

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

John 9:1-41

Lesson #34

A Sign of Blindness

03/27/2016

Consider the narrative of John 8

- **Vs. 1-11** It started with the religious Jews exposing the adulterous woman.
- **Vs. 12-30** It follows with a discourse on Jesus as the light of the world whereby we can see.
- **Vs. 31-59** It ends with Jesus exposing of the religious Jews for their unbelief.

What does the light expose?



1

John 9

¹ And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, **who sinned**, this man or his parents, **that he should be born blind?**"

- This chapter starts with the same theme as ch.8 - **exposing sin**.
- It is interesting that the parents are viewed as culpable in this man's neediness. **Does that sound familiar?**

2

³ Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was in order that **the works of God** might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; **night is coming, when no man can work.**" ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

- **An aside:** Negative circumstances in life (blindness) can have redeeming value (as with Paul's thorn in the flesh). **Look for and expect it.**
- The healing in this case is not about the blind man so much as about **Jesus as the light and the importance of spiritual sight.**

3

⁶ When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes, ⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). And so he went away and washed, and came back seeing."

Why did Jesus make clay and apply it to the blind man's eyes in healing him?

1. **Because the blind man could not see this was a way Jesus could connect with him.** (common sense suggests this)
2. **Making clay, spitting on the ground, and washing were violations of Sabbath tradition.** (vs.14,16 suggest this)

4

- **Vs. 8-13** The word gets out that the blind man has been healed so he is brought to the Pharisees who question him.

¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. . . . ¹⁶ Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "this man is not from God, because **he does not keep the Sabbath.**" But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And there was a division among them."


- **Vs. 17-28** The two groups debate the nature of Jesus - is he a sinner or is he of God?

5

"²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses; but as for this man, we do not know where He is from." ³⁰ The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes. . . ³³ If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered and said to him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?" **And they put him out."**

- The important thing to note here is the deflection of who was the sinner. **This is a sign of spiritual blindness.**
- Religious people still find it too easy to only confess the sins of others.

6



Steven Weinberg
(theoretical physicist)

"With or without religion, good people can behave well and bad people can do evil; but for good people to do evil—that takes religion."

7

"There are few things worse than bad religion and there are few things better than good religion."

Billy Graham

8

"³⁵ Jesus heard that they had put him out; and finding him, He said, **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"** ³⁶ He answered and said, "And who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." ³⁸ And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him."

- The King James Version has **"Son of God"** but the textual support for this is very weak.
- The "Son of Man" is the most common expression used by Jesus of himself and it refers to a **"Messianic"** person who is a Redeemer King and Lord.

9

³⁹ And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see; and that those who see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things, and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, **"If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."**

- This brings us to the point of this chapter.

**A sign of spiritual blindness -
sensing that mistakes are made
BUT NOT BY ME.**

10

Matthew 23

"²³ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. ²⁴ **You blind guides**, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!"

Matthew 7:3

"Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but **do not notice the log that is in your own eye?**"

11

Three levels of John 9's message

1.

Physical healing of a blind man.

2.

God's work on the Sabbath.

3.

Spiritual blindness

12

Three levels of John 9's message

1.

God's Work is always in season

2.

The Law is not the Messiah

3.

Spiritual blindness is revealed in the way we see ourselves.

13

Those who follow Christ walk in the light.

- They see themselves aright.
- They understand law & grace.
- They confess Christ as Lord.

Those on the outside:

1. *Don't see their own need for Christ.*
2. *Distort law & grace.*
3. *Discard Jesus and his followers.*

14

The "I'm okay - you're not okay." spirit is seen in the brother of the Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

as well as the Pharisees of John 9

- A **score keeping** Spirit.
- A **superficial** Spirit.
- A **separatist** Spirit.

15

What should we learn from this?

- We can't address issues that we don't first acknowledge.
- The worst lies we tell are the ones we tell ourselves about ourselves.
 - Judgmentalism is not the problem but rather how we discern reality. **Note the way Jesus judges.**
 - Jesus came to save sinners not saints. **How we see ourselves is the first step in celebrating Easter.**

16

What is a sign of spiritual blindness?

What is a sign of spiritual sight?

The way we see our own spiritual need!

17