

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ talk about Christ and their experiences with God (Acts 4:20).

SCRIPTURE

JOHN 9:1–38

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Jesus' miracles did many things. His miracles always met a physical need—the lame could walk, a disease was healed, etc. His miracles also brought about excellent opportunities for deep and meaningful conversations. The miracles Jesus worked also served as proof of the truth that he is the Christ. John called Jesus' miracles "signs." These signs pointed to the authority and truth of Jesus and his message. Anyone can make divine claims, but miracles certainly make those claims ring true.

Check out the *Teacher Prep Video* for this lesson: <https://vimeo.com/1064814479>



OPENING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

-
-

GAME or ICE BREAKER

Based on your group's size, choose a **Game** from **Deep Discipleship Games** OR use the **Ice Breaker** prompt.

- **Game**—We recommend **The Gameshow Game** or choose another screen game from **Deep Discipleship Games**
- **Ice Breaker**—How might an entire student ministry, church, or community be blessed by even one person becoming a Christ-follower?

WORSHIP

Craft a time of worship with a live band or sing along to a playlist.

- Check out our curated Spotify list. We understand that every church has a different theological view of worship. These songs are suggestions, please pick what works best for your church.
- <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2xmeIKGUjkEE7bJYScbRwe?si=d254ec715a4749e5>

MEDIA AS STUDENTS ARRIVE

1. Play background music (optional)
2. Display **SERIES TITLE Slide** and announcement slides in a loop or customize the provided **PowerPoint**.
3. Play a 5-minute Countdown Timer 5:00 minutes before you start.

DEEP DISCIPLESHIP GAMES

Find free games in **Deep Discipleship Games**. It's already included with your Deep Discipleship subscription. View the game in advance in case you need supplies or slides.

SLIDES (optional)

Use **SERIES Background & Blank Slides** or **PowerPoint** to create lyric slides.

TRANSITION TO MESSAGE

Include a brief element that transitions students from worship to teaching time, like a prayer or video. This will keep students focused and prepared for the message while the band leaves the stage.

VIDEO (optional)

Show **SERIES Promo Video** or **LESSON Intro Video** after the last worship song.

MESSAGE

Use the following teaching points and suggested illustrations as a starting point to build your message.

POINT 1: Choose to see

Read or have someone in your group read John 9:1–7

Some people believe that life is all about karma. Namely, we only experience good things if we've been good and only experience bad stuff if we've been bad. This might've been why the disciples asked what sin the man or his family committed that caused him to be blind. Either way, the disciples believed this man's blindness resulted from sin. Jesus explained that's not actually how things are.

To show them what was possible, Christ spit into the dirt and slapped that mud into the man's eyes (talk about working in mysterious ways!). He then told the blind man to take a public walk to a particular pool that wasn't nearby. The man did this, trusting Jesus and choosing to see. In doing so, the glory of God was shown in a circumstance that seemed hopeless.

SLIDES (optional)

Use the **SERIES PowerPoint** OR the **Background & Blank Slides** to create these slides to support your message:

- John 9:1–7
- Point 1

POINT 2: Choose to celebrate

Read or have someone in your group read John 9:8–23

Instead of celebrating a miracle with this formerly blind man, the locals launched questions and doubts and even went after his parents. Their skeptical spirit was its own kind of blindness that kept them from seeing God's work and celebrating the change.

The amazing things God does today may often cause a similar reaction in others or us. It's in our nature to seek an explanation for the miraculous instead of celebrating God's work. This skepticism can cause us to miss out on so much good around us.

ILLUSTRATION: Tell a **personal story** about a key change in your life that excited you (e.g., getting your driver's license, graduating high school, getting your first job, etc.). Share who celebrated with you and how it felt if anyone seemed less enthusiastic about it.

When God does something extraordinary in our lives or the lives of others, it is a cause for celebration, not questions about God's ability.

SLIDES (optional)

- John 9:8–23
- Point 2

POINT 3: Choose to share

Read or have someone in your group read John 9:24–34

The healed man was willing to share his experience with anyone who'd listen. Even when questioned by hostile religious leaders, he didn't debate or try to sound like he knew more than he did. He simply told them what he knew—I was blind, but now I see.

