

At-home Bible Study: Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Life matters. Even to someone who has never read the Bible and doesn't believe in the God of the Bible, their conscience tells them that people are pretty special beings. But it is in the Bible that God tells us exactly how special we are. In a world in which life isn't always valued, God teaches us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made!

Today: What about those with disease or disability?

A good prayer to begin our study:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for creating us and calling us Your own. Thank You for giving us opportunities to study Your Word. Help us see others through Your eyes and love others through Your heart. Your Son Jesus shows us how important it is to be healed and made whole through His love and grace. Help us recognize His compassion for us and share it with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

The removal of an impairment or disease does not necessarily make a person whole. Jesus cured a man in John chapter 5, even though the man did not recognize Jesus for who He was. Jesus warned the man about the consequences for disbelief, eternal separation from God. We now turn our attention to another Sabbath healing in the book of John, the healing of the man who was born blind. It is markedly different in both its context and end result.

Read  **John 9:1-5**.

How are the disciples defining sin? Is there any other meaning for the word sin?

What persistent wrong-headed teaching does Jesus debunk? (compare  **Luke 13:1-5**)

What is the difference between impairment as a punishment for sin and impairment as a consequence of sin?

What works of God do you see displayed in this account?

How does Jesus use the man's physical blindness to teach a spiritual truth?

The disciples limited sin to individual actions, either those of the man or his parents. In doing so, they address only the symptom of sin. Sin is more correctly seen as a condition which all humanity shares; our sinful actions show this condition. Clearly, the disciples saw only the man's impairment; his blindness was merely a topic of discussion. There was no empathy.

Read  **John 9:6-12.**

What do Jesus' methods tell you about how He viewed the man?

What does the reaction of the neighbors suggest about their attitude toward the man and impairment in general?

Do you find anything ironic in their actions?

Like the disciples, those who knew the man focused on his impairment instead of his personhood, remembering him as a beggar while denying his identity. These typical, sighted, people would not "believe their eyes" when confronted by a seeing man who had previously been blind from birth! This refusal persists to the point of being called before the Pharisees to give account for himself. Unlike the man in John chapter 5, this man becomes a disciple of Jesus.

What do Jesus' words and actions teach us about our relationship with him, whether or not we have a disease or disability?

What specific words or actions can we use to mirror Jesus' love towards those with disease or disability?