

John 9:1-41

Jesus, the Healer

Note: Of all the miracles of Jesus recorded in the Bible there are more miracles of giving sight to the blind (4) than healings in any other category.

Note: This man doesn't ask to have his eyes opened. There is no mention of his faith or lack thereof. That tells us that God alone determines who, how, and when He will heal. He heals on the basis of His sovereign design and for His purposes.

What is the thinking of the disciples behind the question in verse 2? The disciples' question reflects popular Jewish opinion of their day—that sickness is the result of sin. Like Job's friends, they seem to reason: "This man is suffering, and it must be due to sin. Such sin is either that of the man himself, or of his parents." Ultimately all sickness is the result of Adam's sin.

Clearly the Old Testament teaches that sin brings divine punishment (Exodus 20:5, 34:6-7) "*He does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.*"

How does Jesus answer their question? Why was the man born blind? So that God would be glorified. This blindness is not divine punishment for a specific sin committed by this man or by his parents.

Verse 5 Jesus states again, "I am the light of the world." What does light do? Exposes, illumines, reveals. Light causes some eyes to see, but it blinds other eyes.

Four times Jesus opens blind eyes, and He does it a unique and different way each time. What does this tell us about Jesus? He is unpredictable. He doesn't do things in a set way. Jesus is never restricted in terms of His options. He, the infinite, omniscient, omnipotent God, has a limitless variety of means to accomplish the will of the Father.

Verses 6 & 14 What is the concern of the Pharisees? What do they object to? Jesus heals on the Sabbath. Spit + dust = mud must mean He was working on the Sabbath. The miracle is perceived more like a crime than a wonderful cure. Incredibly they look at the day of the week and overlook the miracle.

The Pharisees distort the whole concept of the Sabbath by their man made laws. Jesus clears up the concept in Mark 2:27 "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." The Sabbath is given to us to rest, worship, enjoy. We rule over the Sabbath.

What effect does Jesus have on the Pharisees in verse 16? Jesus polarizes the Pharisees. He still has the same effect on people today. At least some of the Pharisees consider the possibility that Jesus has come from God

Verse 18 Why are the Jews so unwilling to believe that a miracle has occurred? Bias against Jesus. Desire to see Him fail or look bad. Jealousy. Heart issues.

Why do the Pharisees call for the man's parents? The Pharisees will go to any length to disprove Jesus. They are grasping at straws. Only his parents can affirm that he has been truly blind from birth. If he has not been, the Pharisees can dispute Jesus' miracle.

What do you make of the parents' comments in verse 20? The man's parents are certainly aware of the Pharisees' authority and seem to be very intimidated at the thought of being put out of the synagogue. The testimony of his parents is tragic. Not only do they refuse to give glory to God and to bear witness to the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ, they lie about how much they know. If that isn't bad enough, these parents don't stand up for their son. Their lack of courage and their dishonesty is glaring.

The reason for the parents' silence is their fear of excommunication from their local synagogue for affirming that Jesus is the Messiah. For a Jew to be put out of the synagogue means being ostracized by everyone.

How would you characterize the blind man's testimony in verses 11, 15, and 25? Simple and consistent, "I was blind but now I see."

Application: Isn't that our testimony? "I was blind but now I see." Everyone is spiritually blind until we encounter Jesus and He opens our eyes to the truth. The irony is that we don't even realize we are blind until after we are saved. We think we are really "living it up," enjoying life to its fullest, we are free. But we are really enslaved. We are in bondage to sin and don't even know it. After encountering Jesus we are truly free.

The former beggar's personal testimony settles the debate. No one can argue with that.

Application: No one can disprove your testimony. Your testimony is unique, important, and effective. Regardless of your level of understanding of the Bible, you can always testify to the change that Jesus Christ has affected in your life.

Verses 28-34 What character traits of the Pharisees are revealed here? Primarily it is pride. It is easy to see the character defects in other people. If the truth be known there is probably a little "Pharisee" in all of us.

What are the steps the blind man goes through in his increasing awareness of who Jesus is?

- He is a man called Jesus (John 9:11)
- He is a prophet (John 9:17)
- He is a man from God (John 9:33)
- He is Lord (John 9:38)

This man's progress from dark unbelief to the light of faith shows that this process usually involves stages of illumination.

As the confrontation escalates, what do you think of the man's comments in verses 30-33? His eyes are open to more than just visible seeing. He can now see the hypocrisy of the Pharisees as well. The healed man is getting very weary of this questioning. He is simply going over the same facts time after time. His response does not resemble that of his parents in any way. He is not intimidated by these Pharisees; he is irritated by them. He accuses them of not listening to what he is saying. And then he sets out to make them sweat. He asks them—almost certainly in a sarcastic tone—why they wish to hear his testimony again. It isn't because they wish to become disciples of Jesus, too, is it?

What do the Pharisees mean by "steeped in sin at birth"? In their eyes the fact that he was born blind is a direct result of sin. We should pity the ignorance of the Pharisees.

How does Jesus describe Himself in verse 35? Son of Man. This is Jesus' most common title for Himself. It occurs 81 times in the Gospels and is never used by anyone other than Jesus.

Verses 35-41 What is Jesus' intention in finding the man and speaking to him? Jesus has healed the blind man's physical blindness, now He now addresses his spiritual blindness.

How do you reconcile verse 39 with John 3:17? Did Jesus come to save or judge/condemn? Judging is the *result* of His coming, not the *reason* for it. His coming inevitably involves exposing the spiritual blindness in people so they might recognize their blindness, turn to Jesus in faith, and see. His coming also involves confirming the spiritual blindness of those who profess to see spiritually but really do not because of their unbelief.

What does Jesus mean in verse 41? Jesus said that if they are blind spiritually and realize their need for enlightenment, they will not be guilty of sin because they will accept Jesus' teaching. However, they do not sense their need and feel quite satisfied that they understand God's will correctly. Consequently they do not receive the light that Jesus offers. They are wise in their own eyes, but really they are fools (Proverbs 26:12). Their sin of unbelief remains with them, and they remain in their sin and under God's condemning wrath.

Application: Who are the (spiritually) blind people in your path today?

MEMORIZE: John 9:39