

Session 4

March 26, 2023

JESUS OPENED MY EYES TO THE TRUTH

John 9:1-7, 32-33, 35-38

As John's narrative brings us closer to the cross, it reveals the building hostility the established religion had against the Lord. In this week's lesson, notice how the wonder of Christ's miracle was mired in the hypocrisy of the Pharisees' vendetta against Him. It's a clear case of "Don't confuse us with the facts...our minds are made up!" The drama plays out in three scenes.

The work of the Lord (vv. 1-7). The scene is a continuation of the previous chapter. The religious leaders were already in a fury over Jesus' claim of deity (8:58). Now they would witness His deity in action. As the Lord led His disciples out of the temple, they encountered a particular beggar. Verse 1 reveals a well-known *fact*: the man was "blind from birth" (see v. 20 as well). Verse 2 reveals a well-worn *assumption*: that one's physical ailment was somehow automatically tied to one's sin. There is no doubt that both of the disciples' assumptions have some validity. Certainly sin has consequences, some of which involve physical suffering (the law of sowing and reaping comes to mind. See Gal. 6:7). And at times, the sins of the parents *do* indeed infect their children (e.g.: think of the issues faced by a baby born to a drug addict). But to automatically assume that personal suffering is the direct result of personal sin is simply incorrect. Just ask Job! Jesus addressed their misunderstanding by insinuating the sovereignty of God. Two principles are evident. First, we might say that this man's *blindness* was preordained by God (v. 3). Simply put, God made him that way so that Jesus could restore his sight and give witness to the power of God. Second, the *timing* was preordained by God. Verse 4 indicates that this miracle was part of God's plan to bring light into that present darkness. Remember the context: Jesus had just claimed to be "I AM." Now He would prove it to the man, the man's family, the people watching, and the religious leaders. Much can be made of the method that Jesus used here. At times, Jesus affected His miracles simply by speaking. At other times, He touched. Here, He mixed his divine saliva with the most basic element of creation. The mud He made was placed on the man's eyes, then washed clean. For reflection: *Why do you think Jesus used these elements to heal the blindness? What significance do you see in the man having to go and wash it off?*

The wonder of the Lord (vv. 30-33). The remainder of the chapter recounts the turmoil surrounding this miracle. First, the neighbors who recognized the once-blind man were full of questions (see vv. 8-12). Then the Pharisees were full of questions (vv. 13-18). Then the parents of the man were questioned (vv. 18-23). Then the once-blind man was questioned a second time by the Pharisees (vv. 24-26). No wonder the healed man smarted off to them in verse 27! They were so concerned about Jesus healing him on the Sabbath, that they missed the most important point: Jesus had the power to do it! This man didn't care about their petty argument and arrogant accusations. All he cared about was the miracle: "I once was blind, but now I see!" (v. 25). Notice the solid defense the man offered of the Lord in verse 33: "If this man were not from God, He wouldn't be able to do anything!" For reflection: *The Jewish leaders refused to believe that Jesus was God's Son because He healed on the Sabbath. How would you defend the Lord of such a charge? Can you support your view from Scripture?*

The worship of the Lord (vv. 35-38). In *frustration*, the hypocritical Pharisees finally tossed the healed man out of the temple! (v. 34). But in *compassion*, the Lord Jesus found him and brought him to faith. Notice the irony in verse 37, as Jesus reminds the man that he is—for the very first time—able to see: “You have *seen* Him,” Jesus said. “And He is the One speaking with you.” And what is the man’s immediate response? He worshiped Him! For reflection: *Without becoming too allegorical, look at this story through the eyes of salvation. What does the blindness represent? How about Jesus’ restoration? And how about our appropriate response?*