

Healing of the Man Born Blind

John 9

Jesus probably healed thousands of people. He cleansed lepers, restored the lame, and healed all kinds of illnesses. His healing techniques varied; sometimes He touched the afflicted; other times, He just spoke the word. Jesus had even healed from afar. His enemies did not dispute or question that He performed miracles. But the healing of the man born blind brought on extreme pressure, questions, and debate. Why? Jesus created eyes! Jesus had said He was the Light of the World, and with this miracle, He proved it again by giving light, both physical and spiritual, to a man without eyes! The Good Shepherd discourse flows from the Religious Leaders' reaction to this miracle.

The time and location of this event are vague within the Scripture. Most Bible teachers believe that this miracle happened during the three-month period between the Light of the World Discourse (Feast of Tabernacles) and the Feast of Dedication. The Religious Leaders had time to cool their anger, making it safe for Jesus to move about Jerusalem again.

I. Disciples Theological Question

“And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.² And his disciples asked him, saying, Master (Lit. – Rabbi), who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? ³ Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest (Lit. - displayed; revealed) in him. ⁴ I (Gk - ”we”) must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” John 9:1-5

Please notice, as Jesus passed by this blind man, He saw him! This intentional view caused the disciples to focus on the theological question of his blindness.

- A. Jewish Debate over Sufferings and Calamities v. 1-2 Jewish tradition taught that sin was the primary, if not the reason, for calamities and sufferings. They were uncomfortable saying that God gave extreme difficulty to innocent people. So, the sins of the past must be the reason! My study Bible gave this interesting detail about sin before birth: “The Jews considered human life to begin at conception. Thus, they thought one could theoretically sin even before birth.” SB p. 1626 So in the disciple's mind, this man born blind was so because of some hereditary or prenatal sin! This was a very curious notion to the Jewish mind; therefore, the disciples sought clarity from Jesus on this matter. (We see this idea brought up by the Jews as they question the former blind man in v. 34.)
- B. Jesus' Teaching on Sufferings and Calamities v. 3-5 Please notice, the disciples had wanted to know who caused of this man's blindness; instead, Jesus gave the why. He answered their question with a simple statement, “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” While they were thinking of sin, Jesus' truth was God's work! That had to be a huge surprise to them. How could this blindness bring about the works of God? This event will demonstrate the truth of Jesus' words!
- C. “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day” – The days of Jesus' ministry were limited; at this point, He was just a few months before His death on the cross. The night, in other words, the days of helping people, were coming to a close. Now was His time of work; the Father's will was for Him to

accomplish much and then to give His life a ransom for all! There is a wonderful truth I want to point out that is found in almost all English translations. The word "I" found here in the King James Version is actually "we" in Greek. Almost all of the English translations say, "we must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day," Jesus actually added the disciples into this work! That is so true even today: those who believe in Jesus and are faithful followers of Him work with Him! (John 14:12) But that day, the work and ministry with Jesus was coming to an end for all of them!

D. "I am the light of the world" – Jesus is continuing to highlight the truth that He was the light of the world! Just as He had declared in the temple a short time before, now He repeats it to His disciples. As long as He was in the world, He was the light! Jesus came to give light and with-it sight! Yet, many will remain in their darkness. (v. 39-41)

II. Jesus Heals the Man Born Blind Again, I want to emphasize that this man was born blind! He had not had an illness or an accident. He never had functioning, working eyes. This is the only recorded incident of a person born blind healed in all of Scripture!

"When he had thus spoken (had given the disciples the instructions on suffering), he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, ⁷And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation (Lit. – translated), Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." John 9:6-7

FACTS:

- Blind man didn't request healing Most often, we find the sick or needy lining up to see Jesus or calling out to Him, or falling down at His feet, but in this incident, we don't find the blind man ever asking Jesus for help. Jesus seems to go to him and help him freely, unsolicited!
- Jesus made mud with spit Why spit and dirt? Why make mud? I don't like spit – the thought of this is very curious to me! Jesus had used spit twice before
 - deaf and dumb man – Mark 7:33 – put spit in his ears and on his tongue
 - a blind man – Mark 8:23 – put spit on his eyes

But in this incident, Jesus made mud from spit and dirt. I want to propose two reasons.

