

Gospel of John Chapter 9B

In John 9 we find a man who was literally born blind. The Lord Jesus separates him from the crowd for a miraculous display of grace and power. He mixes a paste of mud and spittle applies it to his eyes and sends him off to the Pool of Siloam to wash.

- The miracle clearly displays the power of Christ to heal and his mercy for the poor and broken of this world but there is more to it.
- At the end of the chapter, after hours of controversy and conversation Jesus provides us with what we might call the moral of the story, the reason behind this particular healing.

John 9:39 Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”

- Judgment – (KRIMA) is the result of SIFTING from the root (KRINO) to separate. Jesus came into the world to separate the spiritually sighted from the spiritually blind.
- That is exactly what Jesus is doing here in Chapter 9.
- In this chapter BLINDNESS and SIGHT are used metaphorically for spiritual darkness and spiritual (sight) revelation.
- The Bible speaks of “spiritual blindness” in many places.

Ephesians 4 (NKJV) 17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk (live your lives) as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

- Futility of the mind, darkened understanding, blindness of heart, all of these describe the spiritual darkness in which ALL men are born. (Believers should no longer live in darkness)
- “Futility of Mind” does not speak of a lack of intellectual aptitude or mental capacity it speaks of the spiritual darkness brought about by sin.
- Throughout the scriptures blindness is used metaphorically to represent fallen man’s inability to comprehend divine truth.
- Isaiah 43:8 addresses a people who are blind even though they have eyes...
- Jeremiah 5:21 describes the “foolish and senseless people, who have eyes but do not see.”
- John described fallen man as those who “Love (agape) darkness rather than light.”

Paul describes “Those who are perishing” in this way:

2 Corinthians 4: 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- Isaiah 60 describes a pervasive darkness that covers the entire earth.

Isaiah 60:2 For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. 3 And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

- While that darkness is in fact pervasive, GOD would arise and His glory would be seen.

Isaiah 42:6 “I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, 7 to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

- In his first public declaration in the town of Nazareth, Jesus declared that HE was the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecies:

Luke 4: 18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

- From Nazareth Jesus went forth to proclaim the Kingdom of God, He worked miracles literally and spiritually giving sight to the blind.
- As we return to the Gospel of John Chapter 9 and remember the man who was blind from birth we are going to focus on Spiritual sight and spiritual blindness.

Today we will look at three characteristics of spiritual sight:

1. Spiritual Sight requires divine initiative.
2. Spiritual Sight responds to God's initiative with faith
3. Spiritual Sight results in worship.

Three Characteristics of spiritual blindness

1. Spiritual Blindness is ignorant of its own condition
2. Spiritual Blindness Rejects Spiritual Sight
3. Spiritual Blindness Retains Sin

1. Spiritual Sight Requires Divine Initiative

After applying the mud to the man's eyes Jesus sent him to the pool of Siloam to wash. While he was washing Jesus left the immediate area.

When the man returned seeing, Jesus had already departed. As you can imagine the healing of a man who was blind from birth created quite a stir.

- It goes without saying that the people around him had questions. Are you sure you are the same GUY who used to beg? How did this happen? Who did this to you?
- A notable miracle had occurred the crowd rejoiced. It seems only right to make this great blessing known to the religious leaders. God should be praised! The people take the man to the Jewish leadership.
 - Needless to say the Pharisees didn't immediately break into praise. (Bless the lord)
 - The man was interrogated as if he was a criminal. But He showed a lot of spunk!
 - His parents seemed to abandon him for fear of the Jewish leadership. "Yes he is our son, yes he was born blind, but how this happened, we don't know. Ask him!"
 - Finally, after being maligned and insulted the man is cast out of the synagogue.

John 9: 35 **Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"**

- Mark those words, "Jesus found him." Jesus found the man so that he could continue the work of opening his blind eyes.

Jesus took the initiative in healing the man, but it didn't stop there,

- Now that the man's physical eyes were opened Jesus came to open his spiritual eyes. How is it that spiritual eyes are opened? By the revelation of Jesus Christ: **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"**

It is important to understand when it comes to salvation God is the one who seeks man. In Romans 3 after showing that ALL men both Jews and Greeks are lost in sin, Paul shows the complete inability of man apart from the intervention of God to seek the Lord.

Romans 3: 10 **as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."**

- So Jesus comes seeking the man; with the question, **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"** With that question, we move from divine initiative to the response of faith.

