

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

Brian Frost

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Fully Alive

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26

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Lord I Believe

SCRIPTURE

John 9:1-41



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It is great to see you here this morning. I want to ask you to turn with me to John Chapter 9. We're going to be actually reading all 41 verses this morning. I see lots of smiles right now, you're looking at me, you're thinking, "You're not going to finish this sermon, are you?" The 41 verses this morning. If you're new at this, we're really glad you're here. If you're in this room or in the amphitheater. If you're at home, welcome, we're really glad that you're with us, and it is really good to see you this morning. We're in the 10th month, in October. In each month there's a verse or two for us to memorize. This month is John, Chapter 10, verses 9 and 10. It's going to be on the screen for you right now.

I think it's really good for us this month just to practice this as a family of faith. If you would join me, "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." Next week we'll actually look at that and you'll see the whole context there. But what is so important that you understand about what John is doing, again and again, is that he is choosing stories and teachings and things that he remembers 50 years after they took place. He's writing them down, and he's choosing the things that he knows that if his readers would believe these things, that they would conclude that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God. In believing that, that they would have life in His name, abundant life.

Why I think that is such an important verse to memorize is this week, and every week after it, you're going to be tempted in wondering if God's plan is really the best in the end. That if his path is ultimately in your best interest. When you have those passages memorized, where Jesus himself, the son of God, is standing on the Earth and he's telling us that, "Listen, there's two different paths. One leads to peril and destruction, and death. Mine leads to abundant life." We need some kind of an anchor that we can feel and we can see and we can hold onto when we're tempted to look otherwise. I really want to encourage you.

It's not something that a lot of us do is to memorize scripture, but it really will change the way that you look at life, and respond to what takes place in life. If you would, let's bow and let's pray as we look at John, Chapter 9.

Father, we look to You, Your word tells us that You are a tutor, that You're a teacher. God, we acknowledge that. We pray, God, that You would help us as we read this, and as we seek to really understand what it is that You have for us this morning. God, would you open up our eyes to help us to see. Would You speak through [inaudible 00:03:02]. God, would You put your power on full display in each of our lives this week in some way. God as you work in our life, we thank you, Father, for the complexity of big ideas that are in this chapter. I pray, Father, that by your spirit, that you would minister in ways that we simply cannot at the core of who we are, and that You would speak to us the truth of your word. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Even as we get ready to read John, Chapter 9, I think that's important that you understand just a little bit about some of these big ideas that I just prayed about. That is that where you find in Jesus Christ is that he's the lion and he's the lamb. That he's sovereign over all things, but he's sovereign, it doesn't necessarily that those who walk near him always walk in what we define as safe. Sometimes his powers put on full display, but sometimes it goes through very, very tenuous moments, even moments where we look at it, and we go, "Man, that's suffering. That's hard." So you have these dual pictures in Christ of absolute, tremendous power, that's not necessarily safe, and absolute, tremendous goodness, that always directs that power to good ends in the end.

It makes me think of C.S. Lewis when I think of these dual concepts in Christ. He wrote all these books of Narnia, this amazing storyline to where he's trying to put in, in a story, this great picture of what God has actually done. There's all kinds of interesting characters, of course, you know this. My favorite part of all of the chronicles is one little picture, it talks about God not being safe, but him being absolutely good. What takes place there is they first hear of the lion, the king. The smallest girl, Susan, says, "Who is Aslan?"

Then in the beaver's den, which is where this is taking place, you got all these animals, they can talk. If you've not seen Chronicles of Narnia, read it, you're going to be like, "I have no idea what you're talking about." But this beaver says, "Aslan is the king." Lucy, her sister, says, "Is he a man?" Why this is important? It's because they're talking to a beaver, and there's all kinds of characters. "Is this a human being king or is this something else?" And he says, "Aslan, a man? Certainly not. Aslan is a lion. The lion. The great lion." Then, almost in fear she says, "Oh, I thought he was a man. Is he quite safe?"

