

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

JOHN 9.28-41



T. M. Moore

A Scriptorium Study

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,

He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27

The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Gospel of John: John 9.28-41
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Introduction to *John 9.28-41*

The story of the healing of the man born blind concludes with him coming to saving faith in the Son of God.

We see the Gospel of grace gloriously illustrated in this story, and, at the same time, note that hardened hearts resist the offer of light and life. Such people may take offense at our witness, but we must proclaim the Good News all the same.

There's much to learn about being witnesses from this story, and, in our final lesson of this study, we'll review the entire episode and glean what we can.

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T. M. Moore, Principal
tmmoore@ailbe.org

1 Emboldened

Read and meditate on John 9.28-30.

The more the Pharisees interrogated him, the bolder the man whose eyes were opened became, as he exposed the folly of their hostility toward Jesus.

28Then they reviled him, and they said, "You are His follower; we follow Moses, 29for we know God spoke to Moses. But this Man, we do not know where He is from." 30The man replied to them, "This is a marvel! You know not where He is from, yet He could do this work of opening my eyes!"

- John 9.28-30

Reflect

1. The Pharisees decided to play the Moses trump card. It didn't work with Jesus, but, hey, this guy was a beggar. Surely, they must have thought, this will shut him up! Do unbelievers today hold any "trump cards" they like to play to try to silence our witness? Complete this prayer: *Lord, no trump card exists that can silence the Gospel, so give me boldness when...*
2. I find I have to keep reminding myself this man was a *beggar*. He hadn't been to school. He had neither job nor skills. He'd never read a book, or anything for that matter. And yet, even *he* can see the folly of the Pharisees' hostility toward Jesus. How could this be? *Lord, I don't see how I could be so quick-witted, much less this beggar. His boldness and keen insight make me believe that...*
3. The Pharisees kept resorting to spurious arguments designed to support their presumed authority over all things religious. The man kept returning to his experience. They tried to dismiss Jesus because of His obscure background – unlike, of course, their own. He kept pointing to *what Jesus had done*. Whose side of this argument appears the stronger to you? Why? What lesson is there in this for us? *Lord, I know unbelievers have many "reasons" why they will not accept the Gospel. But I have...*
4. The man whose sight had been restored pressed harder on the Pharisees, suggesting that, if they were the great religious authorities of the land, then how is it they didn't know about Jesus – Who opens blind men's eyes? He stuck a pin into these windbags and their posturing. What authorities do people resort to in our day to resist the Gospel? How might you stick a pin in one of these? *Lord, I wonder if the unbelievers in my Personal Mission Field have even considered Jesus, and all He did. Use me to help them...*
5. This man knew what was coming (v. 34), but he would not recant his story, and he determined to turn the tables and turn up the heat on his interlocutors. I'm truly amazed at him, and I'm chagrined when I think of how timid most Christians are when presented with opportunities to bear witness for the Lord. How can we help one another be more like this man? Bring together into one the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

Summary

"He brings in the miracle everywhere as evidence because they could not invalidate it. And he draws his own inferences from it too. First, he says, 'Whether he is a sinner or not, I do not know.' He has no doubt that Jesus was not a sinner. And so, when he has an opportunity, he turns their own words against them and defends Jesus: 'Now we know that God does not listen to sinners.'" *John Chrysostom (344-407 AD)*

Will you pray that God will make you as bold and ready a witness as this humble beggar?

Closing Prayer

LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!

Many *are* they who rise up against me.

Many are they who say of me,

“*There is no help for him in God.*”

Selah

But You, O LORD, *are* a shield for me,

My glory and the One who lifts up my head.

I cried to the LORD with my voice,

And He heard me from His holy hill.

Selah

I lay down and slept;

I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people

Who have set *themselves* against me all around.

Arise, O LORD;

Save me, O my God!

For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;

You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.

Salvation *belongs* to the LORD.

Your blessing *is* upon Your people.

