

LESSON PLAN

BLIND MAN OF BETHSAIDA; PETER'S GREAT CONFESSION

Mark 8:10-38 (Matthew 16:1-12)

Lesson Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 – “**If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:** In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not...” Grades 1 and 2 can memorize verse 3, which is in bold type.

Lesson Aim: Jesus is the Son of God; we should honor Him and believe on Him as our God and Savior.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Do any of you children know a blind person? (Let the children tell who they know that is blind.) Have any of you ever thought what it would be like to be blind? Let's close our eyes and pretend that we are blind. (With everyone's eyes closed, continue.) Now that we are pretending that we are blind, what are some of the things that we will not be able to see anymore? (Let the children name some.) What are some of the things that we will find very difficult to do as a blind person?

If you prefer, you may have the children play a simple game instead of discussing the difficulties of blind people. Have the children close their eyes and identify three or four common objects by just feeling them. Let them guess, but do not tell them if they are correct until everyone has had a chance to feel the objects and guess what they are. The idea is to help them think what it is like to be blind.

Some people are blind with their eyes and some are blind with their minds and hearts. How can a person be blind with his mind or with his heart? He is blind with his mind when he cannot understand God's Word (the Bible). He is blind with his heart when he cannot believe that Jesus Christ is God and can be his Savior. If a person cannot understand the Bible or believe that Jesus Christ is God, who has come to save him from his sins, he is more blind than those who are unable to see with their eyes.

HE (for Authority): The first memory verse tells about people who are blind to the message of the Gospel. As a result it says that they are lost. That means they cannot find the way to Heaven. They are like a blind person in a world of darkness. They will stumble over obstacles in their path (false teachings that contradict the Bible) and will fall into an open pit (a false religion that says we are saved by our good works). The second memory verse tells who is making them blind. It is the god of this world, who is Satan. He blinds those who do not believe that Jesus is God, the only one that can save them from Hell and welcome them into Heaven.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In our Bible story today we will be talking about some men who were blind. We will talk about one man who could not see with his eyes, but we will also talk about some men who could not see (understand) with their minds and they could not see (believe) with their hearts that Jesus was really God.

I Confusion about the Bread and Leaven – Mark 8:10-21

Jesus' disciples acted as though their hearts were hardened with unbelief in Him and His power (8:17). Why? They had forgotten to take bread for their trip across the sea and had only one loaf among them. When Jesus told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod, He was telling them to beware of their false teachings. The disciples thought that Jesus was telling them to beware of their physical bread so that they would not buy bread from them. Jesus was upset with them because they /should have known that He was not talking about physical bread; He could multiply that one loaf they had into enough food to feed all of them. He had already done it twice when He fed 5000 and 4000 with a few fish and loaves (8:19-20). Didn't they believe He was the Creator? Didn't they believe He was God? He would take care of them. (Review these stories in Mark 6:35-44; 8:1-9 by asking your class a few questions about those stories. Their answers should help them see that Jesus is God the Creator of all things.)

WE: We need to examine our faith in Jesus. Do we really believe that Jesus is God who created us? Do we believe He can save us from Hell? If we believe that Jesus can save us, do we believe that He can take care of us? He can provide for our food like He took care of the 5000 and the 4000. He also can protect us like He protected the disciples in a windstorm on the sea, which was going to sink their ship. He is God and He is our Savior. He is our Friend and He will take care of those that put their trust in Him.

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II. Compassion for the Blind Man - Mark 8:22-26

When Jesus was in Bethsaida some people brought a blind man to Him to heal him. Jesus took him out of the town and healed him in two stages (8:23-25). After the first stage, he could see, but not clearly. He saw men as trees that were walking. After the second stage, he could see clearly. Why did Jesus heal him in two stages? It is not stated, but it is suggested that it was for the benefit of His disciples that were watching Him perform this miracle. They had just shown that they had spiritual eyes that were dull and could not see clearly that He was the Son of God, the Creator of all things. They needed a second stage of healing for their spiritual eyes so they could clearly see who He was. After he healed him, he told the man He had healed to go home and not tell anyone in the town what He had done for him. Apparently he obeyed and Jesus was able to teach His disciples without being interrupted.

WE: We need the healing operation of God on our spiritual eyes so we can clearly see who Jesus is. He is more than a man that walked on the roads of the Holy Land. He is more than a prophet that taught 12 disciples how to live and how to die. He is more than a martyr that died for His principles of right and wrong. He is the Son of God, the Creator of all things. He is our Savior, the only one who can save us from Hell and welcome us into His Kingdom. Do you believe that? Has it changed your life? If not, it is likely that you are still spiritually blind.

III. Confession by the Big Fisherman - Mark 8:27-38

People were saying that Jesus was John the Baptist, Elias (Elijah) or one of the prophets, but none of them said He was God (8:27-28). Peter was the first one that said Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God (Mt 16:16). His spiritual eyes were opened and he saw that Jesus was the Christ (8:29), which was the word for the divine King of Israel. However, shortly after Peter made this great confession, he treated Jesus as a man and not as his God when he rebuked Jesus for talking about His coming death and resurrection (8:31-33). Peter did not think Jesus knew what He was saying, but it was Peter who did not know what he was saying. Jesus was God and Peter should have been listening to Jesus instead of rebuking Him. It took time for the disciples to see clearly that Jesus was God in a human body.

People who do not believe Jesus can save their souls without their good works do not grasp the fact that Jesus is God. He is fully capable to do what He has promised. Those who are ashamed of Jesus Christ and His words (the Bible), show by their shame that they do not fully believe, if they believe all at, that He is God (8:38). But Christians, who obey Jesus and are willing to lose their lives for His sake and the Gospel's, surely do believe He is God (8:35-37). Their actions, more than their words, tell what they believe. We can believe a person's actions, but we cannot always believe his/her words.

WE: We need to show by our actions as well as by our words that we truly believe Jesus is the divine Son of God. To do this, we need to obey Mark 8:34, 38. We need to deny first place for our pleasures and put His pleasures first in our lives. We need to take up our cross by being ready to suffer as a witness for Him. And we need to follow Him without being ashamed of Him or of His words.

(Do not feel that you must use all of the above points. Use only those that fit the needs of your class.)

BE (for Action): Who in today's Bible stories said that Jesus was the Son of God? (Peter) What did he say to Jesus later that showed he did not treat Jesus like the Son of God? (Peter rebuked Jesus for saying that He would be killed and rise after three days.) How does a person show others that Jesus is God? (He or she must obey Him and put Him first in their lives, and not be ashamed of Him or His words in the Bible.)

Do you really believe Jesus is God? (Have them raise their hands if they do believe it.) Do your actions tell others that you really believe Jesus is God? If not, you should be sorry for this sin. Lift your hand to show God that you are sorry for disobeying Him or being ashamed of Him and His words in the Bible. I will pray for you.

Are there any children who never really knew that Jesus was God, but now you believe it and you want Him to save you from your sins so you do not go to Hell?" Have them raise their hands. Deal with those that raise their hands immediately after class.