

## How To Live Sent In Light Of Christ (Part 1) – John 9:1-41

John 9. This is the account of the *healing* of a man born blind. And as such, it's the 6<sup>th</sup> of 7 major signs the Apostle John highlights. Signs, as in miracles with a point, a meaning. Primarily, to show and prove that Jesus is the Messiah.

But John spends an extended amount of time on this one. I think, because of all the other lessons associated with it. A man who is physically and spiritually blind, is given physical and spiritual sight, while those who “see,” remain blind. And the various responses, along the way, are a case study in how to live sent in light of Christ. How to bear witness to him. Speak of him. A case study with at least 8 principles. 4 this week, and 4 next.

### Outline

John 9:1 – *As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. [2] And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” [3] Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.* Our suffering is an opportunity for God to work. Sometimes by supernaturally healing us, and other times by supernaturally strengthening us. All for God's glory and our good. That was last week.

Then Jesus says – *[4] We must work the works of him who sent me* [the works of God] *while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.* *We* must work, he says. He includes us. *We* must do the work of ministry.

And do it now. While it's *day*. While the *Son* is shining. S-O-N. Which not only refers to Jesus' time on earth, 2000 years ago, but right now. Because Light of the world that he is, he still shines. And we still work. The New Testament is clear.

But *night is coming* [he said] *when no one can work*. A time of spiritual *darkness* when the work of ministry will be greatly curtailed. Referring, I think, to *two* different times. One already and the other not yet. Like so many other prophecies in Scriptures.

The “already” time of spiritual darkness was the 3 days Jesus was in the tomb. A dark night of the soul when the Apostles and disciples thought all was lost and ministry came to a halt. And the “not yet,” I think, is the time of great tribulation at the *end* of this age. It too is going to be a time of spiritual darkness. It's coming, Jesus said.

But – *[5] As long as I am in the world* [v5], *I am the light of the world.*” “As long as I shine, it's showtime. Daytime. High time. So get busy and . . .”

### Live with a sense of urgency (v1-7)

That's the idea. The *first* way to live sent in light of Jesus. Seize the opportunity to do the works of God while you can. Procrastinate no longer. Sit out no more. If there's work to be done in your family – like discipling your kids, or encouraging your spouse, or sharpening one another – get busy. If there are people to reach at work, start talking. If there are needs in the community, start helping. Live with a sense of urgency.

And if there's ministry to be done in our church, start serving. And there's always ministry to be done around here. From Coram Deo Kids and Service Teams on Sundays, to Kids Club and Student Ministries mid-week. Opportunity abounds. And you can get involved by checking one of the boxes on the Connection Card, or getting on our website.

And you should. With a sense of urgency. Because Jesus couldn't have been clearer. V4 – *We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day.* (4) **While the Light shines.** Capital L. The light of Christ. Inside these walls and out, live with a sense of earnestness, and get-up-and-go, while you can. While it's fruitful. And available.

And notice, Jesus didn't just say it, he did it. Himself. V6 – *Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud* [anointed, as in set them apart for God's purposes; like priests and leaders of old were set apart by anointing with oil] *[7] and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent).*

So check it out. Jesus was *sent* himself, v4, and he *sent* the blindman, v7, to a *pool* that means sent. You think he's trying to tell us something?

Found in 2004 by work crews fixing a water pipe, the **Pool of Siloam** was located about ¼ mile south of the temple. And it was massive. Even by today's standards. 3 *times* the size of an Olympic swimming pool.

And it most likely derived its name, meaning *Sent*, from the water that was *sent* to it. About 75,000 liters per hour, from the Gihon Spring, flowing through Hezekiah's Tunnel.

All of which made for a large, well-known, easily accessible place to wash. Even for a blind man. And, it was a massive metaphor, for the very thing he was *sent* to do. And a massive object lesson for us. *[7b] So he went and washed and came back seeing.* He was sent, and went.

