

"Eyes To See" | Rev Tim Frickenschmidt | March 22, 2020

Old Testament Reading 1 Sam 16:1-12

16 ¹ The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go. I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for Myself a king among his sons." ² And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'" ³ And invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do. And you shall anoint for Me him whom I declare to you." ⁴ Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. ... And he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him." ⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." ¹⁰ And Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." ¹¹ Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep." ... ¹² And he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him, for this is he."

Epistle Reading Eph 5:8-14

Gospel Reading John 9:1-3, 6-7, 13, 15, 24-27, 34, 35-40

9 ¹ As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him." ... He spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then He anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. ... ¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ... ¹⁵ So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ... ²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He answered, "Whether He is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ They said to him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" ²⁷ 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?" ³⁴ They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out. ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." ³⁸ He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?"

Introduction

Lent is the season for consideration of (1) our human condition, including sin and its deadly consequences and (2) the new possibilities offered to us in Christ Jesus: a new story to live; a new birth to experience; a new well from which to drink; and today, new sight by which to see and understand our lives. So, how does God give new sight?

Background

1. In and through crisis.
 - a. Our OT and Gospel readings are narratives of communities in crisis.
 - b. In the midst of our coronavirus crisis, God may be giving us all new sight. We are seeing that we must begin making sacrifices for the well-being of our community.
 - c. Relenting to the pressures of the Israelites, who wanted Israel to be like other nations and have a king, Samuel anointed Saul as king, even after God warned Samuel that the king will "own" the Israelites (1 Sam 8). Who "owns" us? Our work, wealth, kids, health, social life, envy (as Salieri envied Mozart in Amadeus)?
 - d. Left alone, apart from God, we don't see things as God sees them, we don't see ourselves as God sees us. In our brokenness, in our sin, we are worse off than we ever dared admit. But, in God's grace, we are more loved than we ever dared imagine; because of His grace He gives us new sight, even in the crises of our lives.
2. In and through confrontation
 - a. In a climactic scene of movie [The Shawshank Redemption](#), the main character, Andy, crawled through half-a-mile of feces and came out clean on the other side – likened to the blind man having to endure so much to receive new sight (John 9).
 - b. The blind man receiving physical sight (John 9:7) creates controversy and confrontation by the Pharisees; through the confrontation he becomes persona non grata; but he receives his spiritual sight in John 9:35 ... and worships Him.
 - c. Becoming rejected, cast out, persona non grata, may happen to us by seeking to follow after Christ. But the hope is that Jesus will hear that we have been rejected and come to speak to us, allowing us to reaffirm our faith in Him as our Savior.
 - d. The goal is for us to see Jesus as being more than a prophet but as the incarnate God; and to drive us to John 20 where the spiritually blind Thomas confronts the other disciples saying he will not believe Jesus is Lord until he sees His wounds.
 - e. At what are we looking this morning that's determining how we see everything else? Are we like the Pharisees in John:40 who say "Are we also blind?"
3. In and through complete reversals.
 - a. God's chosen one, David (short) is different from Saul (who is tall, rich).
 - b. The reversal of [primogeniture](#). When God chooses girls that nobody wants, sons whose fathers forget and people who the world rejects, He is reversing the world; and He, also, always gives some people new spiritual sight to specially see Jesus.
 - c. Christ, the highest, most beautiful, all powerful being, became ugly and small and came to earth for us to secure what only belonged to Him (perfect love by God).
 - d. Christ was forgotten and forsaken by His Father on the cross to die in our place, with all of our sins upon Him.
 - e. Seeing Him, with our new sight, will transform every aspect of our lives.

Discuss

1. How do crises (e.g., the coronavirus) allow us to have new sight?
2. Others may confront us because of our faith, leading us to new sight.
3. Christ may confront what is blinding us to Him (maybe covid-19 is placing us closer to our families, giving us "new sight" of them, allowing us to see them as He sees them).
4. The complete reversal of Christ's being, brought us new sight to allow us to see Him.
5. Conclusions/Applications.

Conclusion/Application

- Live like Christ's light has shined upon us; walk as children of light (Eph 5:8-14), especially in the midst of this darkness of the coronavirus we now face.
- Get busy living or get busy dying – Jesus crawled to death with our cross on His back so that we might come out the other side clean. Get busy living as children of light.
- How long will we grieve over what doesn't deserve our tears? Receive what Christ offers. Live as people with new sight, bearing witness to the God who gives new sight.