

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 6TH-7TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

SEEING LIGHT (JOHN 9:1-12) AN ODD QUESTION ABOUT BLINDNESS

Sometime after leaving the tense situation in the Temple, Jesus and the 12 passed by a man who was "blind from birth," and the disciples asked whose fault it was that he was blind.

- The disciples were wrapped up in legalism; thinking either the man or his parents had sinned and caused the blindness.

ASSUMPTIONS AND LEGALISM

In their legalism, the 12 showed no compassion for the blind man. He just was a theological discussion to them. Sin can lead to sickness, but we must never assume that connection.

- **Assumptions and legalism lead to a lack of love and grace. We cannot compromise truth, but we must learn to be empathetic.**

HE WAS BLIND FOR A REASON

Jesus said, "This came about so that God's work might be displayed in him." The man's physical blindness would work as a lesson to teach countless people about the "light of the world" that will heal spiritual blindness.

- Though confusing, at times, **situations can be a result of science, sin, or divine province.**

FOLLOWING HIM LEADS TO A GOOD OUTCOME

Regardless of the origins of tough situations, if we will put our trust in Jesus and follow Him, all things will work together for good according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

- **It takes trust and communication with Jesus to learn how to navigate the difficult and confusing things in life.**

BEING EFFICIENT WITH THE TIME WE HAVE

V4-5 can be a little confusing. More than likely, the phrase "do the works...while it is day" means the time before the week Jesus is crucified ("Night...when no one can work") when the disciples are scattered.

- **We must be focused and never use our faith as an excuse to be lackadaisical.**

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

Progressive revelation is God giving more clarity as one reads through the Bible. If one stopped at v5, it would seem that once Jesus is gone, the world would grow dark.

- **But the reader will learn that the resurrection ushers in the Spirit and the light of God starts to work through us.**

WHY THE MUD AND THE POOL?

Jesus didn't need a physical substance to heal the man, but maybe Jesus knew that the man needed some kind of material aid to encourage his faith (Judges 6).

- It is alright to have physical reminders of God's provision as long as we **remember healing comes from Him, not an object.**

"I'M THE ONE"

The blind man's neighbors were amazed at what had happened, though he couldn't explain it yet. All he knew was **he obeyed Jesus' instruction and he was touched by God.**

- **Jesus loves us. So, we must learn to trust and obey during our growth with Jesus, even when we don't fully understand.**

SOME DIVISION (JOHN 9:13-23) MORE SABBATH DAY SHENANIGANS

The confused neighbors bring the man to the Pharisees, and we discover that Jesus once again seemingly breaks the law by healing another person on the Sabbath.

- God was working on the formerly blind man. Notice this time he doesn't say, "I don't know" who healed him, he says, "He's a prophet."

THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN A BOLD STATEMENT

The first prophet in 400 years was John the Baptist, and he promoted the coming Savior, Jesus. To say his healing was from a prophet would have been acknowledging that God was working on the Sabbath through Jesus.

- The religious people instantly claim that no one can break the OT law and be of God.

"...THERE WAS A DIVISION AMONG THEM"

Jesus' words and actions force people to choose. Jesus did and said miraculous things, but those actions didn't fit some people's preferences, so they rejected Him.

- **Jesus is a dividing sword (Matthew 10) that determines truth, and many people reject Him over those absolutes.**

FEAR OF EXCOMMUNICATION

The Pharisees didn't believe the testimony of the man, so they went to his parents to ask if and how this healing happened. The parents avoided the question because admitting Jesus was the Savior would lead to excommunication.

- To be fair, the consequences were huge, and they didn't know who Jesus was yet.
- This situation does bring up a problem facing us today: **Will we evade responsibility when following Jesus becomes costly?**

- **Are we afraid of being ostracized? Do we still believe the Word is absolute truth? If we aren't willing to lay down our social life, how will we lay down our physical one?**

FROM GOD (JOHN 9:24-34) SUMMONING THE MAN AGAIN

The Pharisees tried to manipulate him into saying Jesus is a fraud, but he answered, "Whether or not He is a sinner, I don't know. **One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see!**"

- Testimonies hold weight. **We don't have to know everything about God, but we must tell people how He has changed our lives.**

"THEY RIDICULED HIM"

The man was ridiculed when he spoke boldly about his healing. But his spiritual sight was catching up with his physical sight.

- **The healed man was bold, but not arrogant or aggressive. We too need to be evolving in our faith and learning to be level-headed with skeptics of the faith.**

GOD-FEARING AND DOING HIS WILL

The illiterate man speaks wisdom to the Pharisees about how we're to communicate with God: **"...God doesn't listen to sinners, but if anyone is God-fearing and does his will, he listens to [them]."**

- This isn't referring to repentance but to people who live in deliberate sin.

"...ARE YOU TRYING TO TEACH US?"

The educated and religious Pharisees were offended when the man spoke about history and theology and pointed out his sinful nature without acknowledging their own.

- **We should never reach a point where we are unteachable. We must also be careful not to live offended.**

FAITH (JOHN 9:35-41) "DO YOU BELIEVE...?"

As the story concludes, there is little doubt that the man became a Believer. We must not miss the fact that Jesus pursued him. This reminds us that we are the lost ones. Also, notice that Jesus invited the man to believe.

- All saved people are first drawn by God and then they choose to follow.

TRUE BELIEF WILL HAVE EVIDENCE

Not only did the man verbally affirm his belief, but he worshiped Jesus. There was no church or worship team around. This was a **praising and thanking God for who He is and what He has done.**

- **Worship is a state of being, not just something we do on the weekends.**

"WE AREN'T BLIND TOO, ARE WE?"

It is in admitting that we are lost and need help that salvation is birthed, but if we are too arrogant to see that we need saving, we will remain lost. This was the problem for the Pharisees and a prevailing problem today.

- **If we will confess, Jesus will forgive and alleviate us from sin.** The key is **humility.**

THE LIE OF BEING "GOOD ENOUGH"

- We live in a self-righteous culture that tells us we're perfect the way we are and to only be concerned about our truth. **This lie is dangerous and has eternal consequences.**
- **We are loved and invaluable, but we're also in need of saving, help, and guidance that can only come from Jesus.**

HUMILITY IS THE KEY

- Salvation and guidance are impossible without humility.
- **We must reach an understanding that we're incapable of fixing ourselves.** This doesn't mean we don't "plant and water" (1 Corinthians 3:6-8), but we know God is the one who makes things grow and develop.

STANDING FIRM WHILE LOVING OTHERS

- In a culture that is increasingly atheistic and aggressive toward Christianity, **we must stand firm regardless of the social and even physical consequences.**
- We must also learn to **deeply love and be empathetic to ALL people without compromising our biblical integrity.**

BECOMING UTTERLY DEPENDENT

- Humility leads to salvation and **utter dependence on Jesus on a daily basis, which leads to a life of freedom, fulfillment, peace, joy, and genuine love.**
- If we admit our blindness apart from God's light, we will be saved, changed, and we will learn to truly see.