

Thank you for your interest in the “*Folks Like Us*” Bible studies by Fran Sciacca. Whether you’re using them for your own spiritual growth and journey, or as a resource for your small group, Sunday school, or homeschool program, you’ll soon discover why these studies originally sold over 600,000 copies in their print editions. The recent decision by the publisher to discontinue print editions and to return the publishing rights back to Fran has given him the freedom to make the nearly 70 individual character studies available to you...at no cost.

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- ***Biblical literacy courses*** – Three, 13-week Bible courses covering the entire Bible. Includes individual course books, audio, and optional animated slide supplements. Course books and animated slide supplements may be purchased on the web store.
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FOLKS  
Like Us

THE MAN BORN BLIND

“Seeing Clearly Takes More Than Eyes.”

Timeless truths from our ancient past,  
for a journey with God in the modern era.

**Fran Sciacca**

## “Folks Like Us” — an introduction

Over the years I’ve written and published a number of Bible studies that collectively have sold well over a half-million copies. They were forged, most of them, in the furnaces of pain, doubt, and loneliness. Maybe that’s why they were well-used, they touched people where they hurt most.

Recently, my publisher decided that they no longer wanted to handle the books that contained these 60 or so individual studies. So, I’ve decided to make them available to any who might benefit from them. At no cost.

I have always believed that because God thought it best to become human in the Incarnation, that perhaps “incarnational truth” was His preferred method of revealing Himself and His purposes to us. I suppose that’s where the basic genre of these studies originated. I wanted to provide believers with Bible studies rooted in our ancestral past. The lives of men and women, who it turns out, are “folks just like us” in so many ways.

So, please take your time and work slowly through as many of these studies as you care to do... there’s a lot of them! And may God use the combination of the struggles and insights of your *ancient* brothers and sisters, combined with those of mine, your modern brother, to help you in your spiritual journey. That is the goal of this project.

Warmly in The Lamb,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fran Sciacca". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fran Sciacca  
Birmingham, AL

# THE MAN BORN BLIND

*“Seeing Clearly Takes More Than Eyes.”*

**A** **BIDING PRINCIPLE** – Becoming like Jesus includes the slow transformation of how I “see.” Instead of interpreting life through my own selfishness, God provides *spiritual* sight and I begin to see life *and* people more the way Jesus did.

*“Whoever sees Christ as a mirror of the Father's heart, actually walks through the world with new eyes.”*  
—Martin Luther

**O**ur perspective plays an enormous role in arriving at biblical truth regarding God, man, sin, and salvation. *How* we see actually determines *what* we see. In the Gospels, Jesus restored the sight of many blind people. Sometimes a mere word worked the miracle; other times He employed gestures and props. For some, it was a public spectacle; for others, a private miracle. But in every case, amazement followed the healing, as a life of total darkness was replaced by one teeming with colors, shapes, and movement. It changed forever what these people saw because it enabled them actually to see what had been there all along. What a miracle!

On one occasion Jesus found himself in the midst an entire crowd of people who couldn't see. But He chose to heal only one man, and then turned and rebuked the rest for their blindness, almost as if it were their own fault! He declared to them that one of the reasons He came into the world was to heal people's blindness. What in the world does seeing have to do with being a follower of Jesus? Perhaps everything.

**KEY SCRIPTURE:** John 9

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## STUDY QUESTIONS...

1. In the story you just read in John 9, Jesus speaks of two kinds of blindness. What are they? In your own words, describe what you think each involves.  
First blindness –  
  
Second blindness –
2. Which of the two do you think is more serious? Why?
3. What insight about "seeing" or understanding spiritual truth can you gain from 1 Corinthians 2:14?

4. In 2 Corinthians 5:16-17, Paul describes both a specific *result* of sanctification that deals with our perspective on people, and a general *principle* about salvation. What are they?

Specific result of sanctification –

General principle about salvation –

5. Before Paul met the Lord on the road to Damascus (his conversion in Acts 9), he was so spiritually blind that he was obsessed with persecuting these new believers in Christ. By his own admission, he did not "see" Jesus to be the Messiah of the Jews. Look at the following verses and isolate an aspect of Paul's life each one describes; then briefly explain how Paul's perspective on that aspect is being changed by his relationship with Jesus Christ:

Aspect of Paul's Life	How it changed by having a relationship with Christ
Acts 8:3; 9:1 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20 (Note: "Saul" is Paul)	
1 Corinthians 9:12-22	
2 Corinthians 12:7-10	
Philippians 1:21-26	
Philippians 3:4-9	
Philippians 4:11-13	

6. a. In your own words, summarize what you have discovered in this chapter about the way a believer should begin looking at life if he or she is truly saved (being sanctified).
- b. How is this different from the way an *unbeliever* looks at life?

