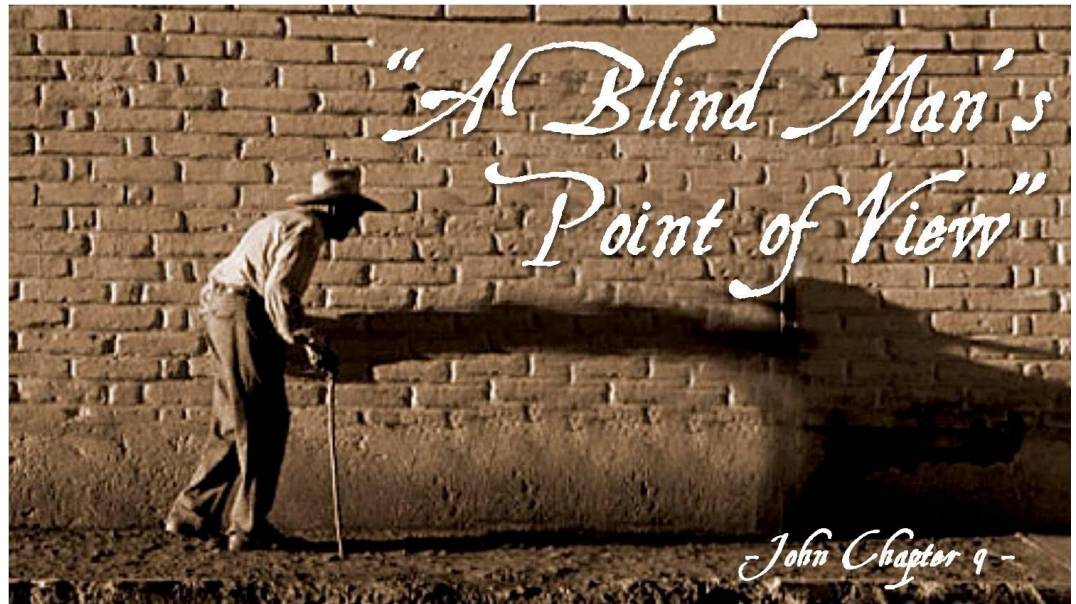


# "A Blind Man's Point of View"

- John Chapter 9

by Pastor Tim Dodson  
at JF Believers Church  
in Menomonie, Wisc  
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1 Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. 4 "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. 5 "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. 7 And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. 8 Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" 9 Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." 10 Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." 12 Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." 13 They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. 14 Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. 15 Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." 16 Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. 17 They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." 18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. 19 And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" 20 His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 21 "but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." 22 His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. 23 Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." 24 So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner." 25 He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see." 26 Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" 27 He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" 28 Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. 29 "We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from." 30 The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! 31 "Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. 32 "Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. 33 "If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." 34 They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out. 35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" 36 He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" 37 And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." 38 Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him. 39 And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." 40 Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?" 41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.

The problem with our modern chapter breaks is that we tend therefore to also see a break in the action...a transition from scene 1 to scene 2 so to speak. But if we take away the chapter break and see what transpired as one seamless event, we garner a very different and somewhat startling picture. The account would therefore play out as follows..."*Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth...*"

Ok, let's see if we grasp the scene at hand: Jesus has been having a discussion with these self-righteous and rather militant religious guys. They have now gotten so hyped up by Jesus' words that they are finally moved to violence. And as the angry mob is trying to get to Him or maybe at this point *find Him to kill Him*, Jesus sees a blind man sitting along the side of his escape route, and instead of getting out of there and to someplace safe, Jesus apparently decides that this is a good time to stop and heal him. Hmmmm...seems like some real bad timing, huh? Maybe Jesus understood something that we just can't seem to get a handle on: And that is that the enemy is *always* chasing us, and there is never, in our flesh, a good time to love and to serve. The reality is that we tend to think that these fires we are passing through in life are just for a time and one day we will enter 'Narnia' and everything will be right in our world, and *then* we will step up for Jesus.

