



Once Blind But Now I See (John 9)

How incredible it would be, for a blind person to be healed and able to SEE! How appreciative would he be! Today we get to watch a man, blind from birth, see for the first time, both physically and spiritually.

John 9:1-3 (CSB) ¹ As he was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," Jesus answered. "This came about so that God's works might be displayed in him. [* Scripture in CSB unless otherwise noted]

The **disciples** of Jesus thought this blind man was cursed for sin. Yet his blindness was NOT a punishment for sin. In the Scriptures, sometimes illness and suffering ARE consequences of sin.

SUFFERING IS SOMETIMES A CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

- ◆ **MIRIAM**, Moses' sister, revolted and got leprosy (Numbers 12).
- ◆ **DAVID'S BABY** died due to his adultery & murder (2 Samuel 12:13-14).
- ◆ Some **New Testament believers were sick or had died** due to pride while participating in communion (1 Cor. 11:27-30).

SUFFERING IS NOT ALWAYS A CONSEQUENCE OF SIN

- ◆ **Job's sin** was not the reason for his suffering.
- ◆ **Timothy** (Paul's disciple), had frequent illness not due to a sinful lifestyle (1 Tim 5:23).
- ◆ **Paul** himself had some sort of physical abnormality, not punishment for disobedience (Gal. 4:13-14).

Some of our tough times are just consequences of living in the reality of a sinful, fallen world. Those FORGIVEN by God are not immune to difficulties. The days are coming when sin, sickness, & death will be forever done away with, but not yet. Here is the reality for His followers.

John 16:33b (CSB) **You will have suffering in this world.** Be courageous! I have conquered the world."

* *We more often learn life lessons during suffering than during celebration.*

This man's lifelong blindness was part of a bigger plan, **that God's works might be displayed in him** (Jn 9:3).

Jesus voices a foreboding phrase

John 9:4-5 ⁴ We must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, **I am the light of the world.**"

Jesus is about to die. This is what Jesus means by **night is coming** as **the light of the world** will seem to be snuffed out, at least temporarily. We have seen the phrase *light of the world*, as it is related to the Feast of Tabernacles. Now Jesus is about to illustrate this truth as He gives *light* to this blind man. This is the next great 'sign' proving Jesus is the Messiah.

John 9:6-9 ⁶ After he said these things he spit on the ground, made some mud from the saliva, and spread the mud on his eyes. ⁷ "Go," he told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means "Sent"). So he left, washed, and **came back seeing.** ⁸ His neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar said, "Isn't this the one who used to sit begging?" ⁹ Some said, "He's the one." Others were saying, "No, but he looks like him." He kept saying, "I'm the one."

In those ancient times it was thought that the **spit** of a renowned person could have healing power, so the action of Jesus is not unusual for that time.¹

- Mark records two more instances where Jesus uses spit (Mark 7:32-35; 8:22-25) and brings physical healing.
- Early Church Fathers often compared Jesus making this **mud** from the earth to God creating man from the earth (Gen 2:7).² Jesus is sending the man to **wash in the pool of Siloam**, the very pool from which the priest would dip water to carry to the temple the water ceremony every day of Festival of Shelters. **Siloam** means '**Sent**'. Throughout John's writing we see that Jesus was **sent** by the father (v.4). Now this blind man has been 'sent' by Jesus. But *the most important issue is not WHERE the blind man was sent, but WHO he was sent by.* This resulted in the man who **came back seeing!** When his neighbors can't explain what happened, they take him to the local synagogue (v.22), where their spiritual leaders of could help them sort out what has really happened.

¹ Gary M. Burge, *John, The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 273.

² George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, vol. 36, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 155.

John 9:13-18 (CSB) ¹³ They brought the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ **The day** that Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes **was a Sabbath**. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees asked him again how he received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," he told them. "I washed and I can see." ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, because **he doesn't keep the Sabbath**." But others were saying, "How can a sinful man perform such signs?" And there was a division among them. ¹⁷ Again they asked the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he opened your eyes?" "**He's a prophet**," he said. ¹⁸ The Jews did not believe this about him—that he was blind and received sight—until they summoned the parents of the one who had received his sight.

Jesus getting in trouble for healing on the Sabbath is a theme in this Gospel. The Jews had allowed rabbinical tradition to override the Scriptural truth. In most of their minds, *Jesus sins when he heals on the Sabbath*. In order to discount this miracle, **the Jews** (i.e. religious leaders & enemies of Jesus) say this man was never **blind** in the first place, and they call the parents of the man in to confirm their suspicions.

John 9:19-23 (CSB) ¹⁹ They asked them, "Is this your son, the one you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰ "**We know this is our son and that he was born blind**," his parents answered. ²¹ "But we don't know how he now sees, and we don't know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he's of age. He will speak for himself." ²² His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews, since **the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed him as the Messiah, he would be banned from the synagogue**. ²³ This is why his parents said, "He's of age; ask him."

The man blind from birth, HAD BEEN HEALED...*but HOW?* The parents likely knew exactly how it had occurred, as they were probably some of the people he went to first. But instead of being quick to give Jesus the praise he deserved for healing their son, they sidestepped the issue.