## LOOKING BACK...

**B**lindness is the inability to see what's there, not just the inability to see. Each of us is blind to all forms of light except that which is in the visible spectrum. We've all heard of ultraviolet and infrared light, but we cannot see them; we are blind to them. Jesus claimed that one of the things He came to heal was our blindness. And while it is true that He healed many people of physical blindness, He also spoke of the existence of a greater and more serious blindness: the inability to "see" life as it really is.

The apostle Paul had a profound understanding of this type of spiritual blindness. After finally "seeing" Jesus as the Messiah, Paul tells us that his perspective on every human being also changed. Being transformed into the likeness of Jesus Christ means that we too begin to see all of life the way He sees it, including the people in it. And, as it did for Paul, it revolutionizes the way we live.

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

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7. Read through the following options below and decide to what extent you see your life through the eyes of your relationship with God. (Check all that apply.)
- I see being saved primarily as a private thing between me and God.
  - I see being saved as something I share with others who are also saved.
  - I see being saved as something that I express in certain environments (such as church, prayer groups, and so on).
  - I see being saved as the foundation for my life, but not something that affects my life.
  - I see being saved as a strong influence in the relationships that matter most to me.
  - I see being saved as something that leaks into every crevice of my life.
8. Which of the following do you see *differently* since (or because) you've become a Christian? (Check all that apply.)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> success            | <input type="checkbox"/> the rich           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> homosexuality      | <input type="checkbox"/> sense of humor     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> compassion & mercy | <input type="checkbox"/> death              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> retirement         | <input type="checkbox"/> gender identity    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ministry to others | <input type="checkbox"/> racism             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spouse             | <input type="checkbox"/> children           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> the poor           | <input type="checkbox"/> sharing the gospel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> career goals       | <input type="checkbox"/> speech             |

<input type="checkbox"/> reading habits	<input type="checkbox"/> parenting
<input type="checkbox"/> priorities	<input type="checkbox"/> circumstances
<input type="checkbox"/> the environment	<input type="checkbox"/> the environment
<input type="checkbox"/> missions	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic diversity
<input type="checkbox"/> devotional life	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment choices
<input type="checkbox"/> honesty	<input type="checkbox"/> my past
<input type="checkbox"/> purity	<input type="checkbox"/> politics
<input type="checkbox"/> money	<input type="checkbox"/> use of free time
<input type="checkbox"/> contentment	<input type="checkbox"/> contentment

9. Compare your answers to questions 7 and 8 above. What strikes you?

10. a. Read Isaiah 55:8-9. What is God saying here about *His* perspective? About *our* perspective? (Note: The word translated *thought* means "plans" or "purposes"; *way* means "journey," "path," or "direction.")

His perspective:

Our perspective:

b. Why is what God is saying here so important to what you've been learning?

c. How could this passage, left to itself, possibly lead to deep discouragement?

11. What encouragement can you find in the following passages regarding our *inability* to understand God's perspective?

Psalm 25:12-14 –

Jeremiah 33:3 –

12. In 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, Paul digs deeply into holy ground regarding the process of our sanctification and what it means to see life from God's point of view. Glean as many insights as you can from this passage and record them below.

13. a. Paul said that we "have the mind of Christ." But he also clearly stated that the process of sanctification involves the "renewing of our minds" (see Romans 12:2). What can you conclude about *your own* sanctification in light of your answers to questions 7 through 12?
- b. What needs some personal attention, through prayer and change?
14. Imagine that you died at the age of eighty. Assume that you spent the length of your days cooperating with God in His sanctification process for your life. If you could listen to the message at your funeral, what would you want to hear said about you? (Give serious thought to this, and then write your thoughts.)
15. a. List one area that needs immediate prayer and effort for you to be transformed into the Christlike person God wants you to become:
- b. What will you do *this week* to move in that direction?

#### **SCRIPTURE MEMORY** (optional)

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- Changed perspective through a renewed mind – Romans 12:2
- Changed perspective on people – 2 Corinthians 5:14-16