



YOU: Connect. Grow. Serve. Go!
Summer 2018 Leader Commentary

Unit 2: No Doubt About It
Session 5: I've Got a Testimony (see pp. 136-139)

The Question: How can I share what I know about Jesus?

The Point: I don't have to know everything, but I can still share what I know about Jesus.

Background Passage: John 9

Focal Passage: John 9:7-9,13-17,24-25

This commentary is designed to help you think about the question, "How can I share what I know about Jesus?" and drive home this one truth: I don't have to know everything, but I can still share what I know about Jesus.

Focus on These Points

Let People See the Difference Jesus Makes in You
(John 9:7-9)

The story of the healing of a blind man in John 9 sheds light on the natural method of personal evangelism that God expects of every believer. The story centers around one man telling his story of his encounter with Jesus Christ—an encounter that changed his life. That is the bottom line of evangelism—telling what you know about the Savior who changed your life. The ninth chapter of John is about the miraculous healing of a man who was born blind. The first five verses address the blindness of the man and set the stage for the healing. We pick up the story in verse 7, focused not on the act of healing but on the example of evangelism the former blind man provides for us.

Jesus told the man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. The parenthetical note in the verse identifies that the name of the pool, Siloam, means "sent." The pool of Siloam was once doubted as an actual location, but contemporary archeological finds have confirmed the existence of this pool. The name Siloam relates to both Jesus' mission and His command to His followers to tell the good news to all the people they encounter. The sending of the blind man to the pool is also reminiscent of the time when Elijah sent Naaman to the river to be healed of his leprosy.

Notice, at the end of verse 7, that the focus of this entire story is about the blind man and his response to Jesus. The man allowed Jesus to mix mud and put it on his eyes, and he left to go and wash in the pool. Both activities would have been forbidden under Sabbath laws. The result of the man's obedience to Jesus was the opening of his blind eyes—He "came back seeing." This was indeed a miraculous healing! It was not a restorative healing since he had been born blind. The man was given something he did not have and had never experienced.

The change was immediate and so remarkable that his neighbors could not believe he was the same person. The man tried to convince everyone that he was the same man they had known as a blind man. In verses 10-11 the man recounted for everyone how Jesus had given him his sight.

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***Don't Worry About What You Don't Know
(John 9:13-17)***

The man's neighbors and those who knew him felt he needed to be taken to the Pharisees in order to investigate this incident. The man must have been frightened and anxious to have to answer to the Pharisees what had happened to him and who had performed the miracle that changed his life. The response of the Pharisees was basically: If this man healed the blind man and did it on that Sabbath then he must not really be from God, because God would never heal on the Sabbath because it is against the law. Therefore, the supposed healer must be a sinner, but if he were a sinner, how could he have healed the man? The entire situation caused quite a conundrum for the Pharisees.

The man stood before the Pharisees and calmly answered their question—probably after listening to their arguing over all of the circumstances and the certain violations of the law. When asked to explain what happened, the man gave a straightforward, factual reply to address the questions he had been asked. He replied boldly what he knew about Jesus. When asked to give testimony (witness or evidence), the man shared what he knew. He didn't pull back, he didn't try to bluff his way through, and he didn't remain silent. He did not know much about the man who healed him, but he knew enough to identify him as a "prophet." And for him "prophet" was probably the highest place he could assign to a man of God. His answer puts Jesus in the highest place he knew.

***Simply Tell How Your Life Has Been Changed
(John 9:24-25)***

Between verses 17-24, the Pharisees were busy trying to figure out this miraculous healing incident. In verse 24, the man is brought before the Pharisees a second time. The Pharisees began this round of questioning by challenging the man to "give glory to God" with his testimony. This was a challenge—a solemn warning—to give testimony and to tell the complete truth. What is interesting about this challenge is that in the end the former blind man did nothing but give glory to God with his response. He praised God for his newfound ability to see. The man gave glory to God by affirming his conviction about Jesus. This was the opposite of what the Pharisees had intended.

The Pharisees hung on to their belief that because Jesus healed unlawfully on the Sabbath, He must, by the very nature of breaking the law, be a sinner.

Although the Pharisees were trying to prove Jesus a sinner, the man refused to speculate on the sinfulness of Jesus. Equally, he refused to back down and deny what Jesus had done for him. The man boldly recounted his experience to the Pharisees. This man was formerly a blind beggar—the very dregs of society at that time. Yet he simply and clearly stated the one thing he knew—while his life had been different and one way the day before, now his life was completely changed. He didn't argue deep theological principles or engage the Pharisees in spiritual arguments. He simply told what happened to him.