To which the beaver replies, "Safe? Who says anything about safe? Of course he isn't safe. But he is good." That's what you see here in John, Chapter 9. We find Jesus, who has all power and authority unsafely creating controversy that's going to end just like Chapter 8 ended, and chapter 10, where people want to pick up stones to throw at him, they want to kill him again. He's going to do this, he's going to create this controversy in order the truth about himself and us can surface, in order that he might be able to pour his goodness and his good plan out upon each one of our lives. Let's read this story. It's long, but it really is good.

Is says, "As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth, and his disciples ask him, 'Rabbi, who sinned? This man or his parents that he was born blind?' And Jesus answered, 'It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day, for night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with mud, and said to him 'Go wash in the pool of Siloam.' Which means Sent. He went and washed and came back seeing."

It says in verse 8 that, “The neighbors of those who had seen him even before as beggar were saying, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ Some said, ‘It is he.’ Other said, ‘No, but he is like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’ So they said to him, ‘How are your eyes open?’ He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and I received my sight. They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I don’t know.’ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.”

“Now, it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. The Pharisees again ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, ‘He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.’ Some of the Pharisees says, ‘This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.’ But other said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?’ There was a big division among them. They said again to the blind man, ‘What do you say about him since he has opened your eyes?’ He said, ‘He’s a prophet.’ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, ‘Is this your son who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?’”

“His parents answered, ‘We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But how he now sees we do not know nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him, for he is of age, he will speak for himself.’ His parents said these things, because they feared the Jews for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, ‘He is of age, ask him.’ For the second time, they called the man who had been born blind and said to him, ‘Give glory to God, we know that this man is a sinner.’ He answered, ‘Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. But one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.’ They said to him, ‘What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?’ He answered them, ‘I have told you already and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?’”

“They reviled him saying, ‘You are his disciple. But we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses. But as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.’ The man answered, ‘Why, this is an amazing thing. You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.’ They answered him, ‘You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?’ And they cast him out.”

“Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, ‘Do you believe in the Son of Man?’ And he answered, ‘Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.’ He said, ‘Lord, I believe.’ And he worshiped him. Jesus said, ‘For judgment I came into this world, that does who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.’ Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, ‘Are we also blind?’ Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would have no guilt. But now that you say we see your guilt remains.’”

What I want to show you here, as we do each week through John, is just three really important truths about who Jesus is and what Jesus does. In the hopes that if you apply these to your life, it will literally transform your very life. The first is that Jesus is attentive to the hurting. He's attentive to the hurting. When you think about life, and all the tragedies that we face, and all the tragedies that we see in this broken world, perhaps one of the greatest and most tragic things that we see is the suffering of children as well as its corresponding trickle-down effect, the sorrow upon parents, who observe the suffering of their children, and who observe it in the context of needing to even alter their own life dreams, what life was going to be like.

It's really interesting, as a pastor, every now and then there's times to where your pastors are called to go to a place, go to a home, or to a hospital, where there's a sick child, where there's a suffering child. I just want you to know that for me, I am so glad that God is not silent on this. I would have no idea what to say if God had not spoken. One of the things you have to know about the bible, and particularly if you're new to all of this, and you're wondering what this book really says, and what it's really about, is the story of the bible is not a whimsical stroll strove through this lush garden. Okay, the story of the bible is literally a rescue mission in a broken field. It starts in a garden, but then we sinned against God, and so we were sent out of the garden to live in the wilderness, where everything is literally tangled with thorns and thistles. It is a broken field. There's tragedy and there's suffering all around us.

What's interesting though is that Jesus time and again, certainly the most important time is when he literally was born on the Earth, he came. But what's interesting is even while he was on the Earth, is that he would enter into these different fields of brokenness intentionally in order to give perspective and to pour out his goodness. What you see in verse one is one of these times. It seems almost so unassuming that you can miss it, but it says that Jesus saw the man born blind. He saw him. Have you ever noticed, in fact it's very likely in the story here in John, Chapter 9, that those who had seen this baby that was born blind, grew up to be a toddler, and the toddler grew up to be a kid, and the kid grew up to be a young man, eventually became an older man, and now this man is sitting on a step and he's begging day after day, after day, after day, after day. He's begging. He's begging again, he's begging again.