One of the biggest roadblocks that keep people from sharing their faith is the fear of not knowing enough. What if they ask questions I don't know the answer to? Like the blind man, you don't need to know everything about Jesus before you can start talking

SLIDES (optional)

- John 9:24–34
- Point 3



about him. Simply share what you do know and what he's done in your life. That's amazing in itself!

ILLUSTRATION: Ask volunteers to confidently share about anything, like who makes the best pizza in town or what they like about their phones. Then, invite the group to ask them follow-up questions, like, "Who personally made your pizza?" or "How does your phone technically work?" Afterward, point out that not knowing doesn't change the knowledge they already have or their ability to share their beliefs.

We have no problem talking about things we care about—our favorite restaurants, sports teams, movies, books, etc., even though we don't know everything about those topics. Our faith shouldn't be any different.

POINT 4: Choose to grow

Read or have someone in your group read John 9:35–38

Notice that Jesus had more for the man than just physical healing. Our spiritual health will always matter more than our physical health. Jesus invites us to keep growing in knowledge and our relationship with him. That's what real worship is—all of who we are for all of who God is.

SLIDES (optional)

- John 9:35–38
- Point 4

CLOSING

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ talk about Christ and their experiences with God (Acts 4:20).

SLIDES (optional)

- Mark of a Disciple

FACILITATOR NOTE: DO YOU HAVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION RIGHT AWAY?

- If YES, then **STOP HERE**, divide into groups, and provide Small Group Leaders with the **Small Group Breakout Questions** on the next page.
- If NO, then end your gathering with the **Reflect & Respond** questions and **Prayer** prompt below.

REFLECT & RESPOND

Give the students time to silently think through what they have heard and contemplate these questions:

- If you were ever in an awkward conversation about faith, what would be a reason to fully commit yourself to it and not try to escape?
- What has God done in your life that's worth sharing?

SLIDES (optional)

Use the **SERIES PowerPoint** OR the **Background & Blank Slides** to display the **Reflect & Respond** questions.

FACILITATOR NOTE: Don't rush this part. Give the students a few minutes to really consider how we can become blind to how others need Jesus. If we don't help them see Jesus, they may miss him forever.

PRAYER

Take time to pray a thankful prayer where everyone says the name of someone who helped them come to know Jesus. At the end, pray that we will be that person for someone else.



SMALL GROUP BREAKOUT (OPTIONAL)

Pick a few questions from each section to discuss. Close with prayer.

BREAKOUT QUESTIONS

Build Meaningful Relationships

- What do you think the words “humility” and “humiliation” have in common, and how are they different?
Answers might vary, but both come from a common root word, “humilis,” which means “low” or “grounded.” The former is a more positive experience through selflessness, while the latter involves shame and embarrassment.
- When have you felt either “humility” or “humiliation” in your spiritual journey?
Answers might vary. Make sure to be sensitive to what is shared. Come prepared to share an example or two from your life to get the conversation started.

Share Personal Stories & Ask Intentional Questions

- What have been some ways that God has helped you “see?”
Answers will vary but could include: salvation, the difference between right and wrong or truths and lies, wisdom through the Bible, seeking him in worship or prayer, changing how we understand life, etc.
- What do you imagine your part is in continuing to let God help you “see” new things?
Answers will vary but may include submission, a willing heart, obedience to his leading, etc.
- Why do you think Jesus wanted the man to know he hadn’t just been healed by a magician but by the Savior?
Answers will vary, but follow up by pointing out that sometimes we might treat God as though we want what he can do for us more than we want him.

Make Life Application & Hold Students Accountable

- If you had to describe your style of sharing about God in one word, what would that word be?
Answers will vary, but note common themes like invitational, confrontational, intellectual, relational, etc.
- What steps can you take to help you be more comfortable sharing your faith with others?
Answers will vary, but they could include: praying for comfort and courage, practicing with fellow believers, talking about Jesus in casual conversation instead of using Gospel presentation methods, etc.

PRAYER

Take time to pray a thankful prayer where everyone says the name of someone who helped them come to know Jesus. At the end, pray that we will be that person for someone else.

Use this space to keep track of any prayer requests.

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible.

Any reference within this piece to Internet addresses of websites not under the administration of LeaderTreks is not to be taken as an endorsement of these websites by LeaderTreks; neither does LeaderTreks vouch for their content.