And while certainly there are 'ebbs and flows' in our daily living with Christ...up's and down's in our 'fires of tribulation', we must not fall prey to the idea that if we can just 'balance' everything just right we can achieve a state of spiritual nirvana and a blissful life as a "gentle child of God." We have discussed this previously in great length, but to reiterate...this thing we are doing is a war, and the more dedicated one is, the more fires he or she will certainly endure. Naturally, one would ask "why do it then?" Indeed! Maybe because last time I checked such description also describes life in general...with or without Christ. At least this route provides me with a spiritual attorney, a protector from all of the harm that the world and Satan wishes to leverage, and a Lord who says "*do not fear...for I have overcome...*" And secondly, we do so because we are compelled...driven by our love for Christ and for other believers. Without such, we surely will NOT do it, and will sooner or later 'fold our hand' and will walk away from the table when the stakes get too high.

Having come upon this man, the approach that Jesus took was very different than that of the apostles. The apostles wanted to discuss and question the peripheral and cultural aspects of the man's blindness. Jesus however just wanted to heal Him. We too can gather around in a little 'doctors huddle' and debate a person's history and current life-state...how they got to that point and give diagnosis and treatment recommendations. Or we could bring that person to Jesus so they might be made new. Plenty of these folks still exist in pews across America. They love to come to church and talk about spiritual "diagnosis" and "treatment options" and "potential for recovery." They like to hear about and even talk about what *could* be, they just never actually "go under the knife" and let the great surgeon take care of their lives so they might **actually be** more and **do** more.

That does not mean there will be no residual issues after such rebirth. If I have been unable to walk for 10 years and suddenly I am healed, it's going to take awhile before I can run the New York marathon. But I have 'been made whole' and can move forward in my disciple development if I truly understand the magnitude of what has happened to me and for me.

The text tells us that this man was blind from birth. That means not only has he not seen a sunrise, the beauty of a flower, or the face of a loved one, but he would be unable to grasp even what it would **mean** to do so...to actually 'see' such! How can you describe light and pictures to someone who has never known anything but darkness? How do you explain "seeing" to someone who has never "seen?" Perhaps it would serve us well to apply that same logic to the unredeemed. Certainly Jesus does. Verse 39 Jesus says "*For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.*" Those who are not yet reborn are not only *blind* to what you see Christian, they have no concept of what *seeing* really even means.

The apostles still were learning their theology, as we all are. They thought that bad stuff happened to *bad people*, and *good* stuff happened to *good* people. They did not yet grasp the nature of fallen man and a fallen world and the fact that “it rains on saint and sinner alike.” (Matthew 5:45) Such does not mean that as a believer we are unable to actually *stand* in the rain and get soaked by the fallout of a fallen world. Such is certainly possibly and frankly many have done it. But it means that we will be unable to avoid all rain for a lifetime, no matter our efforts. We’re going to get wet sometimes, because that is just the nature of life on this planet.

Ironically, this man was reduced to ‘begging’ for his survival, just as those of us that are spiritual blind are so relegated. Because we are unable to see or even understand what “seeing” is on the spiritual realm, we are therefore reduced to spiritual begging. We seek guidance from the world around us...the government, our vocations and our money to care for us and make us safe, and we are apt to use others to deflect the pains of bumping into ‘walls’ and we allow the world to lead us around by the arm. Such folks think that they are free...like the Pharisees in the last chapter who thought they were ‘free’ when they were clearly under Roman occupation! Jesus said **HE** was the truth and that truth would set them free. But having never truly experienced real freedom anymore than some of us have ever experienced real sight, they could not comprehend what Jesus was talking about when He spoke of being free.

In this scene, we learn of a truth about our world and about Christ that is likely to make many of us significantly uncomfortable. Jesus says that this man was blind, so that “*the works of God should be revealed in him.*” (Verse 3) Meaning, this guy was going through a bad situation so that God could do this work in him and thus bring glory to Himself and to His kingdom rule at large. The fact is, we don’t generally like that concept at all! It’s funny though that we while we can feel so *used* in this picture (and similar personal ones), we conveniently forget that *man* did this to the world, and that Christ literally was beaten to death so we can escape the clutches of blindness and truly see...truly *be* free, with “eyes wide open.” Such truth seems to get lost in our feeling that we are but a pawn on some great cosmic board game of life! Like the apostles we tend toward the “why”...like little children who are denied a cookie, rather than the “what”...the ‘bottom line’ concerning the state of the situation on the table.