- 1) Jesus is the Creator – we are formed from the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7), and Jesus was creating eyes for this man!
- 2) Jesus was building the faith of the blind man – salvia was believed to have healing qualities. This act would start a flicker of hope that he might be healed.

- Jesus told the man to go wash in the pool of Siloam Here we find the first test of this man's faith. Just as Naaman was told to go and dip in the Jordan River, this blind man was told to wash in the pool of Siloam. John wanted his readers to know that the Hebrew meaning of the word Siloam was "Sent," just as Jesus sent the blind man to wash. The location of the pool is debated among Bible teachers, but wherever it was, it would have been challenging for the blind man to reach.

- Blind man obeyed in faith We are not told of any discussion or hesitation on the part of the blind man. Getting to the pool of Siloam would not have been an easy task for him, and he certainly had no guarantee that anything was going to change! Yet, he was willing to go!
- Man came back seeing I love the simplicity of the Scripture here. He came back seeing! Wow! Time had passed, Jesus and the disciples had moved on, but his neighbors were there!

III. Neighbors Interrogate the Healed Man

“The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? ⁹Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. ¹⁰Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? ¹¹He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. ¹²Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not. ¹³They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.” John 9:8-13

“Is not this he that sat and begged?” – Did you notice the neighborhood controversy? Is this the local blind beggar or not?! This was a big debate! Some were willing to say that the healed man was a blind man look-alike! Just think about it. The changes in appearance brought on by the given sight and having eyes were significant; it made him unrecognizable. Now he had facial expressions, confidence in moving about, facial brightness, and direct eye contact. No wonder there was debate! It was actually the healed man himself who had to settle the argument! “I am he!” he proclaimed! Wow

Neighbors’ Question: Then started the interrogation! The fact that a notable miracle had been done could not be denied! This fact will drive the rest of the narratives!

“How were thine eyes opened?” – I want you to know this is the first of four times the question will be asked! (v. 10, 15, 19, 26) A person born blind, suddenly given sight, was shocking and hard for anyone to believe. Here, healed man will provide the most complete answer of the step by step healing, but let’s note the most important detail from his perspective – not **how** he was healed but **who** healed him - “**man that is called Jesus**” – that is all the blind man knew about Jesus – His name – not that He was a miracle worker, or Rabbi/Teacher from Galilee, He didn’t know Jesus was the Messiah! He only seemed to know His name! No one associated the spit, clay, or water from the pool as the healing agent; it was a man called Jesus!

Let’s stop a minute and make note of the spiritual blindness that is also being healed in the life of this man. Remember, Jesus had earlier told His disciples again that He was the Light of the World. In this incident, He was going to demonstrate it by giving light to this man both physically and spiritually. Throughout this chapter, we will also see this man’s spiritual eyes opened! Here, we find the first time this man references Jesus. What does he call Him?

“**a man that is called Jesus**” let’s keep that in mind and watch his faith journey develop as he, too, considers the power and person of Jesus!

“Where is he?” - The neighbors asked this question, but the blind man didn’t know! He had been obedient to the man called Jesus and left for the pool of Siloam and washed! And remember, he wouldn’t know Jesus if he saw Him! He had never seen Jesus before!

“They brought to the Pharisees Him that aforetime was blind” – Why? A miracle happened. Remember, this man didn’t get better from an eye illness or injury; he was given eyes! A miracle only God could do! This was both amazing and frightening!

IV. Pharisees/Jews First Interrogation of the Healed Man

“And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. ¹⁶Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them. ¹⁷They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.” John 9:14-17

“it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes” – Oh boy, we know this will stir up the Religionist! It is interesting to note that this is actually the last of seven Sabbath healings recorded in the Gospels. The Sabbath was such a stronghold of Jewish tradition, full of their rules. Jesus will disregard these man-made laws to show God’s mind about worship and service! The Pharisees’ interrogation of the healed man will not center on the amazing miracle done for him, but on the fact that it was done on the Sabbath! Wow!

