



TEACH IT COFFEEHOUSE SESSION 6

1. Materials

For this session each student will need—

- his or her own Bible
- optional: the student journal page for Session 6 (Using the student journal page is optional in the coffeehouse setting since table space will be limited.)

You'll also need—

- one napkin per student and some Sharpie pens
- optional: laptop with wireless Internet connection for showing a video that depicts the scene in John 9
- optional: a cup (or bowl) of water labeled **SILOAM**
- a pack of pencils with erasers
- optional: a few spare Bibles for students who've forgotten theirs

2. Session Intro

GOALS OF SESSION 6

As students experience this session, they will—

- see what can happen when the work of God is displayed in a person.
- examine their personal “blind spots.”
- be challenged to let the work of God be revealed in them by allowing Jesus to heal their spiritual “blind spots.”

PRAYER

After your students have gathered, spend some time silently praying. Give your students a chance to forget about their busy schedules and practice listening for God's gentle voice. Then ask any volunteers to pray specifically for the group session—that students' hearts will be open to the work God wants to do in their lives.

OPEN

Miracle Poll

Begin with a few of these questions:

What kinds of miracles did Jesus do when he walked the earth?

Responses may include he cast out demons, healed the lame, gave sight to the blind, turned water into wine, and multiplied loaves and fish. If someone simply says, “Healing,” ask what kinds of healings Jesus did.

Which miracles move or intrigue you most? Why?




What type of miracle would you guess is mentioned most often in Scripture?

After they've made a few guesses, share that giving sight to the blind is the most frequently recorded miracle in the Gospels.

3. Digging In

Here's Mud in Your Eye

Today's session deals with such a miracle, so have the group read John 9:1-7 from their Bibles. As they read, have them—

1. Mark a cross  over every mention of Jesus.
2. Draw a pair of glasses  over every mention of the blind man.
3. Draw an *ichthus*  over every mention of the disciples.
4. If you are hesitant about marking in your Bibles, write lightly so you can erase the markings later. If you're still not comfortable with it, that's okay. Just eyeball the passage and remember the interaction between Jesus, the blind man, and the disciples.

When most have finished, prompt a discussion with these questions:

Why was the man born blind?

The man was born blind so that the work of God might be displayed in his life (v. 3).

What are some possible meanings of “the work of God”?

As they study this chapter, an accurate understanding will emerge. For now, let the students brainstorm without your giving answers. Here are a few samples if you need to prime the pump:

- a sign for others to believe, like a miracle (This would follow John's theme.)
- a sign connecting Jesus to the Father, as in John 8
- something for the personal benefit of the blind man, such as salvation
- a way for God to receive glory for the healing

4. Digging Deeper

The Man Formerly Known as Blind

Share with your group that this wasn't an open-and-shut miracle. In fact, it laid the groundwork for quite a chain of events. Choose one of the options below for experiencing the remainder of this scene.

OPTION 1: VIDEO EXPERIENCE

Before your session, search a video-sharing Web site such as YouTube or Google Video for a depiction of this scene in John 9. Use key words such as “John 9 blind man.” The goal of this video is to help students see the action in John 9:8-41. It can be animation, still drawings, etc.

Depending on what type of clip you use, you may want to cue it up to start after the action you've already observed in John 9:1-7. After viewing the video, discuss the questions following Option 2.

OPTION 2: “BULLET ME” EXPERIENCE

Summarize John 9:8-38 by sharing these bullet points with the group:

- **Some friends and neighbors ratted on the man who was formerly blind—turning him over to the Pharisees.**
- **The Pharisees interrogated him and his parents (hardest move in the book) on how this man who was blind now could see.**
- **His parents didn't stick up for him because they feared being thrown out of the synagogue (a really bad thing).**

- **The formerly blind man boldly spoke about what happened to him. In some folks' estimation, he even got a little mouthy...and he was thrown out of the synagogue (a very bad thing).**

After sharing these bullet points or viewing one of the videos, discuss the questions below. If you're using the optional student journal pages, ask students to note this information. Ask—

How did things get worse for the blind man before they got better?

- The authorities interrogated him (v. 15, 26).
- His parents were called in, like when your folks get a call from the principal (v. 18).
- His parents feared being kicked out of the synagogue (v. 22).
- The authorities hurled insults at him (v. 28).
- They threw him out (v. 34).

