My Name is Mud
I. Last Week’s Message and the Healed Lame Man
   A. He did not give thanks
   B. He tattled on Jesus and by default entered into the
      persecution of Jesus
   C. He did not follow Jesus
   D. He did not worship Jesus

II. Jesus Meets a Blind Beggar
   A. The Method
      1. Jesus did what He saw His Father doing
      2. The method required faith
   B. The blind beggar comes back seeing

III. The Response of the Neighbors
   A. They still do not treat him as an equal
      1. When Jesus transforms us, many times the last people to
         acknowledge it are those close to us
      2. This authentically shows the difficulty that people of any
         culture have in accepting a real miracle
   B. The division among neighbors
      1. Focuses on
         the beggar
      2. No focus on
         the identity
         of the
         Healer
Table Talk

Teens

Read John 9

Question One:
Being blind from birth, pointed out the man’s life of hopelessness. This also is a good illustration of man’s spiritual blindness from birth.

• Would you rather be physically blind or spiritually blind and why?

Question Two:
In verse 9:5, Jesus proclaimed that while He is in the world, He is the light of the world. As the light of the world, Jesus gives people salvation. After His death, His disciples would be His light, bringing Christ to others.

• How can you be a light to your school, your community, and to the world, while bringing Christ to others?

Question Three:
Mixing clay with saliva was a common practice used for eye infections. Jesus may have used the clay as an aid to provide an opportunity for the man to exercise his faith in washing it off.

• By mixing clay and healing the blind man, what traditional rules did Jesus violate according to the Pharisees?

Question Four:
In verse 9:35-38, by asking the blind man, “Do you believe in the Son of man?” Jesus was calling him to a commitment. The man responded that he was willing to believe and worship Him. His worship of Jesus replaced his worship in the synagogue. The Jews had thrown him out of the synagogue, but Jesus does not throw out those who come to Him.

• How do you feel knowing that once you make a commitment to Jesus you are forgiven?

Question Five:
• Describe the contrast in attitude between the paralyzed man at the pool in John 5 from last week and the blind man in John 9 this week.

IV. The Response of the Pharisees
A. They also do not treat him with honor

B. Their concern is with the identity of the Healer
   1. They do not seem to realize that a miracle has occurred
   2. They are more focused on the fact that the healing happened on a Sabbath
      ★ A godly man would not heal on the Sabbath
      ★ Jesus must be a sinner

C. The parents are brought in to testify
   1. They are petrified
   2. They are more concerned about acceptance in the community than loving their son

D. The argument with the beggar

V. The Beggar’s Response to Jesus
A. He is a prophet! (v. 17)
B. He is NOT a sinner! (v. 25)
C. I am His disciple! (v. 27)
D. He worshiped Him (v. 38)

VI. Jesus’ Response to it all
A. Jesus’ judgment on the blind
B. Jesus’ blessing on the seeing
Life Group Questions for  
October 7, 2012  
“Good News” Series  
Message = My Name is Mud

Ice Breaker: Tell about a fun time you had with water or mud when you were younger.

Read John 9.
1. Tell what you observe about this passage.

2. Have someone read John 5: 1-16 and contrast the beggar with the healed lame man in John 5. Talk about how differently the two of them responded to Jesus.

3. Verbally throw out some adjectives that describe the healed beggar.

4. What kind of relationship do you think this man had with his parents? (If you need a refresher, read John 9: 18-23.) What do you think his parents were more concerned with, acceptance in the community or communicating love to their son?

5. Have you ever put acceptance with people above acceptance with Jesus? Please share with the group about it.

6. Have someone read John 9: 39-41. What is Jesus’ definition of spiritual blindness based on this passage?

7. Have you ever been spiritually blind? Please explain.

8. Pray for one another.

Table Talk

Elementary
John 9

Day 1 - Read John 9 : 1-12. What does this passage say is the reason that this man was born blind? (John 9:3). Can you think of a difficult situation that you have faced in your life? How did God use this situation to display His work in your life? Isn't it interesting that once this man was healed from his blindness, people doubted that he was even the same man!

Day 2 - Read the rest of John 9. What was the response of the Pharisees to the healing of the blind man? How did the man who was healed respond to Jesus? (Think about the crippled man in John 5 from last week...he never even thanked Jesus for his healing!). This blind man had a soft heart toward Jesus, the Pharisees did not!

Day 3 - Have you ever experienced total and complete darkness? Typically, if we are in a dark place, our eyes eventually adjust to the darkness and we are able to see a bit. In total darkness, you can’t even see your hand in front of your face. John 9 : 39 gives us the reason that He has come into this world...so that the blind will see! We live in a darkened world full of sin, yet there is Light that comes from Jesus! And did you know that Jesus can work through your life to bring Light to others!? As you pray, thank Jesus for all that He has done for you, and ask Him to shine His light in and through you!
Day 1: Read John 9:1-12
Start out by talking about how, last week, we talked about how because we know and love Jesus we should thank Him for all the good things He does for us. We should also thank others who help us. This week the story is about a man who is very thankful for Jesus’ healing. Talk about what it means to be blind. Ask your children how they think it would be to be blind. Ask how they think the man felt when he opened his eyes and could see. Just like the man in the story, Jesus wants us to see and believe.