Jesus...seemingly to innately grasp the concept of linear time and the brevity of it much better than mankind, was less inclined to stand around and discuss the finer points of philosophy than He was to simply fix the issue and move on. He knew that “*the night was coming, when no man would be able to work.*” So His strong tendency was to “work while it was day”: to *DO* and *ACT* while He still could. Oh, if only we as believers would grasp this critical aspect! Whatever we need to do, we better do it. For we truly have only today, and tomorrow is far from a guarantee! When we turn to look back when we are standing at judgment...when everything we own is gone and all our stuff...our earthly pursuits and priorities too, are no more, what will matter then? Because that moment is an absolute for each one of us! Will we regret having not fought once the war is over?

The fact is, most of us believe that service unto God and Kingdom should innately be always fun, exciting, and emotionally satisfying. But no such promise exists in scripture. Jesus says He “*must* do the works of God.” He was *compelled* to obey and serve! Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:16 that he was “compelled” to preach, and when we read Acts we can clearly see that such a practice was often painfully hard, dangerous, and many times fruitless, and *yet* he kept on relentlessly. Because he said he *had* to do it. For him there was no choice! To love Jesus meant he would *act upon that love*. Jesus apparently was “compelled” to stop and help this guy even though He stood literally in harm’s way at that moment.

Newer Bible versions more accurately render verse 4 as “**WE MUST** work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day...” instead of “**I** must...” Jesus is clearly including the apostles and all of us who take upon ourselves the mantle of discipleship! All of this would require faith on their part, and on our part, and even on the part of the blind man. For he had to *ACT* upon the words of Christ in order to be healed or he would have still been blind, except now he has mud in his eyes! Everybody in this picture had to act. They all had to *do*. Theory, conjecture, and reason, was saved...*and still is*, for the philosopher and the Pharisee!

While the Pharisee's gathered together to debate the authenticity and the merits of such an event, while the man was factually given his sight. Can you imagine it? Having never been able to see, and then suddenly being able to? The idea of such is to me like a tidal wave: *Real sight for the first time in your life?* I think however that some of us can understand it to a degree! Because we have...in our own way, experienced the same.

One cannot miss herein that it seems the man quickly embraced a rather brave and factual "edge" about him. It's not that he suddenly got rude and flippant, but he certainly learned fast to stand tall and straight! Once he could see, he seemed to have little time for the digging of the Pharisees. The man went from blind beggar to a soldier of Christ in little time! I hold to the position that that is what happens when someone has truly been in the presence of Christ and has been so touched by His power. Such folks are often unrecognizable to those who had been around them their whole life. That was the case with this guy. Everybody was debating and wondering if this even *was* the man they had seen all their lives sitting blind and begging!

Even *having* sight all their lives, they still couldn't see it! Their rejection of the truth... *a truth so obvious even a blind man could see it*, proved that they were in fact the ones that could not see. They wanted to debate, and accuse, and look for loopholes in the clear events that had transpired. But the man that was once blind says "*Why, that's very strange! He healed my eyes, and yet you don't know where he comes from? We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he couldn't have done it.*" It is clear that this man was not only given **physical** sight, but **spiritual** sight and insight too. Isaiah 42:18 says "*Hear, you deaf; And look, you blind, that you may see.*"

That speaks of what is true throughout this event; ***we cannot miss the human responsibility.*** . A 'response' to the work of the cross of Christ. Matthew 11:28-29 reminds us that we are to "***Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.***" This "blind man" made a 'confession of faith' through his obedience to the words of Christ. This is the 'response of action'...in word and deed, of a changed individual. The people around us will ask "*how did this happen?*" And we will answer... "*well, let me tell you...*" The man did have all the answers or know all the theology, but it didn't matter. He knew what Jesus did, and that was all that mattered. We are ***in our living***, the best testimony of Christ and Christianity that can be given! We are the "testimony of life." It is our "testimony of the Light of Life" inside us. No theology degree from Dallas Seminary is required!

This man's life would now affect everyone he comes into contact with. They would *see* the power of God and such would draw people to Christ or push them away. That is the definition of ministry. A blind man knows he is blind and seeks true healing and sight. But for the man who thinks he sees, but does not know Christ, his blindness is like no other. Isaiah 59:10 says "*We grope for the wall like the blind, And we grope as if we had no eyes; We stumble at noonday as at twilight; We are as dead men in desolate places.*" Jesus told the Pharisees that because they believed they could see, their sin remained.

*Jesus said "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind."* The man 'once blind' says "*I believe...*"

**Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see...**