

John Ch 9:1-41

“From Darkness To Light”

As we forge on in the gospel of John, Ch 9 informs us of quite a remarkable miracle, (not that they're not all radically remarkable) but this particular miracle John devotes a considerable portion of his gospel (what would become known as an entire chapter) to it. and It's unique in the sense that it's the only time recorded in the scriptures that a man who was *born* blind, a man with congenital blindness would receive his sight. Now surely other such miracles did in fact take place via the Lord, and there were other blind men that Jesus healed, but this is the only one that the record states who received his sight having been blind from birth. and So this particular miracle isn't so much one of *restoration* as it is in fact of *creation*.

As I see it (no pun intended) this Ch divides up into 3 basic portions, *a work*, *a witness*, and *a worshiper*. So if you want to outline your ch with us in your margin then somewhere relative to the vs you might jot it down, #1 Vs 1-7, “A Work” and it's in these vs that we find Jesus being submissive to the will and the work of the Father in *His* life. Consequently He's busy *about* good works, and of course the work that's in view here is that of opening the eyes of a man who's been blind from birth. #2 Vs 8-34, “A Witness” and this is the result of the work, whenever the Lord does a work in your life it serves as an opportunity for you to bear witness to the reality of it, and who Jesus Christ is, and what He's done in your life and that's exactly what this man does. and Then finally #3 Vs 35-41, “A Worshiper” as he comes to know the Lord in a personal way, and he's brought from darkness to light, and his “eyes are opened” to the reality of who Jesus Christ is, he goes from being more than a simple witness, to a worshiper of the Lord. and So much like the woman at the well, we'll see a progressive revelation in this man as to exactly who Jesus is.

Now we left off last time with Jesus in the midst of a volatile, in fact vicious situation, He'd just revealed the reality of His deity and eternity to the religious leaders once again saying that before Ab *was*, “I AM.” Now this set them off, because as far as they were concerned it was blasphemy that He would make Himself out to be God and so they were prepared to kill Him right there on the spot. and So we read in vs 59 of Ch 8 that they took up stones to stone Him, but Jesus somehow concealed Himself *from* them and passed right through the midst *of* them. and Now this event spills out of the happenings of that event, you might say that this takes place just a “Stones throw” from the temple, and so we read in these 1st 7 vs.

Vs1-7

Look at vs 1(read). Now there are a couple of things I want to address here as we begin this ch that may seem obvious but are worth mentioning and we'll develop them more as we go along. But #1 As we already mentioned, we need to see here that this man was blind from birth. From the time he was brought forth from the womb he was subjected to this condition and there was nothing he or anyone else could do about it in and of themselves in order to bring him from the darkness of his blindness, to the light whereby he could see clearly. His condition was incurable by any standard of works, or the ways of man.

#2 and This may seem more obvious but see it there, Jesus saw him, he didn't see Jesus. The point being that Jesus took an interest in *him* before this man ever knew who Jesus was or what He was about. He wasn't reaching out to Jesus, Jesus was going to reach out to Him, he wasn't choosing Jesus, Jesus was choosing him. But as Jesus moves towards this man, or somehow attention is given to him in a way that directs the disciples to notice him, they ask Jesus a question. and The question there in vs 2 is asked with the presupposition that tragedy in people's lives is the direct result in some form or another of sin. So they're not asking so much "Why" it happened, they think they know why it happened. They want to know whose sin this is the ramification of, is it his own sin, or his parent's sin?

So this is sort of along the lines of the logic of Job's wicked comforters, you remember when all that devastation was taking place in the life of Job, and his buddies came over to encourage him and all they did was depress him even more. They were all, "Man Job, I don't know what you've done, but you must've blown life radically to have this type of repercussion brought upon you, why are you harboring sin in your heart, just confess it, and get right with God." and Job is all, "Miserable comforters are you all!" I haven't done anything to set my heart against the Lord. and The assumption was that when tragedy is brought into your life, it must be because of some sin, or transgression in your life and God is punishing you because of it.