Banned from the synagogue meant becoming a religious and social outcast. The parents aren't willing to risk that, so they say, 'Just go **ask him**.' And like prosecuting attorneys, these enemies of Jesus are determined to get this man to change his testimony.

John 9:24-25 ²⁴ So a second time they summoned the man who had been blind and told him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He answered, "Whether or not he's a sinner, I don't know. One thing I do know: **I was blind, and now I can see!**"

This guy doesn't have all the answers. He doesn't know exactly who Jesus is. All he knows is, yesterday he was begging and blind...and TODAY he can see where he's going! And if Jesus, **this man Jesus is a sinner**, then he sure has done a good thing for this man formerly known as the blind beggar!

Speaking Up for Jesus

John 9:26-34 ²⁶ Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷ "I already told you," he said, "and you didn't listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You don't want to become his disciples too, do you?" ²⁸ They ridiculed him: "You're that man's disciple, but we're Moses's disciples. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses. But this man—we don't know where he's from." ³⁰ "This is an amazing thing!" the man told them. "You don't know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but if anyone is God-fearing and does his will, he listens to him. ³² Throughout history no one has ever heard of someone opening the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he wouldn't be able to do anything." ³⁴ "You were born entirely in sin," they replied, "and are you trying to teach us?" Then **they threw him out**.

It is doubtful that this man ever entered that synagogue again, all because this man was convinced...Jesus was **from God**.

Contrasting this man and his parents:

- **The parents were compromised and STAYED SILENT**, since speaking up it would cost them too much.
- **The son was CHANGED, courageous & willing to SPEAK UP and honor Jesus**, even if it cost him.

🕒 **Will you STAY SILENT or will you SPEAK UP?**

YOUR NOTES

SEEING Jesus

John 9:35-38 ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown the man out, and when **he found him**, he asked, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ "Who is he, Sir, that I may believe in him?" he asked. ³⁷ Jesus answered, "You have seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." ³⁸ **"I believe, Lord!"** he said, and **he worshiped him**.

While this man had briefly heard Jesus' voice, he had never SEEN Jesus, *until this moment*. As far as this man knows, this is simply a stranger asking a strange question: **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"**

Son of Man was a term used of the one who would be given kingdom authority by God so that every people, tribe, and nation would serve Him forever (Dan. 7:13-14). Further, anyone who confessed Jesus as Messiah would be kicked out of the synagogue (Jn 9:22), which is exactly what has happened to this man.

As Jesus had done with the Samaritan woman (John 4), reveals His identity. Jesus is the **"Son of Man"** (v.35) who had healed him, the same man who others were calling "Messiah" (v.22).

This man now SEES physically & spiritually, trusting that Jesus is **Lord, and he worshiped him**.

* **NOTE:** When others bowed before the apostles or angels, they would tell those bowing to stand up, as they were not to bow down to them.

John 9:39-41 (CSB) ³⁹ Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, in order **that those who do not see will see** and **those who do see will become blind**." ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things and asked him, "We aren't blind too, are we?" ⁴¹ "If you were blind," Jesus told them, "you wouldn't have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

Jesus came to do much more than heal physical blindness. Jesus claims that He has come to earth *to give spiritual sight to the spiritually blind*, and blind those who claim to see.

- Those who know they are sick, know they need a doctor to heal them.
 - Those who think they are well, will never seek the help of a doctor.
- Those who know they are blind, desperately want to see.
 - Those who don't know they're blind, can't recognize the TRUTH standing in front of their faces.
- Those who know they are sinners, know they need a Savior to forgive them.
 - But those who think they are righteous, will never seek the Redeemer.

3 Responses to Jesus:

- **Prideful People** don't see a need for a Savior.
- **Compromised People** *STAY SILENT* because of what it might cost them.
- **CHANGED PEOPLE** *SPEAK UP* for Jesus, because He is Lord of their lives.

* **Want to talk further?** Please contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), **Christy** (673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon! Or call our **deacons & wives:** Tom & Martha Waddail, Steve & Debbie Bass, Freddy & Joyce Howard, Jere & Darlene Burnette, Alan & Christy Androski, Willy & Melissa Gamalero.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Read John 9:1-3 & 16:33.** Share some reasons why people go through suffering. Then give an example of how you (or another) has learned a life lesson through tough times, that likely couldn't be earned during good times.
2. **Read John 9:19-34.** Talk about the difference between how the parents and the formerly blind man responded to the religious leaders - focus on HOW and WHY they responded differently.
3. Talk about some issues in our culture that followers of Jesus need to SPEAK UP about and why it matters.
4. **Read John 9:35-38.** It is true that the Greek word translated "Lord" could be translated "sir" and the phrase "worshiped Him" could be translated "bowed before him". How does the context of the whole story lead the translators of the CSB, ESV, NAS, NIV, NET, KJV, & NKJV to all use "Lord" and "worshiped him"?
5. Share how God got YOUR attention; how you recognized that you too were spiritually blind (spiritually) and needed Jesus to help you SEE.
6. Pray for one another this week. Consider texting or calling same sex believers to pray & share together this week.