2. Spiritual Sight responds to divine initiative by putting faith in Christ

John 9:35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" 37 Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." 38 He said, "Lord, I believe,"

- The man's response shows that his spiritual eyes have been opened to see the truth about Jesus.
- Earlier, when he was interviewed by the Pharisees, He considered Jesus to be a prophet: John 9: 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."
- Not yet knowing who the Messiah was and yet trusting Jesus (even as a prophet) to direct him when Jesus brought up the Messiah he asked, "who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?"

At this point it is important to know that while the work of salvation is initiated by God the revelation of God requires a response of faith.

At the outset of his public ministry Jesus declared, Mark 1:15 "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

John 6:47 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

Romans 10:9 if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Even as we focus on the response of man, we must remember that it is God who gives man the gift of faith to believe. You see the whole work of salvation is for the glory of God and not man. I was blind, he gave me eyes to see, I was dead in sin and God gave me new life.

Ephesians 2: 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

- The one whose eyes are opened also receives God's precious gift of faith

3. Spiritual Sight Results in Worship.

John 9:38 He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

- When a man experiences the miraculous "EYE OPENING" results of the new birth, When the Scales of unbelief fall and a man sees Jesus High and Lifted up.
- When spiritual death is overtaken by the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit and the darkness of iniquity is dispelled by the glorious light of Christ,
- The human heart is overwhelmed with sense of deep appreciation that brings a man to his knees in humble adoration.
- I was lost and now I am found, I was blind and now I see, I was dead and now I am alive. YOU cannot repay this priceless gift of Grace ALL you can do is Worship the one who freely gives it to men.

Remember when the disciples were delivered from certain death as the Sea of Galilee turned into the perfect storm:

Jesus rebuked the sea, stopped the winds and these rough and tough fishermen fell on their faces in worship.

Matthew 14: 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

- Do you know that YOU have been delivered from DEATH? Brought from blindness to light freely by the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

When Thomas who did not believe saw the risen Christ and thrust his hand into his side and placed his fingers in the nail pierced hands he responded:

John 20:28 **Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"**

Three Characteristics of spiritual blindness

2. Spiritual Blindness is ignorant of its own condition
3. Spiritual Blindness Rejects Spiritual Sight
4. Spiritual Blindness Retains Sin

John 9:39 **Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind."** 40 **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.**

1. Spiritual Blindness is ignorant of its own condition

40 **Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?"**

It seems obvious that the Pharisees were listening in on Jesus' conversation with the man who was healed of blindness.

- You can easily hear the mockery behind their question: **"Are we also blind?"**
- The original language expects a negative answer. "We're not blind, right?"
- These were the elite of Israel, the experts in the Law of Moses. Not only did they memorize the Old Testament, they actually had portions of it strapped in little leather boxes to their foreheads.
- Matthew records another conversation where Jesus confronts the Pharisee's blindness:

Matthew 23: 24 **You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!** 25 **"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.** 26 **You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.**

2. Spiritual Blindness Rejects Spiritual Sight

41 **Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt;**

If the Pharisees would simply admit their need, humble themselves and confess their lack of spiritual understanding, God would graciously provide sight.

- Foolish Pride is a roadblock to the grace of God which brings spiritual sight.

The very scriptures that they would have memorized gave a glimpse of this light:

Psalm 32:5 (King David) **I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah**

Consider this same idea from a physical perspective:

I know a woman who believed so intently in the healing power of Christ that she continually neglected the cancerous tumor that little by little was working death within her body.

- She believed that she was honoring God by NOT going to the doctor. BUT her view of the Word was distorted by false teachers, For lack of understanding she perished from a very curable form of cancer.

If a person who is suffering from infirmity continually refuses to admit the reality of their condition, the infirmity is able to grow and produce death.

By refusing to admit their blindness, these Pharisees confirmed the darkened condition of their hearts which in turn only increased their hatred for the only one who was able to save them from eternal death.

3. Spiritual Blindness Retains Sin

John 9:41 **Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.**

- Since the Pharisees were unwilling to acknowledge their blindness, but claimed to see, they retained personal responsibility for their sin.
- They were trusting in their religious traditions, the daily sacrifices, offerings of goats and rams which were never designed to remove sin.
- The Sacrifices in which they trusted actually pointed to the coming of Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
- In holding on to the legalistic righteousness of the Law they refused the FREE GIFT of righteousness to which the whole of the Law and the Prophets pointed.

John 9:39 **Jesus said, “For judgment (sifting / separation) I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”**

Spiritual Sight requires divine initiative, responds to God’s initiative with faith, results in worship.