Psalm 3

Psalm 3 (*Eventide: Abide with Me*)

Lord, all around my foes are multiplied,

Rising against me, like a ‘whelming tide;

Many are saying of my weary soul,

“Not even God can save and make him whole!”

You are a mercy shield about me, Lord,

Raising me by Your glory and Your Word.

Prayers fraught with tears stream from me like a fount,

Yet God will answer from His holy mount.

Waking and sleeping, guarded by Your grace,

When foes by thousands stand before my face,

When constant dangers ‘round me are arrayed,

I will not fear, I will not be afraid!

Rise up, O Lord, rise up and rescue me!

Let all my foes destroyed and routed be!

Grace and salvation, Lord, are Yours alone;

Help and protect all those You call Your own.

2 Let's Think about This

Read and meditate on John 9.31-33.

Even a blind beggar, firm in his testimony of what Jesus had done for him, is able to show the illogical nature of the Pharisees' view of Jesus.

³¹“We know that God does not hear sinners; even so, whoever worships Him and does His will, God hears. ³²Since everything began until this day, it was unheard that anyone should open eyes born blind. ³³So if this One were not from God, He could do nothing.”

- John 9.31-33

Reflect

1. Notice how skillfully this man connected his personal experience of Jesus with God (v. 31). Comment on what he did here. Complete this prayer: *Lord, I am to be a witness to You. Help me know...*
2. Following this man's example, how many ways can you think of to connect your own testimony to God – Who He is and what He does? *Help me to see, Lord, how You have affected and blessed my life, so that...*
3. The blind man magnified the work of Jesus in healing him. Nothing like this had ever been heard of before (v. 32)! For the purposes of our testimonies, let's turn this around: Can you think of other people who have been affected by Jesus in the same way you have? Would it be good to use their experience to bolster yours? Explain. *Thank You, Lord, that so many brothers and sisters in Jesus have...*
4. In verse 33, the man concludes his rebuttal of the Pharisees' opinion of Jesus. What has he come to believe about Jesus? Is this yet a full and complete profession of faith? Explain. *Many people may be on their way to faith in You, Lord. Help me to...*
5. Jesus promised that, when we need words to help us in testifying about Him, the Spirit of God will provide them (cf. Lk. 12.11, 12). How can you see this was the case with this blind man Jesus healed? Should you expect God to do the same for you? Explain. Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote from questions 1-4.

Summary

“He who had just received sight and had been miraculously freed from his old blindness was quicker to perceive truth than those who had been instructed by the law. See how through numerous and wise arguments he demonstrates the utter inferiority of the Pharisees' opinion.” *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

The blind man Jesus healed stands as an example to each of us about having the courage to declare our testimony concerning Jesus, and to challenge others to account for our experience apart from Him. How has this man's witness instructed or encouraged you?

Closing Prayer

*It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning,
And Your faithfulness every night,*

On an instrument of ten strings,
On the lute,
And on the harp,
With harmonious sound.
For You, LORD, have made me glad through Your work;
I will triumph in the works of Your hands.

Psalm 92.1-4

Psalm 92.1-4 (*Sweet Hour: Sweet Hour of Prayer*)

How good it is to thank the Lord, and praise to God Most High accord;
By day to let His kindness ring, His faithfulness by night to sing.
With ten-stringed lute, resounding lyre, and sweetest harp we'll lift You higher.
For You have made our souls rejoice; we sing Your praise with blended voice!

3 Take That!

Read and meditate on John 9.34.

Sounding very much like the Queen of Hearts (“Off with his head!”), the exasperated Pharisees, unable to withstand the boldness and sound reasoning of a *beggar*, tossed him out on his ear.

³⁴They
replied and said to him, “What’s that you say?
You who were born in sin, do you presume
to teach us?” So they cast him from the room,
and from the synagogue.