Now, was the mud necessary? Did Jesus have to use that? Obviously not. He could have just spoken. But the mud conveyed a sense of urgency. Who wants mud on their eyes? Especially mud made from spit! The mud transferred a sense of urgency, and the blindman responded.

When Jesus said, *“Go, wash in the pool of Siloam,”* he went. Jesus *sent* him with a sense of urgency, and he *went* with a sense of urgency. *He went and washed and came back seeing.* (7b) No caveats, no pitstops, no nothing. Just flat-out obedience.

And a perfect example for us. To live with a sense of urgency ourselves, **just like the blindman**. Just like an opportunity for *ministry* was at hand, and Jesus seized *it* with a sense of urgency, so too an opportunity for healing was at hand, an opportunity to be *used* by God, and the blindman seized *it* with a sense of urgency.

Out with complacency and in with urgency. Time is short. Your time and *the* time. You may not think so in your 20's and 30's and 40's, but it's going to fly by just like that. And who knows how long before night falls? Live sent, with a sense of urgency. That's the first principle.

The second comes from v8-12. *[8] The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” [9] Some said, “It is he.” Others said, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.”* You can almost see him jumping up and down at the edge of crowd. “I'm the man! I'm the one! I'm right here! It's true!”

[10] So they said to him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” [Dripping with skepticism. If you’re the man, how’d it happen?] [11] He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed and received my sight.” [12] They said to him, “Where is he?” [If that’s really true, where is he?] He said, “I do not know.”

The second way to live sent in light of Christ, is . . .

**Don’t be bashful about God’s work in your life (v8-12)**

Just like the blind man, own it, recount it, and admit it. **Own it**, as in accept it and say so. If God has done a work in your life – a work of sanctification, or sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, or empathy toward others, or patience, or humility, or salvation in the first place – if God has done a work in your life, own it.

Every chance you get, be explicit. “It’s true. It happened. I got saved. I’m different. I’m the one.” Own it, and do so right away. Because if you wait, it only gets harder. That’s why I encourage new believers to tell somebody before the day is out.

Second, is **recount it**. Own God’s work in your life, and recount it. Again, every chance you get. When the blindman’s neighbors asked him *how* his eyes were opened – He answered [in v11], “The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed and received my sight.”

He *recounted* God’s work in his life. Openly. And clearly. He didn’t pontificate, as if it was all about him. He didn’t exaggerate, as if the work of Jesus wasn’t enough. And he didn’t withdraw in some sort of false humility. “Oh, it’s nothing. No big deal.” He recounted it. And we should too.

If God has done a work in your life, speak it. Tell it. Recount it. Because your personal testimony is one of the most powerful ways to live sent and bear witness.

And third, **admit it**. Own his work in your life, recount what you *know*, and admit what you *don’t*. Admit what you *don’t* know.

You don’t have to have all the answers. You don’t have to know everything. The blind man sure didn’t. He didn’t even know where Jesus was. *They said to him* [in v12], “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.” He didn’t speculate, he didn’t hesitate, and he didn’t equivocate. He just admitted it.

So often, I think we’re bashful about God’s work in our life, because we’re afraid we might not have answers to all the questions that might come. “How do you *know* that was God? What makes *you* special? Are you sure it’s *real*? How do you know?”

Don’t let difficult questions keep you from proclaiming what you can; what you know. “I once was blind, but now I see. I once was lost, but now I’m found. I once was guilty, but now I’m forgiven. I once was miserable, but now I’m not.” Don’t be bashful.

Admit what you don’t know, recount what you do, and own it all. That’s the second way to live sent in light of Jesus.

The third comes from v13-17. [13] They brought to the Pharisees [some of the religious leaders] the man who had formerly been blind. [14] Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. [There’s trouble.] [15] So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” More recounting.

[16] Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” Right on cue. Because nitpickers will always pick. Always. And it’s usually church people just like the Pharisees. So obsessed that every “t” is crossed and every “i” dotted, they miss the paragraph. So obsessed that everything is *said* exactly right, they miss the point. So concerned about the *way* things are done, they miss the *work* that’s done. Don’t be a nitpicker.

