)—but can we do likewise?

One tragic part of the story is that even as Christ’s heart is moved with compassion and grace, when the disciples looked at the same man beside the road, they asked this question, “Master, who sinned? This man or his parents...” Do you see the contrast between the heart of Jesus moved to minister to needs and the hearts of the disciples wanting to know, “Who sinned?”

Following Jesus and loving as He loves means becoming a person of grace. It means seeing and ministering to needs, such as support, encouragement, and acceptance, rather than seeing and reacting only to behaviors. The power for sustaining a ministry to people in need must come from God and the power to give grace comes from having partaken of God’s grace. “For it is by grace you have been saved...”

(Ephesians 2:8). “But God demonstrates His own love for us in this “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). One of the things that will empower your ministry to hurting people is reflection upon the abundant grace you have received from God, prompting gratitude in your heart. **Pause often to consider Calvary and whisper the words “He did it for me.”** Never get over the wonder that you have been loved and you’ll be constrained in loving others. (2 Corinthians 5:21).

When we encounter Jesus, his grace is not just for us but for all. As difficult as Jesus’ answer was, it was brutally honest. In God’s grace-filled plan of redemption, this man was called to play a part...it happened so that we could all experience God’s grace! Secure in the wonder of His love, can you submit your life in a new way, a way that allows God to use you so that others can experience—witness, observe, see clearly—the miracle grace of the Father?

Begin small. What humbling experience in your life can you submit to God right now to use for His glory?

Pray like this: “Jesus, You have changed my life so that I could be a witness to others of Your amazing grace. Today, I submit _____ to You and ask that you use Your grace in me for Your glory. Just like the man born blind, today I will get up and wash the filth of shame from my eyes and see You face to face.”

Now go and display the glory of God, that others will see Jesus.

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EXPERIENCE SCRIPTURE

*"I have come to judge those who think they see and make them blind.
And for those who are blind, I have come to make them see."
(John 9:39)*

MY JOURNAL

Like a map, God wrote the Scriptures to point to eternal life through Jesus, yet, the religious elite of His day would not go down the path.

- They memorized, but it never went from the head to the heart.
- They acted out, but the words never changed their lives.
- They sought God, but not the great gift of eternal life they said they pursued.

This is also true in the church today. There is much study but little sanctification. There are many translations but not much transformation. The words of Jesus are not only to be read, memorized, and sung about on Sunday morning but experienced and practically walked out in daily life.

Get out of your head and into your heart. The Holy Spirit was given that we would never be alone (John 13:16-17). When we read His Word, the Holy Spirit is with us to direct us so the external word becomes the internal word that results in the directed path for life today.

Listen to His voice instead of just reading the words. Is there a path, a direction or step that He is directing you to take today?

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you from John 9 and then read the chapter. What Scripture has He impressed on your heart? Now verbalize the lesson back in prayer: “Lord, I see where you showed great grace to the blind man. I need that grace today...I see where many people ignored the man but that you sought him out...I see where the religious people read but never obeyed.”

Now respond to what you “see” by doing what Jesus would do.

Read His words, listen to His voice, and experience the blessing of practical obedience in your life today: *“Jesus, you promised that your Holy Spirit would lead me in all truth (John 16:13). I want to now be led in experiencing your truth. Today, allow Your Word to go from my head to my heart. I commit to obey Your instructions.”*

[illegible]