- John 9.34

Reflect

1. Here we see the pride of the Pharisees. Pride is a terrible obstacle to the Gospel. Why? Complete this prayer: *Let there be no pride in my heart, Lord, lest...*
2. We recall that Jesus was not willing to assign sin to the man born blind – not any sin for which he was responsible, at any rate. How different from that was the attitude of the Pharisees! This *beggar* was *obviously* a sinner, they concluded. How does pride affect us as we consider people from different backgrounds and circumstances? *Give me a heart open to all the people to whom You send me, Lord, so that...*
3. Pride can also affect our ability to learn new things. How can you see that here? *I don’t know everything, Lord, and I want to keep learning more about You, so...*
4. “And they cast him out.” They cast this man out of the community he had known all his life. He knew this was coming, just as his parents did, but he did not let the threat of this keep him from the proclaiming what he knew and what he’d experienced of Jesus. Is it possible that your witness for Jesus might find you being “cast out” from the fellowship of certain people? Explain. *Give me grace to share my faith lovingly, Lord, and boldness to share it...*
5. The blind-man-now-healed thoroughly showed-up the Pharisees, refuting all their arguments and standing firm in his experience of Jesus. And he paid the price. “Take that!” they seemed to say, as they booted him out of their meeting. What’s the worst you could imagine happening to you as you share your testimony to people in your Personal Mission Field? Are you willing to take that for the Gospel? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote for questions 1-4.

Summary

“Of course God listens to sinners. But the man who said that had not yet washed the face of his heart in Siloam. The sacrament had already taken place in his eyes, but the benefit of grace had not yet been achieved in his heart. When did this blind man wash the face of his heart? When, after he had been thrown outside by the Jews, the Lord brought him inside into himself.” *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

We are more likely to be bold and consistent in our witness if we think ahead to what can happen as a result of our testimony, and if we prepare ourselves in our souls to “take that,” whatever it may be. What good can happen from your sharing your testimony? What can you do to prepare each day for opportunities to share your testimony of what Jesus has done for you?

Closing Prayer

I will bless the LORD at all times;

His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.
My soul shall make its boast in the LORD;
The humble shall hear *of it* and be glad.
Oh, magnify the LORD with me,
And let us exalt His name together.
I sought the LORD, and He heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.
They looked to Him and were radiant,
And their faces were not ashamed.
This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard *him*,
And saved him out of all his troubles.
The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him,
And delivers them.
Oh, taste and see that the LORD *is* good;
Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him!

Psalm 34.1-8

Psalm 34.1-9, 3 (*Alleluia [Lowe]: Mighty God, While Angels Bless You*)

I will bless the Lord at all times; I shall praise Him evermore!
My soul makes its boast in Jesus – Him we gladly all adore!
Magnify the Name of Jesus!
Let us lift His Name in praise!

When I sought the Lord, He answered, and from fear delivered me.
Those who look to Him are radiant; shamed their face shall never be.
Magnify the Name of Jesus!
Let us lift His Name in praise!

When I cried to God, He heard me, and from trouble rescued me.
‘Round their camp His angel lingers that they may delivered be.
Magnify the Name of Jesus!
Let us lift His Name in praise!

Taste and see how good is Jesus; blessed are all who in Him hide.
None shall lack for any blessing who in Christ will e’er confide.
Magnify the Name of Jesus!
Let us lift His Name in praise!

4 The Second Touch

Read and meditate on John 9.35, 36.

A second time, Jesus came to the man who had been born blind, this time to open the eyes of his *heart*, and not just his physical eyes.

³⁵Now Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and spoke this word to him, when He had found him: "Friend, do you believe in God's own Son?" ³⁶He said, "But Who is He, my Lord, so that I may believe in Him?"

