

*“Breakthrough!” in 2022*

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide  
SB 11.06.2022

The Miracle in the Mud – John 9:1-7

## Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

As Jesus and the disciples were walking, they met a blind man. The disciples asked Christ if the man was born blind because of his sin or the sin of his parents. Here we see that the disciples were not very concerned about the blind man. Instead of wanting to help the man, they only wanted to find out what caused the man to be blind. Sometimes we are like the disciples. We are more curious than we are concerned about the needs of others. Not all sickness is caused by sin. God allows sickness for many reasons. Here we see that this man was blind in order to bring glory to God. Christ came to work the works of God. God allowed this man to be blind so that others could see the power of God as Christ worked a miracle. Christ came to bring light to the world. Here we see that this man needed physical light as well as spiritual light. We will see that Christ met both of the needs of the blind man. Let’s get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you from this week’s sermon?
2. How would you respond to someone who says they can’t believe in a God who would let some people be born into poverty or sold into human slavery?

It is an age old question: “Why do bad things happen to good people?” Though the answers may never be fully realized this side of heaven (1 Cor. 13:12), today’s Scriptures will help us explore the question and invite God to show us what we can know.

## Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

### HAVE A VOLUNTEER JOHN 9:1-7

1. What assumption did the disciples have about the circumstances into which a person is born? What is wrong with that line of thinking?
2. What was in the "clay" (John 9:6) Jesus put on the blind man's eyes?
3. Why would God use that to make a part of the human body?
4. Why was this pool named "Siloam," which means "Sent" (John 9:7)?
5. How did the blind man get from near the temple to the pool of Siloam?

An understanding of sinful humanity helps us begin to understand why the disciples were wrong in their thinking. Romans 3:23 lets us know that all of us have sinned and fall short of God’s glory. If sin caused physical blindness, then none of us could see a thing! In contrast, Jesus never sinned, yet He suffered terribly; not from physical defect, but at the hands of men.

6. Why do you think so many of us assume bad things only happen to bad people? Where did we get this idea?
7. From this passage, what is one way we can biblically answer the question, “Why do bad things happen to good people?”

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8. What struggle or improper view of God might people have as a result of this answer?

Not only are we all sinners apart from Christ, we also live in a sinful, broken world. Because of this truth, “bad things” are an unavoidable aspect of life and will remain so until Jesus returns to rid our world of sin once and for all. While the disciples were wrong in thinking sin was always the reason for suffering, we cannot deny that sometimes that is the case. Consider the lesson from the life of Ananias and Sapphira, Christians whose sin had devastating consequences.

### **HAVE A VOLUNTEER ACTS 5:1-11**

1. What do you think about the severe and immediate consequence on Ananias and Sapphira? Too harsh? Deserved? Worrisome? Explain.
2. What did Ananias and Sapphira do that would lead us to believe they were good people?

Evidently, this couple noticed Barnabas had received recognition for his gift (see Acts 4:36-37), and they desired the same praise for themselves. So they pledged the full proceeds of their sale to the church; however, they decided to keep some of the money for their own personal use. This couple wanted acclaim without sacrifice and comfort without commitment. If Ananias and Sapphira had succeeded with their deception, the church’s integrity would have been questioned and its unity damaged. The serious offense resulted in severe action. When Ananias fell over dead, great fear seized all who heard what had happened. They understood that to deceive God meant instant discipline.

3. From verse 3, we see that Ananias had a relationship with the Holy Spirit, but Satan, at some point, filled his heart. What does this tell you about Satan’s desires for you? What does it tell you God will allow you to experience by your own free will?
4. Have you ever known anyone who suffered consequences from their sins that seemed to you a bit unfair? Explain.
5. From this passage, what is one other way we can biblically answer the question, “Why do bad things happen to good people?”

God gives His children their own minds and independent spirits, and one of the results is that we can make our own choices and take our own actions apart from Him and His will for us. Because God gives us this freedom, He also allows us to suffer the consequences for our actions. While not always the case, these consequences can result in suffering and hardships we bring on ourselves. The writer of Hebrews explained that this is a part of God’s loving discipline in the lives of His children.

### **HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ HEBREWS 12:3-11**

1. How did the writer of Hebrews see the Lord’s discipline? Suffering?

Since Jesus never sinned, and He is the illustrative example the writer gives (vv. 3-4), we can understand the word “discipline” in this passage to be largely synonymous with suffering (v. 7), not punishment for wrongdoing but nurture for unpleasant life events that God allows. When we find things not going the way we should, we often think it’s evidence of God’s anger or absence. But this passage reminds us that when God disciplines us, it’s actually evidence of His love. He loves us too much to allow us to go our own way unchallenged.

2. What question does the writer of Hebrews pose in verse 9? In light of today’s study, in what way do we need to “submit . . . and live”?

#### **Applying God’s Word**

**What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.**

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It’s amazing that the same elements of carbon, hydrogen, calcium, and nitrogen that you’ll find in dirt are the same elements that make up humans. We are basically walking dirt clods filled with water and the breath of life. By using mud to make new eyes for this man, Jesus was reminding everyone of the original creation story. At the same time, He was letting everyone know that He had the same creative power as God.

**Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.**

1. Based on these three Scripture passages, how would you respond to someone who asks, “Why do bad things happen to good people?”
2. How have you seen these truths played out in your own life? How has your faith been refined as a result?
3. How do you explain why God sometimes delivers you out of hardships, but at other times He allows you to go through them?

**PRAYER** - Thank God for loving you so much that He will use any means necessary to draw you to Himself. Pray that He would teach you to be a willing participant, acknowledging that you stand on level ground at the foot of the cross with every other human being, regardless of circumstance.

*“Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News.” {2nd Corinthians 4:4}*