Day 2:
Talk about some of the things we see in the world that are good things from God. Jesus also wants us to see what we should do in the world. He wants us to forgive others, listen and obey, love and serve each other, and be thankful. We are God’s helpers and we will one day get to see Him in person, just like the blind man in the story.

Memory Verse:
“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” -John 8:12

Day 3:
Talk again about being thankful and talk about how it felt to hand out the thank you cards from last week. Discuss some other ways to show gratitude this week. Find a need and try to meet it.

Activity: Pick a safe room or space to all go and bring a flashlight and an age appropriate puzzle with you. Get situated on the floor in a circle with the puzzle in the middle. Turn out the lights or put on blindfolds. Now see if you can put together the puzzle without being able to see it. It should not be easy. Now shine some light on the task with the flashlight. Jesus is our light!

Personal Devotion Pages
The following pages are designed to help you enjoy a regular time alone with God. We have divided up the curriculum to help us grow wherever we are at in our relationship with God and in our knowledge of His Kingdom.

LEVELS: Since we are a Colorado church, we use skiing imagery to communicate the different levels of intensity and time involved in relating to God.

BEGINNER: If you are new in your relationship with God, we encourage you to try the exercises under this symbol:

INTERMEDIATE: If you have walked with God for some time and would like a little more challenge and more time involvement, try the exercises under this symbol:

ADVANCED: These exercises are for people who have walked with God for some time and display maturity in their relationship with Him.

These exercises provide a practical way to encounter God and His truth on a regular basis. There are no rules here. Please don’t hurry through the process. Slow meditation and memorization seems to soak in better than cramming.

Enjoy!
Day One

1. Take some time to praise the Lord for who He is and enjoy thanking Him for what He has done in your life lately.

2. Read and meditate on John 9.

3. In the space below, write down what God says to you through the passage in John.


Day Five

Then Jesus told him, “I have come to judge the world. I have come to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind.” The Pharisees who were standing there heard him and asked, “Are you saying we are blind?” “If you were blind, you wouldn’t be guilty,” Jesus replied. “But you remain guilty because you claim you can see.”

~John 9:39-41, NLT

Jesus’ stinging remarks to the Pharisees revealed that they were the blind ones, not the beggar. In fact, while he had always been physically blind, Jesus insists that the Pharisees had always been spiritually blind.

Whereas the beggar’s blindness had not been due to his own choices, or even his parents’ choices, the Pharisees’ blindness was a chosen malady.

Jesus related spiritual blindness directly to the understanding of Jesus’ identity. Because they chose to believe He was a false Messiah and a false prophet, but believed they knew God, Jesus proclaimed that they were guilty of spiritual blindness.

There are so many of us in our culture who are spiritually blind; both inside the church and in the world. So many of my unchurched friends have some bit of reverence for Jesus, but there is no worship. Yet, they think their lives are grand! Many of them have money and possessions, so they wonder why they would need Jesus for anything. They are spiritually blind.

On the other hand, there are many of us in the church who are blind as well. I was a blind man until I got into college, where Jesus opened my eyes. Jesus was a part of my upbringing, and a part of my weekly schedule, but He was not my King, my Lord, or the object of my worship.

Father, show me where I am still blind.
Day Five

1. Take some time to praise the Lord for who He is and enjoy thanking Him for what He has done in your life lately.

2. Read John 9: 24-34. Think about the wisdom the blind man had in his argument with the Pharisees.

3. Take time to pray for people you love who are spiritually blind.

4. Finish your Bible memorization today.

Day One

After reading about the man healed at the Pool of Bethesda last week, the contrast between him and the blind man healed in John 9 is astounding.

Once again, we must see how Jesus is led only by what His Father is doing. In order to heal this guy, Jesus makes mud out of dirt and His own saliva and rubs it on the man’s eyes. He then commands him to go wash in the Pool of Siloam, which is about a 1/4 mile walk away.

The man goes, washes, and returns seeing!

Why does Jesus make mud and put it on the guy’s eyes? Why go wash in the Pool of Siloam? At other times, Jesus has healed blind people by simply touching them, or by speaking a word. So why the spit ball? All I know is this... Jesus simply does what His Father is doing, nothing more, nothing less. On this particular day, the Father was healing blind guys with spit/mud balls.

As we read the rest of the story, we find this man to be a man touched by God and held by faith. He will stand up for Jesus at every turn, even to the point of being excommunicated from the synagogue.

This man has found His Savior and by the end of the story, Jesus will also be his Lord and the object of his worship.