Now this man was *born* blind so in order for him to have sinned and brought this on himself he would've had to sin even before his birth. But the rabbis of that day taught that even in the womb babies could exercise self-will and sin against God. and For their proof text they'd sight Jacob and Esau struggling against one another in the womb of Rebekah, and how even when Esau was born Jacob's hand shot out there and grabbed hold of Esau's heel.

So they taught that an infant could sin against God in the womb, and this is how they would explain birth defects and things of that nature. But if it wasn't him, then their natural conclusion was it must've been something his parents did and God is dealing out retribution upon them by causing their son to be born blind. You know, punishing the child for the sins of the parents, but as you well know that's more the mentality of the godfather than our Father God, "You crossed me so your children are going to pay."

But that's not what God meant when He said that He would visit the iniquity of the Fathers upon the children to the 3rd and 4th generation. But rather He was saying that He wasn't going to justify sin just because it becomes a family tradition, but that He would continue to deal with, chastise, convict and judge generation after generation and that His standard wouldn't bend to meet the sins of a certain family.

It doesn't matter how cultures change, times change, or what talk shows purport, the standard of the Word of God stays the same, and He deals with sin the same way generation after generation. But people slip into this mentality today, and they seek to rationalize or somehow justify sin in their lives due to some event in their parents lives, or what their grandma was into, or how their dad treated them, or whatever? and so the disciples are all, "Is this guy like this because of something he did, or because of his folks?"

Vs3-5

Again a few things we need to address here. 1st of all Jesus just tells them straight up that this man's condition isn't the direct result of his sin or his parents sin. Sure it's true that any infirmity is the direct result of the original sin of Adam, but Jesus is disqualifying the thought that the reason calamity comes into a persons life is always the direct result of God's judgment for some sin in their lives. Because if God did dole out judgment like this, then He'd have to be fair in His judgment, so that everyone who sinned in the same way, would have to receive the same penalty.

But we have to remember that God's not seeking to condemn people, but that through Jesus Christ people might be saved. and He also alleviates the idea of causing our parents to be the scapegoat for our personal position in life. "I'm this way because of my mom" or whatever. "My family has been into witchcraft for generations and so I'm naturally drawn to it or have a bent towards it." Or, "I was doomed to be addicted to pornography because my dad always had it laying around." and Jesus is saying, "No go, negatory on the blaming my parents for my present personal position in life."

As a matter of fact God has a real problem with the idea of blaming our parents or our grandparents for a certain demeanor or personal attitude or whatever that we may have and seeking to justify our position due to some thing that took place in them or by them towards me. In the book of Ezekiel we find that the children of Israel had a proverb of sorts that was common in that day. and They would say, "*The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge?*" Ezek 18:2 Which is to say, "I'm the way I am because my parents did what they did." But the Lord went on to say, "*As I live, 'says the Lord GOD,' you shall no longer use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine.*" Ezek 18:3-4 Or to understand that another way God is saying, "I've created each soul, and no one will justify their position based upon another, each soul is created by Me, and is individually responsible and accountable to Me." So Jesus says here, It's not about the parents, and as far as this genetic disorder or whatever, it's no sin of his either.

The point here is that we live in a sin infested, fallen world and sometimes things just happen, and we don't always know why or have a plausible rationale regarding it. Now obviously God knows, but we don't, and it's not His responsibility to explain the details of life to you or me. There are some things that we *can* glean here, but overall, Jesus doesn't offer an explanation, He just says, it's not a personal issue regarding some retribution over sin in his life or his parents lives. and So as far as the direct answer to the question, "Is this because of his sin or his parents?" Jesus says, "Neither this man, nor his parents sinned." Which is to say, "This isn't because of sin in their lives, God isn't doling out personal vengeance upon this man." and That's that, that's the answer to the question, "Whose sins caused this? No ones."