“the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight” – The healed man’s answer was a simple, straightforward, and short. “He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.” I first wondered if the freshly seeing man was a bit intimidated by the well-dressed, haughty leaders, but I think as we continue to look at the interaction between the Religious Leaders and this former beggar, we don’t see awe and respect as much as suspension and contempt. He simply stated, “He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.”

“there was a division among them” – The passage then tells us that these simple facts given by the formerly blind man brought on a division – among the Pharisees! Wow! Again, this was a man born blind; his eyes didn’t heal – they were made. Every teacher of the Law among them knew that was an act only God could perform. This was a great division! Who is this Jesus!? John gives some of the debated issues, among them.

Argument 1: “This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day” – It is sad to realize that their **man-made traditions** were so ingrained that they held to their rules as if they were God’s directives. God had never intended the Sabbath to be so narrow and restrictive that wonderful acts of kindness could not be done. When Jesus gave the man sight on the Sabbath, some Jews couldn’t see past the fact that **their law** was broken and, in their thinking, they could not connect this amazing miracle to God!

Argument 2: “How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? “ – It can’t be emphasized enough that among the Jewish Religious Leaders there was a real debate about Jesus being God or at least of God! There

were some here who honestly admitted that such miracles could not have been done by a man who was a sinner. Please realize, they would have had to looked pass their Sabbath laws to say this!

I find it interesting that at this point, they turned to the former beggar for clarity about Jesus. Realize, because of his blindness, he had been restricted from full religious privilege.

“They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? – And his answer, “He is a prophet.” That Jesus was from God seemed pretty clear to him! He didn’t have all the Jewish traditions that fogged his thinking! But don’t forget, this was a popular consideration on the identity of Jesus. His teaching and miracles were very “prophet-like.” An honest man or woman would, at the least, come to the conclusion that Jesus was a prophet of God, and we find this throughout the Gospel record! (woman at the well – John 4:19; 6:14; 7:40; Luke 7:16, 39; 24:19)

Let’s stop again and point out this man’s faith journey concerning the person of Jesus. This is his spiritual blindness being healed!

“a man that is called Jesus” -> “He is a prophet”

We find this man moved from considering Jesus as a mere man to now a prophet, a man sent from God with God’s message! Big Jump – but wait, there will be more!

V. Pharisees/Jews Interrogate Healed Man’s Parents

“But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. ¹⁹And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? ²⁰His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: ²¹But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. (Now we read John’s insight on what was on the minds of the parents) ²²These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ (Lit. - the Messiah), he should be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.”

John 9:18-23

“the Jews did not believe concerning him” – The Religious Leaders had asked the blind man his thoughts on Jesus by saying, “What sayest thou of him...” but when he boldly said that Jesus **had to be a prophet**, they completely disregarded his opinion! They were becoming desperate because of their hatred and rejection of Jesus; their minds were darkened, and they were unable to see the obvious truth. So, they moved to disbelieve that the man was even born blind! Wow!

“until they called the parents of him that had received his sight” – The Jews called the healed man’s parents to verify that he was really born blind. This miracle was very difficult for them! Again, if a man of God healed on the Sabbath, it would doom their Sabbath tradition!

“he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself” – The parents were asked two questions by the Jews, “Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see?” Notice, they were willing to answer that he

was their son and that he was born blind, but not willing to answer how he received his sight. They cautiously declined to give any evidence of the cure. And John tells us why!

“These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews” – They feared the Jews because they held the power to put them out of the synagogue. The Scripture tells us that the....

“Jews had agreed already” → “if any man did confess he was Christ (**Messiah**)” → “put out of the synagogue”

For the 1st-century Jew, the synagogue was the center of religious and social life. Without good standing in their synagogue, every aspect of their lives, from birth to death, would be negatively affected. To be thrown out of the synagogue was a terrible punishment and extremely life changing. Throughout his book, John the Apostle highlights the people’s fear of the Religious Leaders and their power to take away Synagogue privilege.