[16b] But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” [Some of them were thinking. Some weren’t completely blind by their theology; or ideology.] And there was a division among them. Which is *always* the case when worldviews collide. *Always* the case with preconceived notions. *Always* the case when belief meets unbelief. It creates confusion and division.

Look at politics. Different worldviews lead to different sides. Same for church-world. Different perspectives lead to different factions. There was division then just like there’s division now. Unavoidable this side of eternity. Unavoidable with fallen people.

[17] So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?” [Ha! Little did they know it wasn’t just his physical eyes.] He said, “He is a prophet.” Simple. “He’s a man sent by God to speak the truth and show the way.” And he wasn’t wrong. Jesus indeed, is a prophet. *The* prophet. Not just a prophet, but certainly the one *prophesied* by prophets. Prophet, Priest, and King.

But the point, regarding how to live in light of him, is to . . .

**Keep it simple (v13-17)**

When opportunities arise to speak of Jesus, keep it simple. Be concise. Be clear. Read the room.

When the Pharisees asked the blindman in v15, how he received his sight, he shortened his *already* short answer from v12, to a mere *dozen* words. “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” Simple. Realizing he might not have their attention for long, he reduced his answer to the bare necessities.

Same in v17 when asked, “What do you say about him?” “Well, I think he’s God incarnate. The second person of the Trinity. The one who has existed in perfect communion with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from eternity past. The one who laid out a pathway of blamelessness that we might exist in perfect communion with him and one another for eternity future. That’s what I say.” Stop it.

“Jesus is Lord! Jesus saves! God loves you! Jesus died for you!” Keep it simple. Don’t complicate it with a bunch of words or high-sounding theology. Speaking just to hear yourself speak. Talking because you want people to know how much you know.

I'm not saying dumb your answers down. I'm just saying, speak plainly and keep it simple. It's the third way to live sent in *light* of him.

## You Are Loved

And last, the fourth, comes from v18-23. [18] *The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight [19] and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" [20] His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. [21] But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."*

[22] *(His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ [the promised Messiah], he was to be put out of the synagogue. [23] Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him.")*

Being put out of the synagogue was no small thing. It meant losing your inheritance as a child of Abraham, losing your fellowship with friends and family, losing your access to rabbinic teaching, losing your opportunity to worship, and losing your identity as a child of God. It was a big deal.

So big, that the blindman's parents didn't go *near* a confession of Jesus. Not even by implication in citing his work. Instead, they threw their *son* under the bus. "*Ask him.*" They let their fear of rejection silence their testimony. Even at the expense of their relationship with their son.

Don't go there. Or stay there.

### **Don't let your fear of rejection silence you (v18-23)**

Your fear of man. Your fear of being thought of as weird. Your fear of losing friends. Family. Opportunities. Jobs. For God's sake, your sake, and other's sake, don't let your fear of rejection keep you from testifying. For God's sake, because he deserves the glory; for other's sake because they need the truth; and for your sake, because if the work of God in your life doesn't result in boldness, something is wrong.

The only solution to which, is identifying it and renouncing it. Figure out *what* you fear, and repent. Ask God to forgive you, and ask God to help you. To conquer your fear, and rest in him. To live openly and bear witness.

Do that and do it now. Identify and repent of your fear now. Because if you wait until the rejection is imminent, if you wait until the situation confronts you, it's probably too late. You'll probably go the way of the blindman's parents, and let your fear silence you.

### **Summary**

Four ways to live sent. To make hay while the Son shines. Live with a sense of urgency, don't be bashful, keep it simple, and conquer your fear.

Prayer – Lord, help us. We *want* to live sent in the light of your glory. We *want* to be bold. We want to be open. But we often fail. So forgive us and help us. Spur us on with a sense of urgency. Spur us on with the brightness of day. And spur us on with a firm conviction that you're greater, and stronger, and higher than any fear or foe that could ever stand against us.