He's blind and he's poor, which is a really, really hard way to live. You see, [inaudible 00:15:10] our nature that that which we see routinely, like this picture, things that once stirred our mercy, stirred our attention, that when you see them again, and again, and again, we begin not to see them anymore. When you see somebody, and they're in need, and you see them today, and then you see him tomorrow, and then you see him every single day for the next 20 years, it's really easy not to see them. But what's amazing is Jesus saw him. The whole story literally takes place because Jesus saw him. He could've not seen him. He could've chosen like everyone else, just to walk by, "Well, there's the guy who's always there." Yet it says that he saw him.

It's really interesting that the story, we think it starts when his disciples ask who sinned. But the story begins when they see Jesus seeing another man. Maybe someone that they had stopped seeing. This is really important, because there's many people in this room that are hurting, and this can give you tremendous comfort. You see, when we go through trial and tragedy, sometimes we fear that nobody sees and no one cares, even if they did see. Sometimes we think, in fact, it's really a lonely place to assume that nobody sees or feels the pain that we're experiencing, and yet one thing you can know, is that God knows. You can know this.

Psalm, Chapter 56, verse 8, God tells us this, He says, "You have kept count of my tossings." This is David talking and praying to God. The tossings that he has in mind here are when his heart is so churned up inside that he gets in bed early thinking, "If I can just go to bed, maybe I can sleep this off." All of a sudden he starts tossing in bed and tossing in bed and tossing in bed. What he's saying is, "You know what, God? You have kept count of the number of times that my pain has caused me to turn over and over and over in bed." Not only that, he says that, "You put my tears in your bottle." In other words, that not a single tear was wasted. Not a single tear literally fell to the ground, that he caught every single one of- ... He knows every one of them.

Then he says that God Almighty is almost like He has a journal, and He's paying attention to the pain and to the crisis that you and I experience. He says, "Are not all these things in your book?" You can know this, this morning friends, is that God sees the crisis in your soul. If you're there right now, you say, I may not be able to look at you right now and see it. The people who are sitting next to you they may look right at you and they go, "You know what? I don't see any problem whatsoever, they look like they're just happy, and everything is going fine." You're sitting here, and literally not only you're lonely in your pain, but you're devastated in your pain, and no one else knows. One thing you can know is that God knows, He sees. He sees.

But for us, as the church family, I think it's really important for us to be able to emulate Jesus in this. What this requires is literally a super natural transformation of the heart, that can only take place by prayer. The application of this first point, that He's attentive, is let's ask Jesus to help us see the hurting. You see, with Jesus help, you and I, we can have eyes to see the people even in this room or in our neighborhood, or at the stores that we frequent. The people who really have needs. Those needs may not look like what we think needs always look like. They may be spiritual needs, where they need to hear the gospel. They may need financial needs, where they literally need a meal. They may have emotional needs, where they just need somebody to listen to them, and to pray for them.

But there's needs, there's crisis all around us. When I talk about asking Jesus to help us see the hurting, I don't mean seeing the hurting like we see it in Luke, Chapter 10. Where Jesus tells a parable of a man who gets beat up on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem, and two religious people, they walk by, they see him, and they avoid him, and they go around him, because of what it would mean in terms of the personal sacrifice. Their mercy meter doesn't rise whatsoever. Then a good Samaritan comes by, and the good Samaritan sees and doesn't avoid, and runs in. He's mercy meter changes.

You see, it's really interesting that seeing and avoiding is our normal natural reflex, but we have the spirit of Jesus in our heart if we've trusted in him. We have been seen by Jesus so we can see others, and we can move in mercy. The whole thing, the whole story hinges on the fact that Jesus was attentive to a hurting man.