Now as you may or may not know, there's no punctuation in the Greek, the reason we have commas and periods and things like that in our bibles is because the translators added them for clarification. But I have to agree with Pastor Chuck (Smith that is) on this one in saying that it seems as though they did a poor job here. Because the way they've punctuated this makes it look like the reason this guy was born this way is so that he could be God's personal guinea pig in order to reveal a work of God. As if he's this way that the works of God might be revealed, God caused this so that He might glorify Himself. Now God can glorify Himself through our tragedies, but I don't believe God causes tragedy simply to glorify Himself. I think Jesus answered the question and then went on to make a statement, and if you just punctuate it a little differently it changes the inflection of the passage altogether. I believe it would be more accurate to see it like this, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned. But that the works of God should be revealed in him, I must work the works of Him who sent Me..." and then on from there. In other words, He answered the question and then made a statement, and in essence He's saying, "Boys here's the answer to your question, but it's not time for teaching, it's time for touching." and He's staying focused on touching this mans life, it's not always an appropriate time for philosophy, or theology, there comes a time when we need to reach out personally and compassionately. and This is one of those times. "You guys are looking for an angle by which to teach, when you ought to be taking this opportunity to touch, and bring healing to this man's life."

Now it is true that misery often times opens the door for ministry, but in that misery people don't need to be taught theologically, they need their lives touched compassionately and personally. and So Jesus is saying, "Neither of them sinned in a manner that brought this upon him. But I am going to be sensitive to the Father's will and reveal a work of God in his life." and In vs 4 He says,

Vs4

Underline that 1st 1/2, "I must work the works of Him who sent Me." Now I love this about Jesus, because keeping in mind that just a stones throw away is an angry mob, He's not intimidated by them, He still takes the time to be obedient to the direction of the Father upon His heart.

God's got a purpose for His life, and even in the details He's sensitive to that, He's more concerned about being a God pleaser than a man pleaser and He trusts the Father to take care of His life until that work is fulfilled.

But what about you, what about me, what does this mean for us? To be quite frank it means that when God grabbed hold of your life, He did so for a reason, and as long as you're still breathing, you can be sure that God has a plan and a purpose for your life. You and I weren't saved to simply come to church and be sideline spectators, God wants us in the game, and let me exhort you to that end. It's absolutely critical that you work the works of Him who called you while it is still day. What does that mean, "while it is still day?" It means that life is short, and you've only got a limited opportunity by which God can use your life, and He has a plan for your life. The bible says, "*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*" Eph 2:10

Question, are you walking in them? Are you walking in the works that God has prepared for you? Jesus is saying here, I can't take the time to teach right now, I've got to touch this man's life, God has prepared a work for Me here and I'm going to walk in it while I have the opportunity. Because the time is coming when it'll be too late, you'll miss out, God will call you home and the time for work will be done, then what will the fruit of your labors be? Jesus said that as long as He was in the world He was the light of the world. But He also said, "*You are the light of the world.*" Matt 5:14 Like the moon reflects the sun, so we're to reflect Jesus Christ. Last week we talked about, "Like father, like son." and If we're God's sons (generally speaking) then we're going to act like Jesus Christ (not that you'll be perfect in that sense of the word) but that you'll be busy about His plan, His purpose *for* your life, allowing Him to shine *through* your life that He might be glorified *in* your life. He wasn't worried about what man thought of Him, but what the Father thought of Him, and so He took the time to stop and draw this man out of darkness into light.

Vs6-7

Is it just me or does this seem rather unorthodox? It's just not everyday that you see someone healed by a man who spits on the ground, makes clay, and rubs it in their eyes and sends them to the creek to wash it out. and So often Jesus would touch people in different ways, some people He would lay hands on, others He would simply speak to, some He would do just out of the ordinary type things with. Why? So that we wouldn't get caught up in the method *of* it rather than the message *in* it. If Jesus did the same thing every time He healed someone, we'd all think we had God boxed in and whenever there was going to be a healing you had to do it just like this or it wasn't legitimate or honored of God. and So though it's the same power of the Holy Spirit doing the work, Jesus often did it in different ways.

