

The blind see

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[0 : 00] Now friends, shall we turn for a little time this morning to the passage of scripture that we read together. The Gospel by John chapter 9.

John chapter 9. And we may read again from verse 24. John chapter 9, reading at verse 24. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise.

We know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not. One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.

One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. Has it ever occurred to you, in reading the Gospels, that Jesus takes notice where others pass by?

At this time, he was in the neighborhood of the temple, when he saw this blind man begging.

[1 : 27] Now that was a common sight. There was no such thing as a welfare state, or an institution for the blind.

And a man who was blind. And a man who was blind could only eke out a miserable living by begging for money.

And before performing the miracle recorded in the chapter, our Lord answered a popular superstition.

The disciples said, Lord, who committed some great sin? This man, or his parents, that he was born blind.

That was a prevalent superstition among the Jews. That a person who was born handicapped or deformed in any way, was like that, because of some terrible sin, that had been committed by his parents.

[2 : 48] And Jesus said, Neither had this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

God's grace was to be made evident in the healing of the blind man. And our Lord said to the disciples, I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day.

The night cometh when no man can work. He seized every opportunity of doing good.

And what an example he has left to his followers. I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, while light remains to me.

And this was one mark of the Messiah. The Lord doth give the blind their sight.

[4 : 03] John Wesley said, I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now.

For I shall not pass this way again. Now friends, in meditating upon the text this morning, let us think first of all, of the blind man.

The blind man. As Jesus passed by, he saw a man who was blind from his birth. Blind from his birth.

Oh, how sad. And our Lord's heart went out to the handicap. We are to show Christian compassion to those who are deformed in any way.

And this man is a picture of all men. For we are all born spiritually blind.

[5 : 27] Think of it. All his days, he had lived in darkness. He had no enjoyment of the light.

He had no idea of it at all. He had never seen the beauties of creation. He had never looked up to the blue sky or out upon the green fields.

He had never seen the great mountains or the rolling river. He was unable to earn a living. He could not learn a trade.

He was totally dependent upon others for his livelihood. This poor man was unable to distinguish colors or to differentiate between one object and another.

It is a picture of man by nature. I was born in sin, said the psalmist. I was shaped in iniquity, original sin, man is deformed in God's sight.

[6 : 53] Spiritually, he walks in darkness and he knows not whether he is going. He is unaware of his sad state before God.

That is a picture of unregenerate man. He is indifferent to the things of God.

He has no concern about his spiritual condition. He sees no beauty in Jesus that he should desire him.

He sees nothing attractive about the followers of the Lord. The darkness has blinded his eyes.

And this is the effect of sin. As Jesus passed by, he saw a man who was blind from his birth.

[8 : 01] And you remember how he said, I am come that they that see not might see.

the Lord does give the blind their sight. But then also, friends, in this miracle, we see the power of Christ.

We see the power of Christ. Now, it has been said that to the disciples, the blind man was but an object for theological speculation.

To the Lord Jesus, he was a human being to be pitied and helped. And we are told that he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed the blind man's eyes with the clay.

Now, the means that were used may seem strange and yet they were significant. The means that our Lord used was already in use among men.

[9 : 35] Physicians had found this method beneficial however repulsive it might seem. And of course, it is a parallel with the ridicule and the scorn that ungodly men poured upon the gospel.

Now, of course, Christ could have cured this man with a word as he did with others. But he chose this way to show that God is not tied to any particular method of healing.

Now, by the Jewish tradition, it was expressly forbidden to use this means on the Sabbath day.

And yet, like a gentle physician, the Lord spread the clay upon his eyes.

And then he gave him the command, go, wash in the pool of Siloam. Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.

[11 : 07] man. And there you see, the blind man's faith was put to a severe test. Does it not remind us of the Old Testament story of Naaman, the Syrian general who was a leper?

And he came to Elisha's house. Oh, he came with splendid gifts. He came with an impressive escort.

He came wearing his dress uniform and with all the insignia of his high rank. But the prophet said to him, go and wash in Jordan seven times and thy flesh shall be clean.

And Naaman was angry. He went away in a rage. Are not Abana and Farper the rivers of Damascus? Are they not better than all the waters of Israel?

May I not wash in them and be clean? And it was only after his subordinates prevailed on him to take the prophet's advice that Naaman went down to the Jordan and was healed.

[12 : 33] and this blind man too was put to a severe test. Go wash in the pool of Siloam.

Would he obey the Lord or would he have more reverence for the tradition of the elder?

water? For according to the Jewish practice it was not lawful to wash the eyes not even for a medicinal purpose on the Sabbath much less to go to the pool of Siloam.