VI. Pharisees/Jews Second Interrogation of the Healed Man

“Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. ²⁵He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. ²⁶Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? (This is the 4th time this question has been asked, the 3rd time to the formally blind man) ²⁷He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear (Lit. listen): wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? ²⁸Then they reviled (Lit. scoffed; insulted; scolded) him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. ²⁹We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.” John 9:24-29

“Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner” – The phrase, “Give God the praise,” is actually a Jewish oath to truthfulness; a swearing oath. The Religious Leaders are trying to intimidate this man to doubt his original testimony. They pushed him, demanding the truth from this man as if he had not given it before, they said we want..., “The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!” But as the Jews continued, they volunteered their insulting opinion of Jesus, “...we know that this man is a sinner.” I find it interesting that just a few short days before, Jesus had challenged them with the same thought found in John 8:46, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” The truth was, they could not prove Jesus was a sinner because He wasn’t. They didn’t challenge Jesus with sin at that time because they couldn’t find sin in Him. If they could have found sin, they certainly would have revealed it! But Jesus was sinless. Actually, on the cross, he was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:21). Who did not sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. But who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness (1 Peter 2:22, 24). He had no sin, but He was revealed to take away our sins. (1 John 3:5) Wow! So, how did the formerly blind man reply, with the amazing truth of his healing!

“I was blind, now I see” – He admitted that he didn’t know Jesus’ sin status, but one thing he was very confident in, “I was blind, now I see!”

“What did he to thee? How opened he thine eyes? – The pressure and interrogation continued with the Religious Leaders asking questions they had already asked of the healed man! But notice, he was not intimidated; in fact, he saw through their insincerity and replied with a touch of sarcasm, “I already told you, but you wouldn’t

listen! Are you going to listen this time? Are you ready to change your thinking and be one of His disciples?" It is refreshing to see that this man was not overawed by their position or authority!

"Then they reviled him" – The healed man would not deny his own testimony! He would not rewrite the truth to satisfy these hateful Religionists. He had been sharp enough to see the trap they had tried to lay for him, and brave enough not to fall into it! Jesus had changed his life by giving him sight, and he was not afraid to tell the truth about it, and it was met with insults by the "great ones" of Israel!

"we know not from whence he is" – The whole interview went hostile against the healed man. It degenerated into flares of insults. Oh, the Jews brought up Moses, and that they were Moses-followers, not Jesus-followers, as they accused the healed man. They were lovers of Moses, the Law, and their traditions. The statement, "God spake unto Moses," was true, but Jesus had reminded them back in John 5:46-47 that, "had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my word?" So, they really were not Moses-followers! Jesus had told them He was from above and that He was doing His Father's work, but they wouldn't accept His words. Really, instead of investigating this miracle, they should have been investigating Jesus!

VII. Healed Man's Theological Teaching to the Pharisees/Jews

"The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous (Lit. - remarkable, notable, amazing) thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. ³¹Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. ³²Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. ³³If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. ³⁴They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out." John 9:30-34

"herein is a marvelous thing" – The Religious Leaders' argument didn't make sense to the healed blind man. Their unbelief was a great surprise to him! They **seemed to know a lot about Jesus** but refused to acknowledge that His work was of God or to believe in Him. The healed man proclaimed, "You might not know his origin or authority, but a **notable miracle** has been done, so why judge the human agent with such contempt?" This man's parents were fearful and cautious, yet here we find him brave and courageous! He said to the great learned men, "Look at the evidence! A marvelous, extraordinary healing has been done!" And then he went on to give the theological proofs! He was growing in his faith, even in the face of opposition. And remember, this formerly blind man **has not yet seen Jesus!**

Let's stop again and point out this man's faith journey concerning the person of Jesus. This is his spiritual blindness being healed!

