

Sunday Morning Message

August 7, 2022

The Man Born Blind

The Gospel According to John

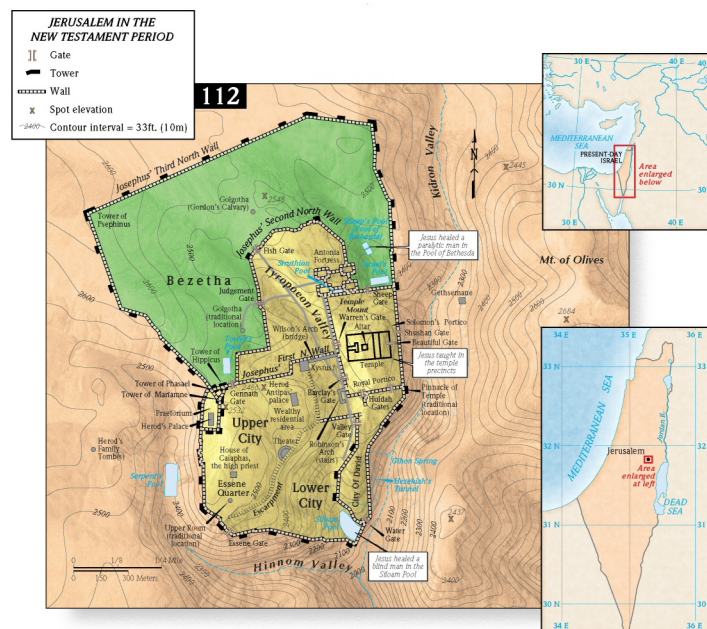
Text – John 9:1 - 41

Congregational Reading – John 9:35 - 39

Introduction

This story is only found in John's gospel, though Jesus gave sight to others who were blind (See Matthew 9:27 – 31; 12:22; 15:30 – 31; 20:30 - 34; 21:14; Mark 8:22 – 26; 10:46 – 52; Luke 7:21; 18:35 – 43)

The healing of the man born blind took place near the Pool of Siloam at the southeastern part of the city. Previously, he had been in the temple. This event may have taken place soon after he left the temple, or it may have been days later.



I. His Healing (vs. 1 – 7)

Verse 2 - Here is the great question: “Why do bad things happen to people?” The disciples ask the Lord about the blindness of this man. “Whose fault is it?” “Did he do something wrong, or what was it the fault of His parents?” “Whose sin caused this disease?”

Jesus answers the question in verse three. Nobody's sin caused the blindness of this man who was born blind. All of them were sinners, but none of their sin was directly

responsible. Sin is ultimately responsible for disease and sickness, but the sins of the parents, or the sins of their son did not cause it.

Disease, sickness, blindness, and sin are all the result of sin entering into the world. There was no disease or death in the Garden of Eden.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" (Romans 5:12)

Sometimes bad things happen that are the direct consequence of something that we have done.

Illustration – Uzziah was struck down with leprosy:

"But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense. And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men: And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hastened also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him. And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land." (2 Chronicles 26:16-21)

Sometimes bad things happen because God will use it somehow, either to glorify himself, reveal Himself to others, or to make us better and grow us in our faith.

Illustration – Job didn't do anything wrong. He was put to the test so that God could prove to Satan that Job was a man who would maintain his integrity even under much pressure.

Illustration – Paul was afflicted by Satan with some kind of thorn in the flesh:

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

Some believe that this thorn had to do with Paul's eyesight. God used the thorn to keep him humble and as a means of conveying His grace to Paul. But, Paul did nothing directly to deserve the thorn, whatever it was.

Bad things happen – sometimes as a punishment for sin, sometimes as a result of bad decisions on our part or the part of others, and sometimes bad things just happen. However, if a bad thing happens, we must realize that God allowed it to happen, though He may not have caused it to happen, and He will use it to do something good:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Practical Application – If something bad happens to you, it would be wise for you to trust God's judgment in allowing this difficulty to come your way, and to try to see what God is doing in you, or through you.

In the case of this young man who was born blind, Jesus tells us that his blindness came because God was going to use it to demonstrate the works of God. This blind man became a witness to the whole world of the power of God.