_Father, enable me to be a person who trusts you for all things. Be my Savior, my Lord, the object of my greatest worship!_
Day Two

1. Take some time to praise the Lord for who He is and enjoy thanking Him for what He has done in your life lately.

2. Read John 9 again slowly.

3. Write down in this space what God is saying to you through this passage that you might have missed last time.

4. Are there people who persecute you or despise you for your walk with Jesus? Take time to pray for them.

5. Continue memorizing and meditating on the scriptures for this week.

Day Four

One of the most outstanding themes of John’s Gospel is the resistance of the Pharisees to Jesus and to truth. In almost every chapter of John, they are portrayed as resisting Jesus vehemently.

As we looked at the man healed at the Pool of Bethesda last week, Jesus made a statement that must of stung: You search the Scriptures because you believe they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! Yet you refuse to come to me so that I can give you this eternal life (John 5:39, 40, NLT).

As a young boy, I had a wonderful mutt named Joe. Joe and I were inseparable and played together every hour that I was not in school. He was amazing at the game of fetch. He would fetch anything I told him to get, except when I deceived him. Sometimes I would pretend to throw a stick one direction, and while he was looking that way, I would throw it the opposite direction. Joe was lost. He couldn’t figure out where the stick went.

As a young boy, I thought I could help him understand where the stick really was by pointing at it. I didn’t realize that Joe couldn’t get the concept of pointing. Every time I pointed at the stick, he would look at my hand rather than comprehending that there was an imaginary line going from the end of my finger to the quarry for which he longed!

Several years later, the Lord showed me that man’s tendency is to be like Joe. We tend to look at the law (my pointing finger) rather than at Jesus (the stick). We can be absorbed into doing our religious duty rather than looking Jesus in the face and adoring Him for who He is.

Father, today I push through the tendency to earn Your love and I humbly accept Your grace and unconditional kindness. I worship You almighty God!
Day Two

I often wonder how the people, who were healed at Jesus’ hand, were treated by their family, friends, and neighbors after their healing. I try to imagine a young woman who has lived in a leprosy colony going home to her family after Jesus cleansed her. I wonder if they could grasp the reality of that miracle, or if she would still be an outcast.

John chapter 9 gives us the only detailed New Testament record of such an incident. The man who had been blind since birth experienced a profound healing and returned to his neighborhood. The response of the neighbors, his parents, and the religious big shots reveals authenticity in reporting. John records natural responses of human nature to such a sensational event.

Read through John 9: 8-12 and revisit the response of the beggar’s neighbors. The natural tendency to treat such blind people as second class citizens, even objects, rather than people, bleeds through the text. There arises an argument between the neighbors because no one is sure this is the same man who had been born blind. All the while, he is crying out, I am the one! Yet, no one gives his testimony any credence. His cries fall on the deaf ears of people who have ignored him for decades. Even after being healed, he is still treated as if he was not.

Then, the neighbors take him to the Pharisees (John 9: 13-17). Their first concern is not rejoicing with him who has been healed, but why did the person who healed him do it on the Sabbath? Such a person would have to be a sinner because everyone knows that God’s agent would never break the laws of the Sabbath! The Pharisees get into an argument, not about the identity of the beggar, but about the identity of the healer.

The man’s parents, who obviously long ago stopped caring, fear for their social status and chicken out when identifying the man.

Father, help me to believe you for miracles, and when they happen, help me believe!

Day Four

1. Take some time to praise the Lord for who He is and enjoy thanking Him for what He has done in your life lately.

2. Read John 9: 1-38 and then go back and read John 5: 1-16. In your mind, see how the healed lame man is different from the seeing beggar in John 9.

3. Take time to pray for the people you know who have responded to Jesus like the healed lame man did.

4. Continue meditating on and memorizing the scripture for this week.
Day Three

1. Take some time to praise the Lord for who He is and enjoy thanking Him for what He has done in your life lately.


3. Ask the Lord where you are afraid to stand up for Him. Ask Him why you have this fear and write down what you hear in this space.

4. Continue meditating on and memorizing the scripture for this week.

As I read about the beggar that Jesus healed of blindness in John 9, I love to see the progression of his belief in Jesus. All through the story, the beggar makes a strong stand, buttressed with faith in his healer.

As the Pharisees argued about the character of the man’s healer, they asked him what kind of man he thought the healer was. The man replied, I think He must be a prophet (John 9:17). The great religious big shots, caught up in theology more than compassion, received those words with coldness.

After a brief, spineless conversation with the man’s parents, they asked him again. They told him, Give glory to God by telling the truth, because we know Jesus is a sinner (John 9:24, NLT). These venomous, controlling words, were spat out expecting the beggar to wilt and agree with them.

However, this man has lived his whole life as an outcast. Though he has the opportunity now to be welcomed into the fellowship of normal people, he sides with Jesus. This kind of faith is supernatural, a gift of God. He now steps up his commitment to Jesus and asks the Pharisees this question: Do you want to become his disciples, too (John 9:27, NLT)?

John 9:28-34 follows with a feisty argument between the man and the Pharisees. They refuse to enter into his wisdom and excommunicate him from the local synagogue, which for most people, is social suicide. This man doesn’t care, he’s been an outcast all his life.

The chapter ends with the man finding Jesus and worshiping Him (John 9:38). What can I learn from this beggar?