That leads us to the second one, which is literally going to bring probably a few frowns. That is that Jesus is sovereign over suffering. He's sovereign over suffering. When Jesus' disciples observed that Jesus was engaged by looking at this man, and seeing him, they engaged with a question. The question almost seems insulting, it's something we don't even really want to read. We don't want to say out loud. It seems so insensitive, so politically incorrect in our day and age. When they say, "Jesus, who sinned that guy or his parents that he was born blind?" What a thing to say. What's interesting is, this was sort of common for the day. In fact, if you look down in verse 34, the text that we read, after the man born blind is healed, and he speaks to them, this is what happen, they say, "Wait a minute, were you not born in utter sin, and would you teach us?"

It was simply a common idea of the day, that literally continues even into our day. I think in order to protect God's justice, I want you to know, God doesn't need you to protect Him, by the way, but sometimes we feel like that we need to. We look at things, and we say, you know, when there's somebody who's hurting, and God is a perfect judge, we would rather attribute to the person's hurting not to God randomness. But to that person's sin. "They must have just sinned, so they're getting what they deserve." This is what we read in the book of Job, isn't it? Where God almighty looks and He says, "Have you guys seen Job? He's upright in all of his actions. He's obedient. He loves me. He fears God. He shuns evil."

All of a sudden he goes through tragedy, and all of his buddies, they come and rally around him, and for a week they sit there in silence with him. But when they finally get enough courage to come out and say anything, what they do is they [inaudible 00:21:59] him for chapter after chapter, after chapter with the question, "What did you do wrong? We know you sinned, so just confess it already. This wouldn't happen to somebody that's not literally loving their sin." You say, "Well, that's old." Actually it's not so old. Several years ago, about 12 years ago, 13 years ago, one of my own sons was going through a period of suffering.

I remember a phone call, when he was in the hospital over at Duke, a phone call, and the question that I received was this, "Is your son suffering because of any sin in your life?" You say, "My gosh, why in the world would somebody say that?" It was because they said it. This is something that has been passed, and why it's passed? It's because it borders truth, meaning, it gets close enough that it sounds true, but it's not. We need to back up just for a second and say, when you say Jesus is sovereign over suffering, let's back up, let's figure out where this suffering really come from.

What we do know from the bible is that there was no suffering, death, or sickness, disease, blindness in the garden. All of it took place after sin entered the world. When you look at that and you think, “Okay, there’s sort of that clue that had none of us sinned, then these things wouldn’t even be realities in the world in which we live.” But we did, and they’re there. What’s interesting is as you keep moving, then you read in the 8th Chapter of Romans, something that’s really, really interesting. What it says is this is, if you can imagine having an orange in your hand, and placing it in a vice, and all of a sudden you tighten that vice, and you tighten that vice a little bit more, and a little bit more, and a little bit more to where that orange is literally just on the verge of breaking, of bursting, what it says is that our collective human [inaudible 00:24:10] is literally placing the Earth and all things on the Earth in a vice that’s getting tighter and tighter, that’s on the verge of bursting.

As a result of that, what it does, is it causes fractures, it causes brokenness on the Earth, in our relationships, in our culture, in our society, even internally. This is what Paul writes to us. He says, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” Now, let me just pause here. What he’s saying is this, is that one day, when we all get to heaven, for those of us who have trusted Christ, and we get to heaven, and we see the magnificent glory of what heaven actually is, that the magnificence of glory is going to be so intense that it’s actually going to look as if that all of the suffering and crisis, and tension on the Earth was compared to very, very little.

By comparison, you look at it, and he says, “One day, we’re going to actually see that that glory is so much bigger, and deeper, and wider than our suffering.” But then he says this, “For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain of the glory of the children of God.” There’s a lot of words there, let me just condense in just a few.

