

Can You See It?

Blinded by Religion (March 14th, 2021)

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- You can watch the sermon online [HERE](#). **Then make sure to watch our [Special Series Video!](#)**
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

DISCUSSION

Opening Prayer: (1-2 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's a suggestion of how your group can invite God into your time together.

Thank the Father for loving us so much that He came to us in the person of Jesus to offer Himself as a sacrifice on our behalf while we were still sinners! Pray that as we navigate the chaotic waters of our cultural moment that we would humbly listen and obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit as we seek to love one another just as Jesus loved us by dying for us on the cross. Finally, pray that the Holy Spirit would open the eyes of our heart to begin to see Jesus for who he truly is!

Discussion: (45-60 minutes)

What's Going on This Week

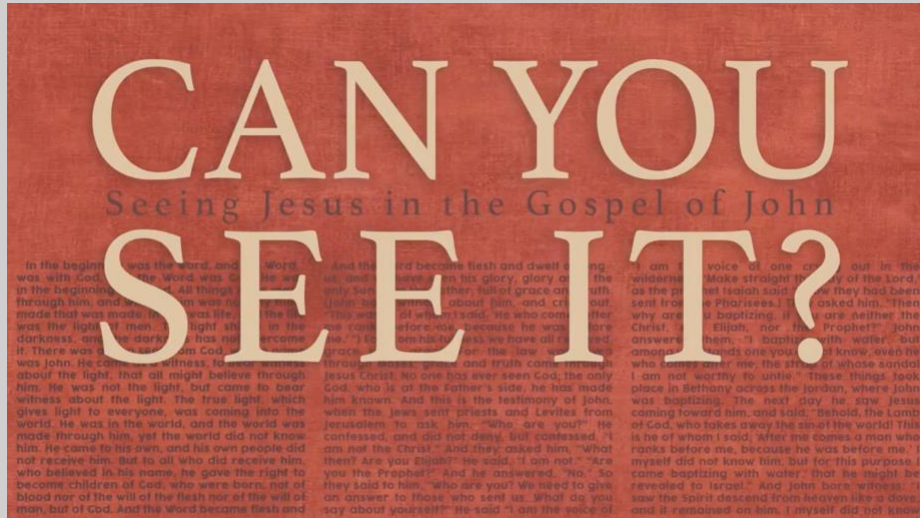
This Sunday, Pastor Danny led us into our third week of our series titled *Can You See It?* Pastor Danny brought our attention to *John 9:1-41* which includes the story of Jesus restoring sight to the blind man who is then kicked out of the synagogue by the religious leaders for his testimony and theology. In these passages, we take a closer look at the factors that make the religious elite blind to Jesus and his work. On the other hand, the blind man in this story challenges us to remember that we are called to a relational *heart* experience with Jesus which extends beyond our *head* knowledge about him. Pastor Danny reminds those who are overly religious or those who have been burned by overly religious people that Jesus is calling us to turn to him wherever we are!

“The world does not need more religious experts; the world needs more men and women who love God with all their heart, soul, strength, and mind.” – Pastor Danny Strange

Suggested Questions

Check-In: Icebreaker – Have you ever been surprised! What was it like to be blind to what was happening?

Series Video: Each week, a collection of ministry leaders will be recording a video that discusses this week's sermon and how it may apply to our lives according to each demographic represented here at 3Crosses church! We recommend that you either encourage your group to watch the video *before* the meeting, or the video can make for a great opening activity for your group!



Objective #1: Reflect on your tendency to let your knowledge of Jesus outpace your relationship with him.

Primary Texts: John 9:1-33 – Pastor Danny points to these texts to highlight the difference between the religious leaders who were blinded by their religion and the blind man who was healed and was able to recognize Jesus as the Son of Man! Pastor Danny suggests that those who are blind in this passage are quick to throw out the “sinner” label, consumed with doctrinal minutia, and swift to solve the mysterious. Alternatively, the blind man experienced the Jesus and was able to simplify his theology! **In your experience, how have you been able to recognize when your KNOWLEDGE of Jesus has outpaced your RELATIONSHIP with him?**

Objective #2: Shed light on the situations in which religiosity creeps into your faith.

Selected Passages and Themes: John 8:32 (Ritualistic); 1 Peter 3:15-16 (Gentle Respect); Micah 6:6-8 (Humility); 1 Corinthians 3:2-3 (Longevity) – In the roundtable discussion video, each of our ministry leaders discussed the various ways in which we can be drawn into religiosity. **What are some of the common situations or factors that lure you into “religiosity” and what are the ways Jesus is calling you to address them?**

Objective #3: Continue to persevere in reconciling community with God (through Jesus) and with others!

Primary Texts: John 9:31-41; Hebrews 10:19-25; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 – Pastor Danny closes his sermon by showing that Jesus reaches out to those who have been burned by religion or religious institutions. Similarly, the end of John 9 offers hope to those who have become overly religious themselves. **If you have been hurt by religion or have become overly religious yourself, how might Jesus be reaching out to you today?**

Closing Prayer: (5-10 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.

Thank our Heavenly Father for revealing himself to us by sending His son! Praise the Son for becoming a human so that we might see the Father and have direct access to Him through the shed blood of Jesus Christ! Ask that the Holy Spirit would open the eyes of our hearts so that we may continue to follow Jesus in a relationship with Him through the Holy Spirit as he equips us to live, love, and forgive like Jesus. Finally, pray that we as a church would have the courage and boldness to proclaim the gospel of Jesus as we continue to stay connected to the Holy Spirit and follow His lead in our lives.

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

-Stay up to date with Coronavirus Ministry Opportunities: Help us out by pointing the people in your Community Group to [3Crosses.org/coronavirus](https://3crosses.org/coronavirus) . If you or anyone in your group is looking to serve food in our pantry, access spiritual care, or seek financial assistance, you can find all you need at [3Crosses.org/neighborhood](https://3crosses.org/neighborhood)

-Can You See It! Series: Each week, we will be recording a message that includes a collection of our ministry leaders and helps explain this week's study guide! *Tune in at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday Nights* each week for the premier of the video or check it out anytime on our [YouTube channel!](#)

-Group Prayer: This week, pray that the Spirit would illuminate the truth of Jesus in our lives! Challenge one or two members of your group by contacting them with a truth about Jesus upon which you are reflecting!

-Further Reading: *John 10* Next week, we will be exploring the idea of seeing Jesus as our one true shepherd! As you read this section of scripture, try and think about what it means for disciples of Jesus to be sheep and Jesus as the true shepherd!

-Community Groups 2021: For more information about joining a group, leading a group, or general inquiries, contact AJ at avanegas@3crosses.org