"a man that is called Jesus" -> "He is a prophet" -> "man of God"

Theological Logic: Though a beggar because of his blindness, this man was mentally sharp, emotionally strong, and morally solid. He was not going to let the Jews' position and authority inhibit him from expressing the truth as he saw it. Here we see the beautiful and accurate train of thought concerning the logic of who Jesus was!

- “God heareth not sinners:” The first point of the formerly blind man was a basic principle of the Old Testament (Ps. 18:41; **34:15-16; 66:18, 145:18-20; Prov. 1:25-28**; 15:29; 28:9; Is. 1:15; Jer. 11:11; 10-12; Ez 8:18). A “marvelous thing” was done, and it could only have been done by someone who...
- God hears:
One who worships Him + One who does His will
- “since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind” Everyone knew, everyone in this incident understood, especially the healed man, that there was no hope, no cure, no help to people born blind. This was a miracle of epic proportions! So....

Therefore:

“If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.” – Remember, Nicodemus had come to that same honest conclusion in John 3, but also we read in verse 16 that some of the Pharisees from among them had earlier said the same thing, “How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?” With sound theological logic and a spice of wit, this man’s argument was strong and could not be denied! The late John MacArthur said this about his testimony, “The healed man demonstrated more spiritual insight and common sense than all of the religious authorities combined who sat in judgment of Jesus and him.” p. 291 Please notice, the formerly blind man didn’t claim to believe **Jesus was God**, but that He was definitely **of God**! Before we move on, I want to point out something that was not mentioned by anyone in this event, but a Messianic fact that all the theologians at the time of Jesus would have understood. The Messiah, their Christ, would heal the blind! (**Is. 29:18-19; 35:4-6; 42:6-7**) Jesus used these Old Testament prophesies in His preaching and arguments to prove who He was! (**Matt. 11:4-6; Luke 4:16-21**)

Reaction to the Healed Man’s Lesson The Religious Leaders had no answer to the healed man’s argument, just ridicule and insults!

“Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? Well, we’ve come full circle back to this Jewish debate on sufferings and calamities! “How dare you try and teach us!” they billowed, “You’re a common beggar, untaught, ignorant, illiterate, and besides that you were born in sin!” These proud men scorned to be taught, especially by their inferiors! Here, they turned and insulted this man’s former blindness – “you were **completely** born in sins!” Wow!

“they cast him out” – Though there is some debate among Bible teachers that this “casting out” was just referring to being thrown out of the gathering, most believe it was a formal excommunication from the local synagogue! Remember, this was the very thing the healed man’s parents so greatly feared for themselves! What we have here is the first person cast out because of his faith, faith in the fact that Jesus was from God! Later, Jesus will teach the disciples about the upcoming normalcy of this persecution! John 16:1-3

VIII. Healed Man Meets Jesus

“Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God (Lit. most manuscripts have “Son of Man” a Messianic term)? ³⁶He answered

and said, Who is he, Lord (Gk - Sir), that I might believe on him? ³⁷And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. ³⁸And he said, Lord (Gk - term for God – “Lord”), I believe. And he worshipped him.” John 9:35-38

“Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and....found him” – Here again, we see a wonderful characteristic of Jesus. Remember, Jesus had seen this man before the blind man ever considered that he had hope. Jesus healed this man, changing his life, and now, when rejected and cast out by those who should have rejoiced with him, Jesus purposely finds him! The first time Jesus came to him, it was to give him physical light; this time, it will be to give him spiritual light! That’s just like our Savior, the Light of the World! Jesus comes with such gentle care, encouragement, and comfort, to give sight to the blind and comfort to those who stand in faith. Reminds me of the words of David in Psalm 27, let’s take a walk through that beautiful chapter. (highlight verses – 1, 4, 8, 10-14)

“Dost thou believe on the Son of God? – Notice two things here: this is the first narrative of Jesus in this event, and the first time this man sees Jesus! And He asks, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” I checked Bible Gateway, and 2 out of 3 times, English translations use “Son of Man” instead of “Son of God” as given in the KJV. Remember, this is the Messianic name for Jesus, highlighting both His deity and humanity. So, right away, Jesus challenged the former blind man's faith by asking, “So you believe in the Messiah?”

