

John 9

SPIRIT EMPOWERED Faith

Day 1

L-3. Experiencing God as He really is through deepened intimacy with Him.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind.’ This is the first and most important command... And the second command is like the first: ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’ ... All the law and the writings of the prophets depend on these two commands.” (Matthew 22:37-40)

I. Love the Lord Your God... How might this text lead me to better love God? “We love because He first loved us.” (1 Jn 4:19) We can only love with all our “heart, soul, mind, and strength” the REAL God.

A. As you read and reflect on the chapter, how might you describe the “REAL” God as He is seen as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

1. In verse _____ He is seen as _____

2. In verse _____ He is seen as _____

3. In verse _____ the love of Jesus is seen toward _____ as He

4. In verse _____ the love of Jesus is seen toward _____ as He

5. How might the above insights challenge some of your misconceptions of God? “Sadly, I sometimes mistakenly see God as _____.”

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Day 2

W-1. Frequently being led by the Spirit into deeper love for the One who wrote the Word.

B. Since God is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8): The REAL God described above wants to relate to you as you described Him above; pause to let Him love you.

1. Father, as you express yourself to me as the God who _____, my heart is moved with _____

2. Father, as you express yourself to me as the God who _____, my heart is moved with _____

C. Jesus is available to love you like we read of His love in this chapter. Pause to express your heart to Him as you see Him in this chapter.

1. Describe how Jesus has loved you in some of the same ways that you read of His love in this chapter: “I have experienced the love of Jesus as He has _____

2. Jesus, as you love me like you loved those in this chapter, my heart is touched with _____

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Day 3

P-5. Ministering His life and love to our nearest ones at home and with family as well as faithful engagement in His Body, the Church.

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Day 4

M-1. Imparting the gospel and one's very life in daily activities and relationships, vocation and community.

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Day 5

L-4. Rejoicing regularly in my identity as "His Beloved."

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind." This is the first and most important command... And the second command is like the first: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' ... All the law and the writings of the prophets depend on these two commands." (Matthew 22:37-40)

II. Love Your Neighbor... How might this text lead me to better love others, both those who follow Jesus and those who don't know Him? "Love one another even as I have loved you." (John 13:34)

Since we have freely received of His love, we are to freely give this same love to others; consider again how you see love portrayed in this chapter.

A. Who among your family or friends might you better love?

1. I could better love _____ especially by _____

B. Notice again how Jesus expressed love by accepting, forgiving or sacrificing? How might Jesus have taken initiative, expressed compassion or offered support? How did Jesus share truth and eternal hope?

1. Who in the traffic patterns of your life might benefit from receiving the blessing of Christ's love through you? (*who*) _____ could benefit from my sharing the love of Jesus by _____

2. Who in your life could benefit from sharing part of your life story of encountering truth and eternal hope? (*who*) _____ could benefit from sharing more about _____

3. Pause now to pray from this person and then yourself as you impart both your life and the gospel.

III. "As you love yourself" your significance, value and worth have been established by your creator through the gift of His Son. How might this text affirm your identity as His "beloved"?

"This is how God showed his love to us: He sent His only Son into the world to give us life through Him." (1 John 4:9)

Celebrate how you have received His love and grace, His forgiveness and new life, His calling and kingdom purpose.

A. Re-read the text as His truth being shared just for you.

1. I'm grateful that I have experienced the blessing of verse _____ as I _____

B. Since He is the same yesterday, today, and forever meditate on you being "in" the story of this chapter; allow Him to love you as you read of His love in the chapter.

1. My heart is touched with gratitude that Jesus _____

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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)

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M-1

Imparting the gospel and one’s very life in daily activities and relationships, vocation and community.

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.

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)

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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).

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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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)

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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.”*

My Journal

One of the most read books in history is the bible which finds itself at the top of every list of best sellers. But still it is a "book of books", divided between old and new, poetry and history as well as dozens of other categories that fill libraries as well as minds and hearts from little children to the aged scholars who rightly divide the text. Of those books, one stands alone as the most widely read, translated and distributed. Written by the disciple uniquely described as "the beloved" the book is often the first that a new believer is told to read. It is mother's milk to the newly born again and forever loved for the heartfelt and simple cadence that John strikes upon the heart of believers everywhere. "In the beginning was the Word" begins John's recollection and he ends his story this way, "Jesus did countless things that I haven't included here. And if every one of his works were written down and described one by one, I suppose that the world itself wouldn't have enough room to contain the books that would have to be written!"

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M-1

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