

“I Was Blind, Now I See”

Lesson 16

John 9–10

Purpose To help class members have a greater understanding and appreciation of Jesus Christ as the Light of the World and the Good Shepherd.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. John 9. Jesus affirms that he is the Light of the World and heals a man who was born blind. The healed man testifies to the Pharisees and worships Jesus.
 - b. John 10:1–15, 25–28. Jesus teaches that he is the Good Shepherd and that he will lay down his life for his sheep. The Lord’s sheep are those who hear his voice and follow him.
2. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
 - a. The picture *Healing the Blind* (62145; Gospel Art Picture Kit 213).
 - b. Segment 3 of “New Testament Customs,” a selection from *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914).
3. Suggestion for teaching: “Humility before God is one key to success. A teacher who is humble before the Lord taps the source of all knowledge and power and draws from it unceasingly. A teacher who feels self-sufficient will lose the Spirit. Without God, [we] can do nothing. With him, all things are possible” (*Teaching—No Greater Call*, 5).

Suggested Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson. Ask class members to think of several physical infirmities that Jesus healed during his mortal ministry. List their responses on the chalkboard. Then point out that part of this lesson is about Jesus healing a blind man—a miracle he performed often.

- Why do you think healing the blind was such a significant miracle in the Savior’s ministry? What might healing the blind symbolize spiritually? (The Savior’s power to help us overcome spiritual blindness and “see” or understand spiritual truths.)

Explain that the scriptures studied in this lesson focus on seeing and hearing the Savior and on our responsibility to help others do the same.

Scripture Discussion and Application As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

1. Jesus gives sight to a man who was born blind.

Discuss John 9. Invite class members to read selected verses. Display the picture of Jesus healing the blind man.

- Before healing the man who was born blind, Jesus proclaimed, “I am the light of the world” (John 9:5). In what ways did Jesus bring light to the blind man? (See John 9:6–7, 35–38.)
- The man who had been blind testified several times that Jesus had healed him (John 9:10–11, 15, 17, 24–25, 27, 30–33. You may want to encourage class members to mark these passages in their scriptures). What can we learn from this man’s example? (Answers could include that we have a responsibility to share our testimonies. Point out that the man courageously testified to many people, even those who rejected his testimony and threatened him.)
- How did this man’s testimony grow as he continued to share it? (Compare verses 11, 17, 33, and 38.) How has your testimony grown as you have shared it?
- How did the Pharisees react when they heard about the miracle? (See John 9:16.) Why do you think they refused to acknowledge that Jesus had performed this miracle by the power of God? (Answers may include pride, anger about Jesus healing on the Sabbath, fear that they would lose power or popularity, and so on.) How did the Pharisees try to discredit Jesus? (See John 9:16, 18–20, 24, 28–29, 34.) How do some people today deny the power of God?
- How did the parents of the man who had been blind respond when the Pharisees asked them about the miracle? (See John 9:18–23.) Why did the parents respond this way? (See John 9:22.) How are we sometimes like this man’s parents? How can we be more valiant in our testimonies?
- How did the Pharisees punish the man when he continued to testify that Jesus had healed him? (See John 9:34. Explain that being cast out meant being excommunicated.) What did Jesus do when he heard that the man had been cast out because of his testimony? (See John 9:35–37.) How has the Lord blessed you for remaining faithful during adversity?

If you are using the video presentation, show “The Synagogue” now.

- In what way could the Pharisees see, and in what way were they blind? (See John 9:39–41. They knew the law very well, but they were blind to its true purpose. They refused to see that Jesus came in fulfillment of the law.) What is the difference between seeing with our eyes and “seeing” or understanding spiritually? What are some causes of spiritual blindness? What can we learn from this account about how to overcome spiritual blindness?

2. Jesus teaches that he is the Good Shepherd.

Read and discuss John 10:1–15, 25–28. In these verses, Jesus described how a shepherd would protect and care for his sheep. Explain that in Jesus’ time, sheep were led into an enclosure called a sheepfold for the night. One of the shepherds would guard the door while the others went home to rest. If a wild animal got into the sheepfold, the shepherd would give his life if necessary to protect the sheep. In the morning, each shepherd would return and call his sheep. They would recognize his voice and follow him to pasture.

- In Jesus' discussion of the shepherd and his sheep, whom do the sheep represent? (See John 10:4, 27.) Who is the shepherd? (See John 10:11.) What are some qualities of a good shepherd? (You may want to list these qualities on the chalkboard as shown below.)
 - a. He knows his sheep, calls them by name, and leads them (John 10:3–4, 14).
 - b. He is the door of the sheep, allowing them to enter the fold to be saved and find pasture (John 10:7, 9).
 - c. He gives the sheep "life . . . more abundantly" (John 10:10).
 - d. He gives his life for the sheep (John 10:11, 15).
- What is the difference between a shepherd and a hireling? (See John 10:11–14.) How is Jesus the perfect example of a shepherd? (Using the list you have written on the chalkboard, discuss how Jesus exemplifies each of these qualities. See 2 Nephi 9:41–42 as you discuss how Jesus is the door of the sheep. As you discuss Jesus' willingness to give his life for us, see John 10:17–18.)
- How do sheep recognize their shepherd? (See John 10:3–4.) How can we hear the Lord's voice? (See D&C 1:37–38; 18:33–36; 97:1.) How are we protected when we know and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd?

If you are using the video presentation, show "The Shepherd" and "The Sheepfold" now.

- Who are the thieves and robbers who try to enter the sheepfold? (See John 10:1.) They are people who try to harm the Lord's followers or lead them astray.) How can we discern between true shepherds and those who try to lead us astray? (See John 10:10.)
- How are the sheep rewarded for following the Good Shepherd? (See John 10:9–10, 28.) How have you been blessed for following the Savior?

Conclusion

Testify that Jesus is the Light of the World and the Good Shepherd. As appropriate, share with class members how the Lord has helped you to see spiritually and to follow him.

Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

1. Our responsibilities as shepherds

- How are we also shepherds for the Lord's sheep? What can we do to help others hear and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: "Anyone serving in any capacity in the Church in which he [or she] is responsible for the spiritual or temporal well-being of any of the Lord's children is a shepherd to those sheep. The Lord holds his shepherds accountable for the safety (salvation) of his sheep" (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 710).

2. “Other sheep I have” (John 10:16)

- To whom did Jesus refer in John 10:16? (See 3 Nephi 15:21–24.) When did these “other sheep” hear the Savior’s voice? How could this verse help someone who is investigating the Church to have a better understanding of the Book of Mormon?

Elder Howard W. Hunter taught: “Those who are familiar with the life and teachings of the Master from their knowledge of the books of the Bible will be interested to know there is also a record of his appearance to the people of the Western Hemisphere—the other sheep to whom he made reference. It is titled the Book of Mormon after the prophet who compiled and abridged the records of the peoples of the American continents. The Book of Mormon is another witness for Christ and records his teachings to the other flock in the New World” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1983, 19; or *Ensign*, May 1983, 16).

3. Different ways of seeing

To help class members more fully appreciate the ways the Savior helps us see, make a wordstrip for several different meanings of the word *see* (suggested definitions appear below). Place the wordstrips in a hat or box, and have class members take turns choosing a wordstrip and explaining how the Savior helps us see in the way it describes. This idea could be especially effective for youth classes.

to perceive by the eye

to understand

to be aware of

to imagine as a possibility

to discover

to direct attention to

to look at from a particular point of view