- John 9.35, 36

Reflect

1. We note that Jesus "found" this man. He went looking for Him. What did that entail? Jesus came to earth to seek lost people (Lk. 19.10), and He sends us into the world in just the same way (Jn. 20.21). What does it mean for you to seek lost people? Complete this prayer: *Thank You, Lord, for seeking me. Show me how I can seek the lost today, beginning by...*
2. We may safely assume that Jesus knew full well what this man had just been through. We note, though, that Jesus did not ask him about his trial. Indeed, He showed no interest whatsoever in how this man had fared before the Pharisees. Why not? *Lord, don't let me waste my time focusing on the things that trouble me. Instead...*
3. Jesus was bringing this man's healing to completion. Why did Jesus ask a question here, rather than simply say, "You must believe..."? How did asking a question help this man along toward complete healing? What are some questions we might ask people, to help open them to believing in God's Son? *Teach me to ask good questions, Lord. Today, as I think about the people I will see...*
4. This man was ready to believe, but he needed to be clear about the *object* of his faith. Mere believing is of no benefit if we don't know Him in Whom we believe. The man said he needed to *know* the Son of God before he could *believe* in Him. How does this instruct us in our witness to the people in our Personal Mission Field? *I need to be clear about You, Lord, so that...*
5. This man believed when he *saw* Jesus and *heard* Him speaking (vv. 37, 38). How does this help you to think about what is required of you in *being* a witness to our Lord (Acts 1.8)? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

Summary

"Since he could not yet say 'I believe' but as in ignorance answered, 'Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?' he was therefore on the borderline, so to speak, between unbelief and belief." *Origen (185-254 AD)*

We need to tell people that Jesus is the Son of God. He is our Savior. He is our Lord. He is King and Judge. Only when we are *clear* about Jesus can people be *sincere* in their profession of faith. In one sentence, how would you explain Jesus to someone who asked you who He is?

Closing Prayer

Praise the LORD!

For *it is* good to sing praises to our God;

For it is pleasant, *and* praise is beautiful.

The LORD builds up Jerusalem;
He gathers together the outcasts of Israel.
He heals the brokenhearted
And binds up their wounds.
He counts the number of the stars;
He calls them all by name.
Great *is* our Lord, and mighty in power;
His understanding is infinite.
The LORD lifts up the humble;
He casts the wicked down to the ground.
Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
Sing praises on the harp to our God,
Who covers the heavens with clouds,
Who prepares rain for the earth,
Who makes grass to grow on the mountains.
He gives to the beast its food,
And to the young ravens that cry.
He does not delight in the strength of the horse;
He takes no pleasure in the legs of a man.
The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him,
In those who hope in His mercy.
Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!

Psalm 147.1-12

Psalm 147.1-13 (*St. Ann: Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*)
Praise God, for it is good to sing loud praises to the Lord!
With joy our songs of praise we bring to God and to His Word.

The Lord builds up His Church and He His people gathers in.
The broken hearts He tenderly repairs and heals their sin.

The stars He counts, He knows the name of every chosen soul;
His pow'r is great, and great His fame Who understands us whole.

The humble God exalts above; the wicked He casts down.
Sing thanks to this great God of love; let songs of praise abound.

He brings refreshing rain to earth and feeds the beasts so dear.
He puts in man's strength naught of worth, but loves those who God fear.

O praise your God, Jerusalem, O Zion, praise the Lord!
He strengthens those who trust in Him with blessings from His Word.

5 Believe, Worship

Read and meditate on John 9.37-39.

Jesus brings the blind beggar fully into the light of life.

³⁷Said Jesus, “Truly, you have seen Him, and He is the One Who talks with you just now.” ³⁸The man replied, “O Lord, I do believe!” and worshiped Him. ³⁹And Jesus said, “I have for judgment come. Blind eyes instead will see, while those who see will be made blind.”