So I don't really know why Jesus did this like this, but there are some things we can glean here. As I said this miracle is one that's creative as opposed to restorative, and God created the 1st man (Adam) out of what? Clay, (dirt), and so there are nuances of creation here, but more practically in part it no doubt caused further irritation, we don't read where this guy asked Jesus to heal him, or even knew this was coming. All this man knows is suddenly something's going on around him and before he knows it someone is rubbing mud in his eyes, perhaps at 1st he wondered if he was the victim of a cruel joke. Someone making matters worse, not better, but can I tell you that this *irritation* made him all the more willing to be obedient and seek out *irrigation*. To seek that water whereby he could be washed and freed from those irritants. and As well as the Holy Spirit what do we see "water" in the scriptures as a picture of?

The Word of God, Jesus said, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."* John 13:8 and Then later on He said, *"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you."* John 15:3 and So often with you and me the Lord will allow irritation and frustration in our lives in order that we might be eager to seek out the irrigation of His Word. That we might seek to draw near to Him, and desire to be obedient to Him, and there's just something about the Word of God that causes me to come back seeing clearly as to where before it was like there was mud in my eyes. I just couldn't *see* it, didn't *understand* it, was frustrated and irritated *by* it, but when I go to the water of the word of God it flushes my eyes so that I can see, it clears things up. and As to where I was previously blind, now I'm seeing clearly. We also might see this irritant in his eyes as the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, and how the Spirit prompts me and prods me, convicting me and bringing me to that place of willing obedience. and If we wanted to get super spiritual we could even see this pool of Siloam as a picture of the cleansing work of Jesus Christ Himself in our lives, notice how careful John is to tell us that Siloam means "sent." What did Jesus say of Himself in vs 4? That He was "Sent" of the Father, and so we need to go to Jesus Christ with our issues and irritants in life that He clears matters up for us, and brings clarity to us.

Again I would draw your attention to the divine initiative here and human responsibility. That man could've said, "What is this some kind of sick joke! Can't you see I'm blind here, and now you're rubbing mud in my eyes, that's real funny, I'm not going anywhere, just get out of here." and He'd have missed out completely on what God wanted to do in his life, but because he obeyed the Word of God, he was blessed by God. So this is the work, now for the witness.

Vs8-12

2 quick things and then we'll blaze on. 1st of all I want you to see the difference that was made in this man's life by a simple encounter with Jesus. His friends, and neighbors weren't even certain it was the same guy. If you claim to have met Jesus Christ or be a Christian and those nearest to you, have never noticed a difference in you, then you have cause for concern. They were starting to think this guy was a totally different man, I remember when I got saved, my non-Christian friends though I'd lost my mind, my grandparents thought perhaps I was abducted by some cult and brainwashed, because I was so different. But I wasn't brainwashed, I

was heart washed, I'd met Jesus Christ and He changed my life. and This is always the way it is; Jesus just changes your life, noticeably.

2^{ndly} Did you notice the detail he left out in his witness; he didn't say anything about Jesus spitting on the ground and making clay. Why? He couldn't see that part, he simply experienced the effects of the Lords touch, but as for how He did it exactly, he didn't know. and That's like us, we know the Lord has touched our lives, can explain perhaps the effects of it, but as for how exactly it happened we don't know. I wasn't looking for Him, crying out to Him, or asking Him to look upon me, I didn't choose Him, He chose me, I didn't reach out to Him, He reached out to me. I was blind to the reality of who He is until He touched my eyes and caused me to see. You see, this man is a picture of everyone of us, and the way Jesus came into our lives, all I know is that one day a Man named Jesus anointed my eyes, touched my life and now I can see. This is his witness, and it's yours to.

Vs13-17

See how his revelation of Jesus is growing, he went from calling Jesus a man in vs 11, to calling Him a prophet here in vs 17. and Of course a prophet was one who was sent by God, and did the works of God.

