

JESUS GIVES SIGHT TO A BLIND MAN ...

TWICE



... A SIMPLE, THOUGH MULTI-LAYERED, NARRATIVE OF A BLIND MAN'S
JOURNEY TO FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST ...

SCENE 1: THE FIRST MIRACLE, 9:1-7.

Participants—Jesus, the disciples, the blind man ... Jesus opens the eyes of a blind man to display the works of God and to illustrate several necessary truths regarding spiritual blindness and the urgency we should have in doing the work of God.

- (John 9:1–3 ESV) As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3 Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.”

1. Jesus directed his attention to a blind man which prompted the disciples to question him as to who was responsible for the man’s blindness.

This probably happened as he was leaving his latest skirmish with the Jews. And we should take note that the man was blind ... so he could hear but see none of what was happening.

2. Jesus answered that the issue was not that this man or his parents had sinned but that he might display the works of God in his healing.

(PARENTHESIS: A TIMELY WORD ON SICKNESS AND SIN.)

- I. All sickness and health issues are the result of sin entering our world through the rebellion of Adam. This man’s congenital blindness is an example.
- II. The disciples’ question reflects the common thought then and as in Job’s day that afflictions such as this had to be the result of someone’s personal sin.
- III. Sometimes it is true that sickness and even death are the result of a person not examining his life and not dealing with the sin in his life and then facing the consequences.
 - (1 Corinthians 11:30–31 ESV) That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.
- IV. It seems from Jesus’ warning to “sin no more” that the man he healed in John five was lame because of his sin. (See John 5:14.)
- V. The lesson is that we cannot make a proper judgment on these things from outward appearance alone or popular reasoning as was the case here with the disciples.

(END PARENTHESIS)

3. Jesus shifted the discussion from who was

responsible for his blindness to the sovereign plan and the works of God in his healing.

4. Jesus used his healing as an example of the importance of being about the Lord’s work while we have opportunity.
5. Jesus intentionally draws our attention to three specific aspects of the sovereign works of God on display and the providential care of God in the man’s life in opening his blind eyes.

A. GREAT: Giving the blind man sight was a great work and a tremendous blessing to this man.

B. GREATER: Giving the man spiritual sight was an even greater work.

C. GREATEST: But maybe the greatest work of God was Jesus drawing our attention to the pervasive, faulty, deadly thinking of self-righteous people who think they can see when in reality they are blind.

- (John 9:40–41 ESV) Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” 41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.

D. This is a dire warning that must be preached to every generation of those who profess to follow Jesus.

6. Jesus finished his discussion with his disciples and heals the man.

- (John 9:6–7 ESV) Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man’s eyes with the mud 7 and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

He puts mud on the man’s eyes, tells him what to do, the man does what he said and is healed.

(PARENTHESIS: THE BLESSED PRIVILEGE OF BEING CALLED TO DO THE WORKS OF THE ONE WHO SENT JESUS.)

- I. Jesus clearly includes his followers in the call to do the works of the one who sent him.
 - (John 9:4–5 ESV) We must work 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.”
- II. We need to hear the urgency and embrace the privileged position we find in Jesus’ words as he tells them (and us) that “we” must work the works of the One who sent him.

- III. This text also provides insight into Jesus' sovereign purpose in provoking the Pharisees ... their way of death must be exposed while people still have opportunity to receive light and repent.
- IV. Jesus also indirectly calls his followers (them and us) to his example of being light in the world while there is still opportunity to be light.
- V. To shine the light of life in the world then we must understand the progression: follow Jesus-> walk in the light->not walk in darkness.
 - (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
- VI. To keep from stumbling in doing the work of the One who sent Jesus we must walk in the day and not the night.
 - (John 11:9-10 ESV) Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."
 - (Romans 13:12 ESV) The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

(END PARENTHESIS)

SCENE 2: THE FIRST INTERROGATION, 9:8-13.