- John 9.37-39

Reflect

1. This man had “seen” Jesus. In what way? Jesus does not show Himself physically to people today. But He does show Himself. What is a believer’s role in showing Jesus to lost people? Complete the following prayer: *O Lord, You dwell in my heart, and I am being transformed into Your image. I want others to see You in me, to see...*
2. The local church, which is the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12), should also be a means whereby people in a community “see” Jesus. Explain. *Lord, I long for our church to be more visibly the Body of Christ in our community. Show me how I...*
3. Seeing Jesus was not enough to convert this blind-man-now-healed. He needed to *know* Jesus; and for that, some *explaining* was needed. Jesus focused on His being the Son of God (v. 35). Is there a sense in which “Son of God” sums up what we need to tell others about the person and work of Jesus? Explain. *I know that You are God’s only-begotten Son, Lord, sent to the world for...*
4. The man believed, and then he worshiped (v. 38). What does this suggest about the role of worship in the life of a believer? What is worship? *You are worthy of our worship, Lord, and I worship You today by...*
5. How was Jesus using the ideas of *seeing* and *being blind* in verse 39? He said that He came for “judgment,” that is, to exercise divine choice “that” (Greek: *ina* – in order that) seeing and being blind might result. What does this suggest about the saving work of Christ, and how people come to be saved? Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

Summary

“Worship follows faith, and faith is confirmed by power. But if you say that believers also know, they know from what they believe; and vice versa, they believe from what they know. We know God from his power. We, therefore, believe in him who is known, and we worship him who is believed.” *Basil of Caesarea (330-379 AD)*

The combination of *showing* Jesus to people and *telling* them about Him is what it means to *be* a witness for Jesus. But our witness need not be perfect. God does not expect us to be perfect, only faithful. Salvation is of the Lord, no matter how clear and compelling or halting and incomplete our witness. We do not bring people to saving faith. Jesus does. We show them Jesus and tell them how to know Him. How does this work out in your experience?

Closing Prayer

I will extol You, O LORD, for You have lifted me up,
And have not let my foes rejoice over me.

O LORD my God, I cried out to You,
And You healed me.
O LORD, You brought my soul up from the grave;
You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.
Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His,
And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.
For His anger *is but for* a moment,
His favor *is for* life;
Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy *comes* in the morning.
Now in my prosperity I said,
“I shall never be moved.”
LORD, by Your favor You have made my mountain stand strong;
You hid Your face, *and* I was troubled.
I cried out to You, O LORD;
And to the Lord I made supplication:
“What profit *is there* in my blood,
When I go down to the pit?
Will the dust praise You?
Will it declare Your truth?
Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me;
LORD, be my helper!”
You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
You have put off *my* sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,
To the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

Psalm 30

Psalm 30 (*Madrid: Come Christians, Join to Sing*)

We will extol Your Name!
 You have lifted us, O Lord!
Our foes retreat in shame –
 You have lifted us, O Lord!
You healed us when we cried; safe shall our souls abide;
Hell’s claim have You denied –
 You have lifted us, O Lord!

Lord, we extol Your Name!
 You have lifted us, O Lord!
Thanks we with joy proclaim –
 You have lifted us, O Lord!
Anger shall not prevail; grace will for us avail;
Day frees us from travail –
 You have lifted us, O Lord!

Firmly in You we stand –
 You have lifted us, O Lord!
Kept by Your gracious hand –
 You have lifted us, O Lord!
Lord, when You hide Your face, I cry to You for grace;
Living, I’ll sing Your praise –

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You have lifted us, O Lord!

Lord, hear our earnest plea –

You have lifted us, O Lord!

And our strong Helper be –

You have lifted us, O Lord!

You turn our tears to song; praises to You belong.

Thanks is our endless song!

You have lifted us, O Lord!

6 Good Question

Read and meditate on John 9.40, 41.

Man, these Pharisees are everywhere! But they asked a good question, and Jesus gave them a concise answer.

⁴⁰Some Pharisees were there, and they replied, "Are we then blind?" ⁴¹And Jesus said, "If you were blind, you'd have no sin, but now you do, because you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains."