Vs18-23

Now to be put out of the synagogue was equivalent to being socially and economically ruined. People would have nothing to do with you, and your business and everything else would be sunk, and so his parents pass the buck, why?

The fear of man, contrast this with what was happening with Jesus in the previous vs, He was being threatened with His life, yet He was careful to honor God. These people are worried about their social and economic status and so they're careful to honor man, more worried about what man thinks than what God thinks, a dangerous position to take.

Vs24-25

Notice the simplicity of his witness, he didn't seek to argue philosophically, or debate theologically, he just shared the reality of what Jesus has done in his life. and That's something we can all do, you may not know the answer to every question someone has, that's ok. If all you can say as they're trying to blow you out of the water is, "Look all I know is once I was blind and now I can see, and the Man who changed my life is called Jesus." Then you have a powerful and irrefutable witness, share it, no one can argue the fact of your encounter with Jesus Christ, it's for real.

Vs26-29

Remember what they said in ch 7 trying to argue that no one would know where the Christ was from? They said, "*We know where this Man is from;*" John 7:27 but now their story is changing to suit their position.

Vs30-33

He's dogging them here. "How many people are running around Jerusalem opening blind eyes fellas?" Ps 146:8 says, "*The LORD opens the eyes of the blind;*" and scattered throughout the book of Isaiah were various prophecies of how the Lord would open the eyes of the blind. So Jesus is fulfilling Messianic prophecy in this, and this man is more or less calling them to the carpet on this, who's truly blind here? In vs 31 we don't know that God doesn't hear sinners, as a matter of fact if He didn't none of us would be here. We do know that if a *believer* harbors regards iniquity in their heart that God won't hear him, and that sin separates us from God. But to say that if you don't know the Lord, God doesn't hear you, what about the man that Jesus said wouldn't so much as raise his eyes to heaven but smote his chest and said God be merciful to me, a sinner? Jesus said he went down the road justified, this is the insight of an unsaved man, so let's be careful to take in the totality of the word of God.

Vs34

Again taking the position that because he was born blind, it was due to sin. But here's the news flash, we were all completely born in sins, there are none that are righteous, no not one, and so once again they resorted to name calling and excommunicated him.

Vs35-38

So cast out by organized religion, taken in by Jesus Christ *Jesus found him* just like He found us and gave him the invitation to salvation. "Do you believe in the Son of God?" That's the bottom line, and we see sort of a parallel here to the woman at the well in that Jesus revealed Himself to the man for the reality of who He is. and This man believed and what? "Worshipped Him" the progressive revelation, "A man" in vs 11, "A prophet" in vs 17, and "Lord" here in vs 38, the Son of God, worthy of worship. Now his eyes are truly open, he's a worshiper. and By Jesus receiving this worship He once again assumes equality with God, making Himself to be God. Because who but to God does the bible commend and condone worship? No man, or even angel in the scriptures will receive worship, here Jesus does, why? Because He's God.

Vs 39-41

So though his eyes were opened, they willfully closed theirs, what's the result? Judgment; it's not the *reason* Jesus came, it's the *result* of His coming. To choose blindness is to incur judgment, do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Jesus wants to open your eyes to the reality of who He is, take you deeper in your love relationship with Him. If there's irritation and frustration in your life, seek the irrigation of the Word of God to cleanse you, and minister healing to your life.

Maybe you're here and you don't know Jesus Christ but the circumstances in your life have brought you to this point and now here you are confronted by Jesus, hearing His Word and the question comes to you, do you believe in the Son of God? Let me encourage you, give your heart to Jesus, say, "Lord, I believe" and just worship Him. Just surrender, and as far as the east is from the west, He'll cast your sin from you, forgiveness can be yours today if you'll but repent and give your life to Jesus Christ and Just like this man you'll be brought from darkness to light, and though your sins be as scarlet, you'll be washed white as snow.