Go wash in the pool of Siloam it was a test of obedience test of obedience but there was no hesitation he heard the word of the Lord and he obeyed he went and washed and came seeing now we are told that Siloam means literally sent the sent one of God that pool was a witness to Christ by its name the sent one of God Robert Murray McChain wrote these beautiful lines beneath

Moriah's rocky side a gentle fountain springs silent and soft its waters glide like the peace the spirit brings the thirsty Arab stoops to drink of the cool and quiet wave and the thirsty spirit stops to think of him who came to save Siloam is the fountain's name it means one sent from God and thus the holy saviour's fame it gently spreads abroad oh grant that I like this sweet well may Jesus image bear and spend my life my all to tell how full his mercies are go to the pool of Siloam and wash and he went and washed and came seeing but then friends the last thing we would see in our text is that we have here a clear testimony a clear testimony one thing

[15 : 47] I know that whereas I was blind now I see the enemies of the Lord Jesus would deny his power when a blind man told them of his healing he put clay upon mine eyes and I washed and to see some of the Pharisees said this man is not of God for he keepeth not the father the Sabbath day he is not of God how swift they were in their condemnation they called the parents of the man born blind they asked them is this your son was he really born blind and they were given a positive answer yes this is our son and he can now see but by what means or who has healed him we do not know they would not go further than this we do not know they were afraid of the sentence of excommunication and to a

Jew it was indeed a dreadful thing to be excommunicated from the synagogue and John tells us that the Jews had agreed already that if any man did confess that Jesus was Christ he should be put out of the synagogue he should be excommunicated and this excommunication was not merely a church censure it meant too that the person was deprived of civil rights and of liberty and of property and you see your fellow Jew would be unwilling to trade with you be unwilling to enter into any business arrangement with you because the excommunication was civil as well as ecclesiastical if any man confess that

Jesus was Christ he should be put out of the synagogue the church has known persecution from the very first that is a weapon that has often been used against the cause of Christ and it is being wielded today in Eastern Europe there are many faithful believers who are unable to gather in public for worship and there are pastors and elders who are imprisoned because of their faithfulness to Christ because of their love for the truth oh how we should prize our freedom and how we should prayerfully remember those who are suffering for

Christ sake now the parents of this man said to the Pharisees he can speak for himself he is old enough and they adopted a very subtle approach they said to the man who was healed now give us the truth make confession the words they used are in verse 24 give God the praise give God the praise asking him to make a confession to acknowledge that what he had said was not true they would do anything in order to damage the position of

Christ they would even use the name of Jesus their hatred was so great you are that fellow's disciple they said and with self satisfied arrogance they claimed that they were the disciples of Moses the man who was healed said it is astonishment astonishment that you do not know where he comes from

[22 : 16] Christ had again and again expounded to them the source of his authority you don't know where he comes from and yet yet he has given me sight the Pharisees were insulted and humiliated and then the man who was healed became bolder he said if this man were not of God he could do nothing thou was altogether born in sin they said and dost thou teach us and they cast him out they excommunicated him whether he be a sinner or no he said I know not one thing

I know that whereas I was blind now I see he was no much for the subtlety of the Pharisees he could not enter into theological debate with them he was a mere beggar but he says of one thing I am sure I was blind and he gave me my sight of this I am sure I was blind but now I see now I am living a new life now everything is changed with me I am not walking in the darkness anymore

I don't need the white stick I don't need anyone's assistance to go along the street I was blind but now I see it was a voice of experience he was testifying for Christ I owe it all to him yes and our Lord heard of the action of the Pharisees in casting him out of the synagogue and then he graciously revealed himself to him as a Messiah dost thou believe on the son of God who is he Lord that I might believe on him and Jesus said unto him thou hast both seen him and it is he that talketh with thee and he said

Lord I believe and he worshipped him dost thou believe on the son of God hast thou a desire to believe on him to commit your soul entirely to his keeping to place your confidence in him alone do you remember what the apostle Paul said on the eve of his martyrdom I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day against that day the day when the night cometh against that day

I have committed my soul to his keeping the man who was healed said concerning Jesus if this man were not of God he could do nothing he could do nothing friend what is your position in regard to the gospel have you acknowledged your spiritual blindness that you have been groping in the dark that you have no sure path for your feet oh how many are afflicted today by an awful feeling of uncertainty the things that cause men's hearts to fail for fear when we hear the great nations threatening one another with the fear of nuclear war when we read of the terrible crimes being committed in our land today some of them very unnatural crimes crimes against innocent little children and elderly people there is a terrible feeling of uncertainty and and I have had experience of hearing ungodly men saying surely we're living in the last days surely these are terrible times surely there is a judgment coming upon the earth things well

[28 : 55] Christ said I am come I am come a light into this world he that follows me shall not walk in the darkness but he shall have the light of life the light of life the light upon the path that leads to the city of the great king one thing I know one thing I know of this I'm sure he said of this I'm certain that I was blind but now I see now I see all that fear God to the psalmist come here and I'll tell what he did for my soul I was blind but now I see Horatius

Boner said I heard the voice of Jesus say I am this dark world's light look unto me thy morn shall rise and all thy day be bright I looked to Jesus and I found in him my star my sun and in that light of life I walk till traveling days are done one thing I know that whereas I was blind now I see may the Lord bless us in our meditation on his word sound hand your own