The man replies, “Who is the Messiah, Sir, that I might believe on him?” It’s wonderful to remember that this man would know the voice of Jesus and was keenly aware that He was a great miracle worker, not a sinner, but it seems that he never considered that Jesus was the Son of Man, the Messiah!! We can be sure the former blind man was done with religion as normal! He had seen the lack of common sense when dealing with the Jewish Religious Leaders, and when challenging them, they tossed him out of the whole system! This man was ripe and ready to believe! He had been on a journey of faith directed by God! – let’s review...

“a man that is called Jesus” -> “He is a prophet” -> “man of God” -> disillusioned with Religion

“Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee” – Wow! What a beautiful statement! Jesus confirms His deity once again to this former blind beggar! How He loves the seeking ones, regardless of their status in society! Let’s remind ourselves of His words to the woman at the well in John 4:25-26! So, how does the man reply,

“Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.” – How wonderful! Here, at the end of the chapter, we find the man’s confession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah! The term here, “Lord,” is exactly right! He called Jesus Lord, God, Messiah! His growth in the knowledge of who Jesus was reminds me of Peter’s admonition to the readers of 2 Peter: “But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...” We must all admit that the healed man certainly grew in grace as he learned about the person of Jesus!

As we move forward, it’s interesting to note that Jesus will comment on this whole event; actually, someone called it “a lesson to a former blind man,” but evidently it was also for the listening ears of the Pharisees.

“And Jesus said, For judgment (don’t let this word confuse you, this means the work of saving the world! Not condemning to hell, but providing for heaven!) **I am come into this world, that they which see not might see;**

and that they which see might be made blind. ⁴⁰And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? ⁴¹Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.” John 9:39-41

“For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind” – One of the beauties of this amazing miracle was that the picture this gave of one coming to belief in Jesus. The blind man couldn’t see the Light of the World when He first stood before Him, just as today, unbelievers don’t understand Jesus and His work, but then, after God opens their understanding, their spiritual eyes can see the Light of God’s truth. Jesus is the revealer of darkness, because He is the Light!

“Are we blind also?” – Wow! The Pharisees understood they were blind to Jesus’ truths! It seems they say this with puffed-up pride, and it is this pride that will be their downfall!

“If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but not ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth” – This statement is very similar to another answer Jesus gave to the Pharisees found in Mark 2:17, “...They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” The Religious Leaders didn’t see their spiritual need, their spiritual blindness, their spiritual sickness. They believed they were actually spiritually enlightened and spiritually whole! The sin of self-righteous pride remained, and it blinded them to the need of their hearts!

Let’s look at a few other verses from the teachings of Jesus and then later echoed by Paul: **John 3:19-20;** Matthew 6:22-23; 9:12-13; 13:10-16; **18:11;** **Luke 9:56;** **2 Cor. 4:3-6;** **Col. 1:12-14**

In Conclusion: All of John 9 shows us Jesus, the Light of the World, in action. It concludes with the former blind beggar confessing Jesus as the Messiah. What a contrast are the blind, unbelieving Jewish Religious Leaders. They had knowledge of Jesus and His power, but they would not receive it. The same is for all of us. A decision must be made for Christ. Just as 1 John 5:1 says, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...”

Let’s finish by reading from Romans 10:9-17. It has a message for all of us, the followers of Jesus and those who might still be on their faith journey to Him! Come to Jesus, and go tell others!

Believers’ Application:

1. The cause of suffering has baffled the human race. God has given several reasons and the desired outcomes in His word. Here in this passage, Jesus taught that suffering, pain, calamities, and hardships are not always the result of sin! We live in a fallen world where good behavior is not always rewarded, and evil is not always punished! Bad things happen! Jesus will use two examples of this in Luke 13:1-5, where He reminds the listeners that they better be in the right relationship with God because death can come anytime! But in this event, He taught that this man was born blind, “that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” In God’s mysterious and wise providence, He allows man to go through difficulties so they can experience His works! Let’s take a brief look at the Biblical reasons for suffering and pain in life.