- John 9.40, 41

Reflect

1. You can hear the note of pique in the Pharisees' question: "Are You saying that *we're* blind?" Review verse 39. Would you classify this question as curious or indignant? Explain. Is it OK if our witness for the Lord offends someone? Complete the following brief prayer: *I need to speak the truth in love, Lord, but even then, the truth can...*
2. In His response, Jesus commended being blind to being able to see. What did He mean? *Lord, I know there are many areas of my life in which I remain "blind." Help me to admit my blindness so that...*
3. Jesus said those who claim to "see" are still in their sins. Why is that so? *Help me daily to "see" as I should, Lord, and I will...*
4. What is the opposite of sin remaining in someone? What should be the effects of sin no longer remaining? *Lord, You have opened my eyes to see You, and You have taken my sin away! Help me to live like one in whom sin no longer remains, so that...*
5. There's a sense in which we should understand ourselves as both blind and seeing. Explain. Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

Summary

"That is why, when the Pharisees who were listening to what he was saying, themselves said, 'We are not blind too, are we?' They were obviously like the one who had gone up to the temple and was telling God, 'I thank you, because I am not like other people, unjust, adulterers, rapacious,' as though to say, 'I thank you that I am not blind but can see, unlike other people of the same sort as this tax collector.' What did those ones say? 'We are not blind too, are we?' And the Lord answered them, 'If you were blind, you would not have any sin. Now however, because you say "We can see," your sins remain.' He did not say 'your sin occurs' but remains. You see, it was already there; because when you do not confess it, it is not taken away but 'remains.'" *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

Unless we know ourselves to be blind, we will not despise our darkness and seek the light of truth. Now, since the Lord has healed our blindness, we see, believe, and worship Him, because our sin no longer remains. Give thanks to the Lord for His healing your blindness and enabling you to see.

Closing Prayer

The LORD reigns;
Let the earth rejoice;
Let the multitude of isles be glad!
Clouds and darkness surround Him;

Righteousness and justice *are* the foundation of His throne.
A fire goes before Him,
And burns up His enemies round about.
His lightnings light the world;
The earth sees and trembles.
The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD,
At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
The heavens declare His righteousness,
And all the peoples see His glory.
Let all be put to shame who serve carved images,
Who boast of idols.
Worship Him, all *you* gods.
Zion hears and is glad,
And the daughters of Judah rejoice
Because of Your judgments, O LORD.
For You, LORD, *are* most high above all the earth;
You are exalted far above all gods.
You who love the LORD, hate evil!
He preserves the souls of His saints;
He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.

Psalm 97.1-10

Psalm 97.1, 6, 9-12 (*Darwall: Rejoice, the Lord is King!*)
Rejoice, the Lord is King! O earth, lift up your voice;
Be glad, you islands, shout and sing: Rejoice! Rejoice!
 Beyond, above all gods and nations be exalted, God of love!

The heav'ns above declare His glorious righteousness;
And tribes and peoples everywhere His Name confess.
 Beyond, above all gods and nations be exalted, God of love!

All you who love the Lord, despise sin's wicked ways!
Praise Him Who guides us by His Word through all our days.
 Beyond, above all gods and nations be exalted, God of love!

7 Witness and Worshiper

Read and meditate on John 9.28-41.

This blind beggar proved that his healing was complete. He showed his prowess as a *witness* for Christ, and he proved his faith as a *worshiper* of Christ.

28Then they reviled him, and they said, "You are His follower; we follow Moses, 29for we know God spoke to Moses. But this Man, we do not know where He is from." 30The man replied to them, "This is a marvel! You know not where He is from, yet He could do this work of opening my eyes! 31We know that God does not hear sinners; even so, whoever worships Him and does His will, God hears. 32Since everything began until this day, it was unheard that anyone should open eyes born blind. 33So if this One were not from God, He could do nothing." 34They replied and said to him, "What's that you say? You who were born in sin, do you presume to teach us?" So they cast him from the room, and from the synagogue. 35Now Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and spoke this word to him, when He had found him: "Friend, do you believe in God's own Son?" 36He said, "But Who is He, my Lord, so that I may believe in Him?" 37Said Jesus, "Truly, you have seen Him, and He is the One Who talks with you just now." 38The man replied, "O Lord, I do believe!" and worshiped Him. 39And Jesus said, "I have for judgment come. Blind eyes instead will see, while those who see will be made blind." 40Some Pharisees were there, and they replied, "Are we then blind?" 41And Jesus said, "If you were blind, you'd have no sin, but now you do, because you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains."