II. His Hearing (vs. 8 – 23)

A. The Testimony of the Man Himself (vs. 8 – 15)

Once it becomes apparent that this man was healed, everyone wants to ask him what had happened. First, his neighbors want to make sure that it was really him. Then, they want to find out what happened to him. He is brought to the Pharisees, and they begin to interrogate him to find out how he had received his sight.

Notice something very important here. He didn't go beyond the facts with his answers.

Practical Application – When you give your testimony about your salvation, don't embellish, and don't try to explain things that you may know very little about. Just tell people what happened. You don't have to give people a dissertation on the ten major doctrines in theology, just tell them how you got saved. Keep it simple.

B. His Parent's Testimony (vs. 16 – 23)

The Pharisees then begin to grill the man's parents, and they are also very careful about what they say. They just stick to the facts. Here, however, the Bible clarifies that his parents were afraid that they were going to be kicked out of the church if they said anything positive about this Jesus who had healed their son.

III. His Higher Purpose (vs. 24 – 34)

The man is brought back to be questioned again by the Pharisees and at first, he is careful about what he says, but eventually he becomes frustrated with these religious leaders who are grilling him, and eventually he just decides that he doesn't care anymore about the opinions or even the sentence of these men. They had never done anything for him or for his family. His allegiance belonged to the One that healed Him.

The man's logic was irrefutable. Only God could open the eyes of the blind.

*"And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: **The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.**" (Matthew 11:1-6)*

Jesus was referring to Isaiah's prophecy:

"And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." (Isaiah 29:18)

Notice in v. 27, he alludes to the fact that he has become a disciple of Jesus. This infuriates the Pharisees, and they cast him out of the synagogue.

Practical Application – When I was first saved, I was very careful about what I said. I wanted to please everybody. I wanted to be accepted by my new friends in the church, but I also wanted my old friends to still like me. I had to come to the place where I chose a side. I had to take a stand for the Lord. I had to declare my allegiance publicly and proudly to the Lord.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:16-17)

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32-33)

"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John 6:66-69)

Conclusion - Spiritual Sight vs. Spiritual Blindness (vs. 35 – 41)

Notice that when the man takes the stand, and boldly renounces his allegiance to what he had previously believed, Jesus comes to Him and reveals Himself to the man. **Here is where the man really receives His sight, not physical sight, but spiritual understanding.** First, however, he had to be willing to admit that he was wrong before about what he believed.

Practical Application – In order to come to the truth about Christ, you must first let go of the doctrines, philosophies, or dogmas that you previously held on to.

For me, it was my good works. I thought if I was going to go to Heaven, it would be because I was a good person. I had to let go of that philosophy. First, I wasn't good – I was a sinner. Second, even if I wasn't that bad, the just payment for my sins, even if they were not as bad as other peoples, was death in Hell. I had to come to the place where I let go of my good works and trusted in Christ alone.

Jesus concludes this story by explaining the connection between physical sight and spiritual sight. Your physical eyes can cause you to see and understand the physical things around you, but you will need spiritual eyes to understand the things of God.

These Pharisees had professed to see, they claimed to know and understand God. Yet, they were blind. However, they were not blind because they could not see the truth. They were blind because they would not see the truth. They rejected the truth that was right in front of them.

Jesus stated in Matthew's gospel:

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." (Matthew 13:15)

But Jesus also added to His disciples:

"But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." (Matthew 13:16)

It is important for us to know that these Pharisees were spiritually blind because they were so full of pride, they refused to open their hearts to the possibility that Jesus was who He claimed to be.

A couple of them – Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea – were open to the truth, and at first were secret followers of the Lord. Eventually, however, they too would come out of their closet and publicly declare whose team they were on.

These religious leaders, however, were closed to the truth.

Practical Application – You are as close to God as you want to be.

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." (James 4:8a)

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." (James 4:10)

If you are spiritually lost, meaning you are not sure about your eternal destiny. Maybe you are not sure about which religion is the right religion; or what the Bible really teaches about God and salvation. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to the truth. He will.