1) Rejecting God – Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:9 all mentions that unbelief in God will bring severe consequences even to the third and fourth generations of Israel. When they forgot God, their children and future generations would bear the burden! I’m afraid we see the same principle played out in America! Ultimately, God desires to bring all people to Himself, and often people sink low before they will look up to Him.

2) Not living God’s way – Now, we all know that sin and foolish decisions cause a lot of suffering and pain to both believers and unbelievers. Anger, violence, alcoholism, drug addiction, divorce, theft, laziness, overspending, the list could go on and on! We need to remember there are consequences to living outside of God’s way! We see so much suffering caused by these and other sinful actions of man, and so often that suffering falls on innocent ones because of the other’s sin.

3) Build the Faith of the sufferer – Jesus spoke of the “works of God” that would be displayed in the life of the man born blind. This is a principle evident in all those who are committed to pleasing God in their suffering. I can’t help but think one of the great works of God is the faith that can be built in one’s life during suffering. It is in hardship that a trusting soul can grow in faith as they feel the gentle leading of God’s hand, sustaining grace, amazing comfort, and unexplainable peace. All those around them, both believers and unbelievers, can be in awe of their deepening faith in the face of difficulty, and others’ faith can also be positively affected! When a believer is committed to living in suffering to please God, the works of God are on full display!

4) Show God’s power – Not only can the growth of faith be a work of God in the life of a suffering believer, but also all can see and experience the power of God. God still works miracles of healing, baffling doctors! God can orchestrate schedules, meetings, and conversations; He is all-powerful. He loves to show His power to build the faith of His followers and bring unbelievers to Himself. Just as God brought the Israelites through the Red Sea on dry ground by His power, He can carry us through the death of a loved one, a diagnosis of cancer, or sudden loss of health, financial instability, unfaithfulness of a spouse, the hurts of children or relatives, or the loss of a job. God loves to show His strong power over all these struggles and more! And when His power is displayed, all see His glory! Jesus taught this in the raising of Lazarus from the dead. (John 11:4) Paul wrote of this when relating his “thorn in the flesh.” (2 Cor. 12:7-10) **Let’s remember, suffering is holy ground for a believer.** It is a time God desires to display His work – power, sustaining grace, build the faith of believers, bring unbelievers to Himself, and in it all amaze the scoffers! We need to be committed to living in union with God during suffering so He can bring about His wonderful works! In suffering, ask God for strength for the trial, and a clear perspective on how you can bring God glory!

2. Let’s examine what we know about each of the characters in this “marvelous” event of Jesus. Focus on their character, reaction to the miracle, reaction to the Jewish authorities, and their reaction to Jesus. Of all these characters, who would you honestly associate with the closest?

Neighbors – **Divided and indecisive** about their neighbor – “is this the neighborhood blind guy?”

Curious about Jesus’ location – “Where is He?”

Go to their comfort zone – their religious authorities

Pharisees/Jews – **Divided and indecisive** about Jesus – v. 16 - “division among them”
Curious about the healed man’s testimony – “tell us the truth!”
Remained in their comfort zone – religion as they knew it – division but no movement

Parents – **Divided and indecisive** about the truth – they knew Jesus healed their son, but in fear stopped short
Curious about their part of the story – feared if they said too much
Retreated to their comfort zone – fear drove them to empty religion

Healed Man – **Unified and Decisive** about the truth! - “herein is a marvelous thing.”
Confident with the fact - “if this man were not of God, he could do nothing.”
Found a new Comforter – we find this man saying, “Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.”

Are we just curious about Jesus, yet stay in the comfort of structured religious activity?
Do we feel divided and indecisive about a commitment to Jesus, yet stay in our comfortable religious doctrines?
Do we let peer pressure and fear dictate our coming to Jesus, and therefore stay in empty religion?
Or instead, are we like the healed man, decisive and confident with the truth that Jesus is God, the great Comforter of the soul? Which of these four do you most associate with? Read Romans 5:1-2, 6-11