What it says is this, its creation is saying Jesus come now, come soon. All that’s strife and all of the death and war and disease, all of these things are taking place not because one person made one individual sin, and there’s a correlation between you did that, and so now you’re blind. No, what he’s saying is this, is that the collective efforts of human [inaudible 00:26:20] when put together, it creates a society in a world that literally trembles under that weight.

But what Jesus says here is this, he says, “But you need to understand that specific sins in the past don’t always correlate with specific suffering in the present.” Because actually this has nothing to do with his sin, or his parents sin. It’s really interesting if you watch what Jesus does, he’s going to turn the whole conversation on its head in one verse. You see, they ask for a cause, they said, “Whose fault is this?” Did you notice that Jesus did not answer whose fault or what’s the cause? Jesus turned the attention to what’s the purpose. Not who did something wrong, but what is God going to do with this.



It's really interesting that he does this. He says, "This has happened so that the works of God might be displayed." In the context of a boy, a little boy that's born blind, what he's saying is this, is that if God permits a conception in the womb to take place that He knows is going to produce physical blindness, then God has purposes for that permission. This is where the sovereignty of God gives comfort, but it's also unsafe. There's literally a man that's suffered in blindness for years until adulthood, and God said, "I'm in that." That just messes me up. It might mess some of you up. Wow, that's a heavy truth to carry.

Yet, isn't it interesting you look through the bible and God just doesn't apologize for a sovereignty over life, or over conception. Psalm 139, verse 13 says, "You formed my inward parts, you knitted me together in my mother's womb." You see, friends, any attempt to protect God's honor, which is what I think that we try to do. There's a child with something, that they're born with this, God didn't. Any attempt that we have to protect God's honor by denying his sovereignty at conception literally collides with his own words at Exodus, Chapter 4, Verse 11, when God says, "The Lord said, who has made men's mouth. Who makes them mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind is it not I, the Lord?"

It's interesting that I find myself more defensive of protecting God's honor in your perception than He does. God says, "You know what? It was me." That's hard, isn't it? That's when I say it's not safe, and yet what He does is so amazingly good. The application that I want to give you for this point is let's trust God's good heart when we cannot see God's good hand. Jesus is saying, "Look, God intends to display some of His glory through this man's blindness." In this case, it's through healing, but isn't it interesting it's not always through healing, is it? Remember even Paul. Paul says that three times he prayed for God, "God, would You take this physical ..." we're not sure exactly if it's physical, or emotional. He says, he called it a thorn in his side, a thorn in his flesh.

There was something that literally was pestering him. It was crisis, it was a tension. It was some kind of suffering that he lived with every single day, and he says he prayed repeatedly, "God, would you take this away from me?" And God responds by saying, "I'm not going to heal this." He says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." In other words, what He says to Paul is this, "I will display my power in your life, not by healing you, but by sustaining you." What you see in these two cases, the blindness of one man, and thorn in the flesh of the other. The healing of one man, and the non-physical healing in the other were all for God's glory.

I just confessed to you, that when I look at the millions of unanswerable tragedies in the world today, without sign of God's good hand, I only hope is to trust God's good heart. That's why we as a people have to constantly rehearse the gospel. Literally everything that we say that we believe hinges on the resurrection from the dead. That Jesus came to this Earth and rose from the dead. Listen, if that didn't happen, even the bible says, we're all fools for being here this morning. All of us.

First Corinthians, 15, he says, “We should be pitied more than all men that we wasted our life on a lie if Jesus didn’t rise from the dead,” because that resurrection is literally the pivot of the entire bible.

It’s how you and I know when we cannot see God’s good hand in the tragedies, that I look, “God, why didn’t you steer that hurricane away from Haiti? 1000 people just died in that.” I can’t answer that. What I have to do is I have to back up, just like this, I can’t answer why God would create a man in order to have a healing, where that man had to endure blindness for decades beforehand. That’s just ... I’m not smart enough for that. What we have to do is we have to look back when we say, “Let’s just look at the heart of God.” What the heart of God says is this, is that after we’ve rebelled against Him, and totally messed up the world that He created to be good, that He promised to rescue, and that He delivered on His rescue by sending His own son to live on this Earth, to walk on this Earth, to do these kinds of miracles on this Earth, and then to die on a cross for our sin when he had none of his own.

