

More Than Hearing Worksheet

Episode: ALent4x2017

Text: John 9:1-41

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, **who sinned, this man or his parents**, that he was **born blind**?” 3 Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was **born blind** so that God’s works might be revealed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. 5 **As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**” 6 When he had said this, **he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva** and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, 7 saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 8 The **neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar** began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” 9 Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” 10 But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” 11 He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ **Then I went and washed and received my sight.**” 12 They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15 Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” 16 Some of the Pharisees said, “**This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.**” But others said, “**How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?**” **And they were divided.** 17 So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

18 The Jews **did not believe** that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight 19 and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” 20 His parents answered, “**We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind**; 21 but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” 22 His parents said this **because they were afraid of the Jews**; for the Jews had already agreed that **anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.** 23 Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” 25 He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. **One thing I do know**, that though **I was blind, now I see.**” 26 They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” 27 He answered them, “**I have told you already, and you would not listen.** Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” 28 Then **they reviled him**, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. 29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, **we do not know where he comes from.**” 30 The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and **yet he opened my eyes.** 31 **We know that God does not listen to sinners, but**

he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. 32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” 34 They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Spiritual Blindness

35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and **when he found him**, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” 36 He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” 37 Jesus said to him, “**You have seen him**, and **the one speaking with you** is he.” 38 He said, “**Lord, I believe.**” And **he worshiped him**. 39 Jesus said, “**I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.**” 40 Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “**Surely we are not blind, are we?**” 41 Jesus said to them, “**If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.**”

Body - I, Music - I/S, Nature - I, People - I/S, Self - S

Smarts	Images in the text/ interesting exegesis	Illustrations	SFX
<p>Word - Verbal/Linguistic</p>	<p>“blind” is used 17x in John</p> <p>15x in this chapter alone</p> <p>Is it significant to the writing of the gospel that this story appears near the middle? Is it a turning point?</p>		<p>Listen for the word “blind” as you read this passage; count up how many times the word is used to define the man.</p> <p>Make a poster with the word “BLIND” and have someone hold it up every time the word is read in the passage. Maybe have another with “OPENED THE EYES”</p>
<p>Eye - Visual/Spatial</p>	<p>Vs. 5 - the light of the world vis. he enables Israel to see things the way they really are and that he is likewise the source of Israel's life.</p>	<p>There is movement all over the place in this story.</p> <p>Walking at the beginning, the man being sent to the pool, his neighbors getting together to discuss who this new guy is, the man being called before the council, his parents being called in, the man being called in again, the man being driven out, Jesus going to</p>	<p>As the story is read, move to each location.</p> <p>Or, as you preach on the passage, move to locations in your worship space. Include others as part of the crowd or the neighbors or the disciples.</p> <p>The movement of the story is from bewilderment to belief; from darkness to light; from dislocation (of the</p>

		find him.	man) to acceptance in the fellowship and vice versa, revealing that those who belong are entirely missing the point.
Math - Logical/Mathematical		Vs. 16, 31-33, 39, 41 Jesus brings revelation of the truth. This subverts our common assumptions and exposes spiritual blindness which is the judgement Jesus delivers.	
Body - Kinesthetic D2		The story is in some sense the opposite of a kid trying to get out of school by playing sick (Bueller?) who has to convince others of the reality of the disease and get a note from the parents. In this story, though, the man must convince people he is well, and his parents won't give him an excuse. <i>Putting this in Body because one needs to be body aware in order to fake an illness. Plus, just talking about it will likely produce in your listeners a body memory of being sick.</i> <i>There is also some People Smart in the attempt to convince others.</i>	
Musical MWD		Amazing Grace - duh.	Set the story as poetry.
Natural MWD		Vs. 6 - some evidence of healing properties in saliva; an enzyme called lysozyme has blood clotting and tissue building reactants. Of course, saliva also carries bacteria that can infect a wound. Yet, in places and times where	

		<p>there was no modern antiseptics, saliva could cleanse a wound and provide necessary lubrication for healing. Kinda gross, but why do we ask Mommy to kiss our boo boos?</p> <p>Admittedly, it's a far leap from having beneficial properties re: a wound to giving sight to eyes that have never seen.</p> <p>Similarly, there are certain clays that have curative properties. Again, curing blindness is not usually listed.</p> <p><i>These examples get in touch with the physical elements used by Jesus, although in this case we have to say that there was something supernatural going on.</i></p>	
<p>People - Interpersonal D2</p>	<p>Vs. 2 - and verse 8 Physical symptoms - the disease - were of little concern. The main concern was with the social dislocation - the illness - associated with the physical symptoms</p> <p>The miracle that occurs in this passage is not the healing, but the change in relationships.</p>	<p>Vs. 2 It could mean: "A generation of parents polluted the waters with runoff from mining near their rivers and now many generations of children have been born with defects." In that sense, sin is a power with real effects, but not immediately recognized as a direct cause-and-effect.</p> <p>Vs. 2 In the early Twentieth Century, The Times of London, a newspaper read all over England, indeed all over the world; invited famous writers to answer the question:</p>	<p>Vs 2 - how does "sin" cause "blindness"?</p> <p>Think of a time when a beloved member of your fellowship was injured or ill; how did that affect the body of believers? What about a less-beloved member of your fellowship? Was there a similar effect? If not, what made the difference?</p> <p><i>Recognizing the effects of one person's situation on the larger group, raising awareness of the sociology of illness.</i></p> <p>Do this as a Readers Theatre (we'll have a link) Or congregational reading.</p>

		<p>What is wrong with the world? In response, they got many long essays spelling out the problems and also, as a bonus, the writer's assessment as to who was to blame. God, the Devil, the Church, the Communists, the Fascists, White people, Black people, Asians, Hispanics, the Jews, the Germans, the Italians, the Chinese, the Moslems, and the Americans. It was women, men, "The Older Generation" and "These Young People Today." Christian writer GK Chesterton wrote: Dear Sirs, What is wrong with the world? I am. Sincerely, GK Chesterton -- via Delmer Chilton at LectionaryLab</p> <p><i>These reflections on sin rise from an understanding of sin as broken relationships more than broken rules. That makes sin interpersonal as opposed to impersonal.</i></p>	<p><i>Drama is People Smart because it makes us recognize the connections</i></p>
<p>Self - Intrapersonal MWD</p>	<p>A blind beggar = only identity</p>		<p>When has your physical body been your defining characteristic? An injury? An illness? Pregnancy? How has this altered your experience in the world? especially regarding access and perception by others? Can you empathize with the man's frustration at claiming his new identity on the other side of his old one?</p> <p><i>These sorts of questions personalize the experience of the man born blind.</i></p>