Participants—The blind man, his neighbors and other acquaintances ... The blind man's neighbors and other acquaintances question the blind man regarding the miracle of Jesus opening his eyes.

- (John 9:8-12 ESV) The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." 10 So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." 12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."
1. The neighbors gave mixed accounts of his identity.
 2. The blind man testified on his own behalf confirming the miracle—I am the man.
 3. He gave clear, simple answers to their questions.

SCENE 3: THE SECOND INTERROGATION, 9:13-17.

Participants—The formerly blind man, the Pharisees ... The blind man was brought before the Pharisees and questioned by them regarding the miracle.

- (John 9:13-17 ESV) They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15 So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. 17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

It is very interesting how clear-minded and composed this man was when he spoke in view of the mixed emotions he must have been experiencing.

1. We don't know their motivation but the neighbors brought the man to the Pharisees.
2. Tensions were high because Jesus had once again broken the Pharisees' rules by healing someone on the Sabbath.
3. The Pharisees asked him to recount his story which he does in very simple terms.
4. Following his account of the miracle there was division among the Pharisees.

CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE: SPIRITUAL LEADERS WHO ARE BLIND TO SPIRITUAL TRUTH IS A THEN AND A NOW PROBLEM ...

1. Since ancient times in Israel religious leaders who are bad shepherds of God's flock have been the norm and not the exception.
 - (Zechariah 11:17 ESV) Woe to my worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! Let his arm be wholly withered, his right eye utterly blinded!
 - (Jeremiah 23:1 ESV) "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD.
2. So it is no surprise at all that in the first century Jesus confronted shepherds that dishonored God and scattered his sheep.

3. Jesus broke the rules of these heavy-handed hypocrites as he went about his Father's business and they were filled with fury.

- (Luke 6:9–11 ESV) And Jesus said to them, “**I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?**” 10 And after looking around at them all he said to him, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored. 11 **But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.**

4. The Pharisees were determined to prove themselves right and Jesus wrong—to do this they accused Jesus and his disciples of violating the law of God.

- (Matthew 12:2 ESV) But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, **your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.**”
- (John 5:8–10 ESV) Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” 9 And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. **Now that day was the Sabbath.** 10 So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “**It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.**”

5. Their huge problem was that the examples they gave did not prove that Jesus had violated God's law but that he had violated their traditions by which they had violated God's law.

- (Mark 7:5–9 ESV) And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “**Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders,** but eat with defiled hands?” 6 And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “**This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me;** 7 in vain do they worship me, **teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**” 8 You **leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.**” 9 And he said to them, “You have **a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!**”

6. Jesus came to fulfill the law and the Prophets.

- (Matthew 5:17 ESV) Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; **I have not come to abolish them but to**

fulfill them.

7. Jesus was very purposeful in choosing to heal these people on the Sabbath to provoke these leaders and expose them for who and what they were—the children of the devil.

8. We will not truly understand his intent unless we accept that these specific miracles were planned and carried out according to God's sovereign purpose.

9. It must be noted that in all this Jesus was doing the work the Father had sent him to do.

- (John 5:16–17 ESV) And this was **why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.** 17 But Jesus answered them, “**My Father is working until now, and I am working.**”

10. We will face the same obstacles in the church today that Jesus faced in the first century.

WE KNOW WHAT IS WHAT BY GOD'S TRUTH ... NOT OURS ...

■ **Humble ourselves to find and abide in God's truth so that we may not be caught up in prideful schemes to prove ourselves right.**

■ **Discipline ourselves to not go past what is written and to separate ourselves from those who do.**

- (2 John 9–11 ESV) **Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God.** Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him** into your house or give him any greeting, 11 **for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.**

■ **Discipline ourselves to not fight like humans fight but to take our thoughts captive to Christ and make our obedience complete.**

- (2 Corinthians 10:3 NLT) **We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do.**
- (2 Corinthians 10:5–6 ESV) We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, **and take every thought captive to obey Christ,** 6 being ready to punish every disobedience, **when your obedience is complete.**