He was buried in a grave, and then he rose from the dead in victory and extended to us an invitation that if we would believe in him, that we would be forgiven of all of our sin, and he would give us his righteousness. This is our hope, and our only hope. If this didn’t happen, then we are to be pitied more than all men, but if it did, and we believe that it did, then this is the thing that when we cannot see God’s kind, good, strong hands in the world, we can look back and we can know of God’s kind, good heart. It comes down to the gospel. He’s attentive to the hurting. He’s sovereign over suffering.

And the third and last is Jesus is creating believers who see His glory. He’s creating believers who see His glory. Jesus says, “We must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day for night is coming when no one can work.” In other words what he’s saying there is, “The day is going to come when I’m going to trade in my day ministry of physical healing so that I can do my night ministry of dying to heal. As long as I’m in the world, I am the light of the world.” He talks about all this work, and isn’t that ironic once again? He talks about all this work, and does all this work on a day when you’re not supposed to do any work. It’s the Sabbath day.

He knows it’s a Sabbath day, and he knows that the Pharisees have an actual law that they created that says you cannot make mud, because they made homes with mud, it was their concrete. Jesus made mud on the Sabbath. It says, “He anointed his eyes, he sent him to wash in the pool of Siloam, which means Sent.” John added that in there, “Hey, by the way, this means Sent.” Because after he said Jesus was sent from heaven to Earth, and he’s going to be sending us into the world. He sent a man who’s blind to a pool called Sent. He says, “Go and wash your eyes.” All of a sudden his sight is restored.

Sometimes we just leave things too quickly. I just want you to imagine, you think all the beautiful things in the world today, all the most amazing beautiful things you and I, we see every single day, and because we see them every single day, we don't even see them any day. Imagine if you've never seen anything your entire life, and the very first thing you see is something as beautiful as water. You see, you see water every day, so you don't see water any day. Go home today, turn the water on, and watch the air bubbles when it falls, watch it ripple. This man for the very first time in his entire life, he looks at water, and all of a sudden there's ripples, he can see literally drops from his face, and all of a sudden he sees his reflection. This is the first thing he sees. All of a sudden he looks up and now all the things that he has heard his entire life, he can trace to their source.

That's what makes that noise. That's what makes that noise. He's healed, and what's amazing is in all of John, Chapter 9, nobody celebrates. Nobody is glad. Nobody is happy. Everyone is so uptight in all the rules that they can't even celebrate when God does a miracle on somebody's life. Instead of gladness, the miracle serves literally to cut diverging paths. One that leads to worship and one that leads to blasphemy. It's set up like a play with five different scenes.

The very first scene, all of a sudden, the big curtain it goes up, it says that the neighbors look, and the neighbors, they begin arguing whether the man who actually was the man who was healed, was the same one that they've seen all their life. You see, they have seen him every day, so they've not seen him any day. They've seen this guy his whole life. He's at the curb every single day. Now they're wondering, "Is that the same guy?" He's got the same clothes on. So they ask him a question, "How did this happen?" He goes, "Yes, I am the man. I promise you I'm the man." He said, "The man named Jesus, he told me to go wash after he put mud on my eyes, and all of a sudden I can see."

Curtain drops, curtain raises, scene two. These neighbors drag him to the Pharisees, and the Pharisees ask him the same question, "How did you receive your sight?" He tells them, and all of a sudden they get uptight. But there's a little division, because they start to recognize things, "Wait, two plus two doesn't equal four in this case." This guy, he broke the Sabbath, so he must be a sinner. Other people say, "But how can a sinner do this? There's never been in the history of the world a man that was born blind and someone say, 'hey, go wash,' and it restored his sight. This has never happened before." So they said something, so they don't know what to do.

