

# Journey of Faith

## The Blind

(John 9:1-41)

**Introduction:** Ken Greene comments about this text— "Bad theology always leads to insensitivity."

- Misunderstanding God's intent or God; we tend to mistreat others
  - Remember the adulterous woman in Chapt. 8 ( non-person).
  - The lame and disease are considered bottom of society (in the 1st. Cent.)

### I. The Encounter

A. Jesus comes along as the "light of the world," **John 1:9** (This chapter illustrates Jesus' identity as light)

1. By the end of this story we'll ask -- "Just who is really blind in this story?"
2. The tragedy is -- the disciples see a theological question: **v. 2** and again Jesus gives a confusing responses **v. 3**

B. Does something strike you sort of strange in **v. 3**? (KJV, ASV, RSV, NIV - all create a problem in this text)

1. Did they think he sinned in his mother's womb or suffered the consequences of his parents sin
2. Could God have really done this to prove Himself? **I just can't believe this about God!!**

**The Message-** Jesus said, "You're asking the wrong question. You're looking for someone to blame, There is no such cause-effect here. Look instead for what God can do. We need to be energetically at work for the One who sent me here, working while the sun shines. When night falls, the workday is over.

**Youngs Literal Translation-** Jesus answered, 'neither did this one sin nor his parents, but that the works of God may be manifested in him; it behoveth me to be working the works of Him who sent me while it is day; night doth come, when no one is able to work:  
(God is our deliverer, not our tormentor)

### II. The point of the story

A. If we're not careful, we're more interested in a theological problem rather than in a person

1. The irony -- Jesus restores the blind man but always sees a human being
2. Debating theology can be a distraction to caring about hurting people

B. Jesus declares Himself to be the light of the world **n v. 5**

1. He then spits on the ground, makes mud, smears it on his eyes, sending him to a pool to wash.
2. John explains that the name "Siloam" means "Sent."
3. The result: enter the community of the fully human!

a. There's a reaction!! **9:8-10**

- Hello!
- Religious authorities rule
- Sabbath...

b.. Back to the debate **Who is the sinner in this story now?" Jesus! He worked on the Sabbath!**

### III. The responses

A. None of this makes sense to the blind man

1. Jesus didn't heal because of faith/he had compassion
2. All he knows is that a man named Jesus healed him
3. When pressured-- he says he is a prophet (9:17) --- **sight & blindness are not only physical things**

**-Some can see the light of the world, and others are blinded in darkness?**

**B. The parents reaction**

1. Fear of being blackballed... v. 9:22
2. He's a grown man

**C. Back to the man-- they pressed him to deny Jesus**

1. Great answer!! **9:24-25** Blind/see
2. When pressed harder he really got in their faces-- Do you want to become his disciples **9:27**

**D. Our reflection leads back to 7:27 (the 38 yr. invalid)**

**9:28-29 (Not knowing where He's from)**

1. Yet the man answered-- **9:30-34** wow!!!  
**7: 24 Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment."**

**E. Now who's blind?**

1. The man is excommunicated
2. It is here, where the man first sees Jesus that he responds to him in faith.
  - Since physical sight this man has had nothing but trouble
  - Once again, bad theology leads to insensitivity
  - No interest in the person
3. The truth of this man's life was the light of the world!

**Conclusion:** Jesus said: vv. 9:39-41

**A. Who sinned, this man or his parents?"**

1. Sin and blindness do go together (blindness of the heart that leads one in sin)

**"I'm reminded that good theology always shows itself by affirming the dignity and value of everyone to God." (Rubel Shelly)**

**B. Many times the blind are the most self-assured about how well and clearly they see everything.**

- **Story suggests: anytime we see theology first & people second or not at all, we may be going blind**

**C. The good news of the story is that Jesus is the Light of the World. (Jo. 9:5)**

1. He offers sight to every last one of us blind people!
2. The vision test comes when we encounter other people: **those who are still blind see a problem to be solved, and those with sight see a person to be loved.**

**-Helen Keller)**

**It was this tender meeting between teacher and pupil on March 3, 1887, that six year old Helen Keller experienced the turning point in her life**

Helen tells of the dramatic moment when Anne Sullivan first broke through her dark, silent world with the illumination of language.

We walked down the path to the well house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word water, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten-- a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me, I knew then that "w-a-t-e-r" meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand, That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, it is true, but barriers that could in time be swept away.

**D. Is he the light of your world, or is it more comfortable in the darkness?**

- There is no testimony more compelling than a changed life (Christian— we have changed lives!!)
- We can get wrapped up in theology or we can get wrapped up in the Light of World

**I hope you will let the light of the world shine through in such a way that those you touch will see!**

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