- John 9.28-41

Reflect

1. Let's review this episode for what we can learn about salvation and being witnesses for the Lord. First, it is clear from this account that salvation is all of grace. What does this mean? How does the story of this man's healing and coming to faith illustrate this? Complete this prayer: *I know, Lord, that I do not deserve to be saved, and I have done nothing to merit your salvation. Thank You that...*

2. Next, let's observe that sometimes salvation unfolds in stages for a person. That is, coming to faith can be a gradual process, rather than a sudden conversion. How do you see that in this story? How does this lead us to think about the unsaved people we know, and what it might require of us for them to come to the Lord? *You healed the blind man, then You revealed Yourself to him. Help me always to do good to people, and, at the same time, to...*

3. Coming to faith in Jesus has *immediate* effects, as well as *ongoing* effects. How does the story of this blind man show us this? What does this suggest about your own salvation? *I'm saved, Lord, and I thank You for saving me; show me more of Your salvation so that...*
4. Those who have experienced the saving power of the Gospel talk freely and boldly about what they have come to know. What are the most important lessons about being a witness that we can learn from this blind-man-now-healed? *Make me a more consistent witness, Lord, beginning today. Open my eyes to...*
5. Even in the face of the most compelling evidence, there will be those who deny our testimony and will try to discredit our witness. How should we respond to them? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

Summary

“Some of the Pharisees’ were disturbed by these words ‘and said to him, “Are we also blind?”’ What had moved them were the words ‘And those who see may become blind.’ Jesus said to them, ... “If you were blind, you would have no sin,” that is, if you identified yourselves as blind you would run to the physician... For I have come to take away sin. But now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains. Why? Because when you say that you see, you are not looking for a physician, and that is why you will remain in your blindness. Therefore, what he has just said before about coming for those who do not see so that they may see concerns those who acknowledge that they do not see and seek a physician so that they may receive their sight. ‘And those who see may become blind’ concerns those who think they can see without looking for a physician, and so they remain in their blindness. He calls this act of division ‘judgment,’ saying, ‘For judgment I came into this world.’ ... He is not referring here to that ‘judgment’ when he will judge the living and the dead at the end of the world.” *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

In what sense does our witness for Christ function as a form of “judgment”? Is this a good thing? Explain.

Closing Prayer

Oh, sing to the LORD a new song!
For He has done marvelous things;
His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory.
The LORD has made known His salvation;
His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel;
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth;
Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises.
Sing to the Lord with the harp,
With the harp and the sound of a psalm,
With trumpets and the sound of a horn;
Shout joyfully before the LORD, the King.
Let the sea roar, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell in it;
Let the rivers clap *their* hands;
Let the hills be joyful together before the LORD,
For He is coming to judge the earth.
With righteousness He shall judge the world,
And the peoples with equity.

Psalms 98.1-9

Psalm 98.1-9 (*Duke Street: Come, Let Us Sing unto the Lord*)

Come, let us sing unto the Lord new songs of praise with one accord!
Wonderful things our God has done: Jesus has our salvation won!

Now is God's saving mercy known; His glory to the world is shown.
Faithful and kind is God our Lord; earth has the Name of Jesus heard.

Raise to the Lord your loudest voice! Break forth and sing! Rejoice! Rejoice
Praise, praise to You our God and King, with all our hearts and strength we bring!

Now let the whole creation 'round burst into song with joyous sound!
Jesus will come to judge the earth; let all proclaim His matchless worth!

The Gospel of John: John 9.28-41

Questions for reflection or discussion

1. Why did Jesus say these Pharisees were still blind? Did they consider themselves blind? Explain.
2. Those who “see” only do so because they have admitted that they are “blind.” How does this relate to our ongoing relationship with the Lord?
3. Why should we expect some people to be offended by our witness for the Lord? How should we respond to them?
4. Is it important that people who do not believe in Jesus understand that their “sin remains”? Explain.
5. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from John 9.28-41? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

Items for prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.