They look at the guy that was born blind, now he can see, he goes, "What do you say about the man?" All of a sudden he has a little bit more courage. He goes, "I think he's a prophet." But did you notice he started by saying he's a man, and now all of a sudden he's up to a prophet. Well, curtain drops, curtain comes up. It's scene three. They don't believe him. The Pharisees don't. They say, "Let's get his parents." They bring his parents in, and say, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? How does he see?" They say, "He is our son. He definitely was born blind. We have no idea and we don't want to answer this question, because we're afraid of you."

Curtain drops, curtain raises back up, we're over scene four. Scene four it's really, really dark. If there's a big orchestra, this is when all the harsh musics come, and it's this really, really bad ... the Pharisees, they're getting more uptight, and so they come back and they say, "Okay, listen," and they tell the man, they say, "Listen, I want you to give glory to God. We know Jesus is a sinner, confess him to be a sinner." In other words, "Join us in our blasphemy. Call the son of God, evil. Condemn God. Blaspheme with us."

He says, "Look, I don't know about all your little rules and everything, but one thing I know is I was born and I couldn't see, and now I can. Now I can see." I just love how courage just knocks walls down. He says, "I can see." They want to ask again, so he says, "Why do you want to know the story again. You want to be his disciple too?" They begin to revile him, and instead of backing down, he says, "This is amazing. You don't know where he comes from, but never in the history of the world has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If he were not from God, he could do none of this." They can't handle it, so they cast him out.

Curtain drops, curtain rises, scene five. Jesus hears that he's been cast out. The man has never seen Jesus, so Jesus goes and finds the man, just like the good shepherd we're going to look at next week in John, Chapter 10. He comes up to him, he goes, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answers him, "Sir, who is he that I may believe in him?" Jesus said, "You've seen him." He's seen for like 10 minutes in his whole life, he's probably seen ... he goes, "I'm not seen hardly anybody." He goes, "That's true, but you've seen one. You're looking at him right now." All of a sudden, he once said, "He's a man. He was a prophet." Now he says, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped.

I want you to think about this. In all of John, Chapter 9, there's only one person that's recorded as worshiping God, and he's the one that was kicked out of the worship center. He's the only one. Jesus, "For judgment I came into the world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." This is where these diverging paths really become very, very clear. In each one of our lives, and what we're going to with Jesus, are we going to go this way or are we going to go this way?

You see, for the beggar, he moved from Jesus being a man to Jesus being a prophet to Jesus being Lord. But the Pharisees moved in the opposite direction. They moved from saying, "This man is not from God. If anyone confesses this man to be the Christ, he's going to be thrown out the worship center." And the third is, "Give glory to God and confess this man to be a sinner. Blaspheme with us." By way of application is simple this, is let's place our trust in Jesus as Lord. I don't know where you're at today, but I do know this, is that if you're not with Jesus, you're in peril.

If you cannot see spiritual things, ask God to help you see the greatness of Jesus. Ask Him to help you see. Because the bible tells us that if we will believe in Jesus and his accomplishments, that we will be saved, that we will be forgiven of our sin. Then the second application is this, is let's confess Jesus openly with our simple testimony. You see, as God opens up our eyes, because we're asking him to help us see people who are hurting, and then God gives this opportunity to open up our mouth, I would simply encourage you, and us a church family, let's be encouraged in our simple testimony that it really is sufficient. We can go to people, "You know, at one time I couldn't see. But now I can."

All of us have a story if we know Christ, and that story is effectual, it's powerful, so let's speak it this week. Okay? Let's pray together. Father in heaven, thank you for Your kindness to us. It really is amazing that You did this, that this really took place on this Earth. Lord, there's a lot about suffering and evil and tragedy that we do not understand, but what we do understand is that You love us, that You see us, and that You care for us. God, I pray that as we [inaudible 00:43:07] and as we think, as we give, that that all of these things will be done with You in mind would help us to see Your greatness. We love You and we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.



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