What ultimately happened to the blind man as a result of his healing?

- He got to see Jesus (v. 35).
- Jesus personally ministered to him (v. 35).
- He worshiped Jesus (v. 38).
- He believed (v. 38)!

Take another crack at this question: What works of God were displayed in this man's life?

- The miracles of healing and salvation were displayed.
- In this scene, the blind man was the one who got the main benefits of his healing; he wasn't just an "object lesson" to cause others to believe. Because he was born blind, he enjoyed—
 - being healed by Jesus.
 - being ministered to individually by Jesus.
 - getting to see Jesus personally.
 - coming to believe in Jesus as the Son of God.
 - worshipping Jesus while Jesus was right beside him!

Now have your group members read John 9:34-39, looking again at what they've marked. Then discuss—

Who was the first person to seek out the blind man after he was cast out of the synagogue?

Jesus was the first person to seek out the blind man.

What was Jesus' primary concern?

His primary concern was the blind man's soul, and possibly his feelings, too.

5. Cross-Checking

Write If You Find Work

Ask for a volunteer to read John 6:28-29 aloud from his or her Bible. Tell your students to listen for the word *work* as the volunteer reads the passage. (If possible, make sure to read from a version that uses a form of the word *work*, such as the New International Version, Today's New International Version, the New King James, or the New American Standard.)

What light do these verses shed on what "the work of God" means?

It has to do with salvation, believing that Jesus is sent from God.

6. Taking It Inward

Spiritual Blind Spots

Make sure each student has a napkin and access to a Sharpie pen (or something that can write on a napkin). Ask your group members to write their responses to the following questions on the napkin:

What kind of blindness are you experiencing in your life? Spiritual blindness might include the “blind spot” where you keep getting hit with temptation—or a struggle, a hurt, or a loss that keeps you “blind” to the comfort or encouragement Jesus can give. Write your response in a corner of the napkin. Here are some questions to prompt your thinking:

Do you lose your temper easily?

Are you struggling with lustful thoughts?

Are you friends with anyone whom you always seem to be fighting with?

Are you constantly fighting with your sibling or a parent?

Has anyone close to you died? How are you recovering from that loss?

How is your spiritual life like that of the blind man in John 9? Write the appropriate letter in another corner of the napkin. Are you—

a. still blind from birth?

b. eyes half shut—aware of Jesus but haven’t accepted him yet?

c. eyes wide open—believing in and worshiping him as the Son of God?

7. Cross-Checking

The Cure for Darkness: Light

Have your group members hang on to their napkins. Tell them you want them to have the same opportunity as the blind man in John 9—to have Jesus himself come to them and heal their blindness, so that the work of God can be displayed in them.

Ask a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 4:5-18, or have students read the passage on their own. Explain—

As we read this passage, look for things such as *light* and *dark*, along with anything that happens for our benefit.

8. Wrapping It Up

The Bucket of Siloam

Fill a cup or bowl with water. Label it **SILLOAM** (pronounced *sigh-LOW-um*), the name of the pool Jesus sent the blind man to wash in, and place it in a spot that’s central to your group. Share that you want them to have an opportunity to fully experience Jesus’ healing of their “blind spots.” Point out the significance of the “bucket of Siloam.”

Ask any volunteers to, one at a time, tear off the corners on which they wrote their “blind spot” and drop them in the “pool of Siloam.” (If every student can’t easily reach the “pool,” you can pass it around.) As they drop their blind spots in the pool, they can share as much or as little as they’d like about the healing they desire.



Next, ask whether anyone would like to share how his or her spiritual life compares with the blind man's (a. still blind from birth; b. eyes half shut—aware of Jesus but haven't accepted him yet; c. eyes wide open—believing in and worshiping him as the Son of God). Stay open to the fact that some may be ready to change their status and accept Jesus Christ, believing in him as the Son of God. Be sure to give them an opportunity to do this before the session ends.

The last thing the man “formerly known as blind” did was worship Jesus. Close your session by inviting students to share a one-sentence thank you to Jesus. If you're using the optional student journal pages, ask students to write a sentence down and then share it with the group. If you aren't using the journal pages, they could write this on a napkin.