

Are We Also Blind?

Haddon Robinson once said, "One of the hardest things to get over is the incongruity of how God works. Things are not intuitively the way you think they would be. The way to lead is to serve. The way to live is to die. Want to be first? Be last. Want a crown? Find a cross. Want to be mature? Learn to suffer."

God's ways are not man's ways. The truth feels like a paradox. What is actually true doesn't seem to make sense. And today, we'll find that God tells us if you want to see, you must admit you are blind.

THOSE WHO ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR HELPLESS CONDITION AND PLACE THEIR FAITH IN JESUS WILL GAIN SPIRITUAL SIGHT AND LIGHT, BUT THOSE WHO DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR HELPLESS CONDITION AND PLACE THEIR FAITH IN JESUS WILL REMAIN IN SPIRITUAL DARKNESS AND BE BLIND.

There are 3 discussions that take place in this text.

Discussion #1 - The Pharisees challenge the former blind man to confirm that Jesus is a sinner.
9:24-34

Pharisees: *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." 9:24*

The Pharisees were the legalistic, religious leaders of first century Judaism. The word Pharisee means "separatist." These men pridefully held to the strictest code of Jewish religious practice. That separated them from everyone else, but Jesus would call them hypocrites.

When Jesus healed a man born blind on a Sabbath day, the Pharisees found themselves at a major cross roads between their theological beliefs and what they saw happening around them.

These men did not believe Jesus was the Messiah, and so Jesus said, "watch what I'll do to prove to you I am who I say I am." Jesus went out from the temple and found a man born blind, and He healed that man.

The Pharisees were left frustrated, scratching their heads in unbelief. They approach the man formerly blind, once again trying to discredit anything this man said about Jesus. They say, "give glory to God." They quote Joshua 7:19 to this man. One time, Joshua told a man caught in sin to give glory to God and admit his sin. Give glory to God by telling the truth. The Pharisees essentially say here to this man, "give glory to God by admitting that Jesus is a sinner. Just tell the truth like we tell the truth. Jesus is a sinner."

Man: *He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." 9:25*

This man hardly knows Jesus. He doesn't know everything there is to know about Jesus, and these guys drill him with deep questions. It would be like asking a Christian who's been a believer for one week to tell us his stance on the impeccability of Jesus.

What should you do when someone asks you a question but you don't have an answer? You do what this man did. You say, "I don't know."

So this man says, "I don't know what to say on this sin issue, but let me tell you the one thing I do know. I was blind, but now I see. And I've already told you, Jesus is the reason."

The Pharisees are stuck in their unbelief. They don't like the answer the man gives, so they do what unbelief does to a person. They ask more questions, but not for the goal of finding truth. They ask questions so they can find opportunities to justify their own unbelief.

Pharisees: *They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 9:26*

They say, "this doesn't make any sense." And that's true. To the world, Jesus doesn't make any sense. Some people will ask question after question, but they'll never be satisfied with the answers. This is the fourth time they ask how this happened.

Man: *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" 9:27*

The man is seeing that the Pharisees are standing in sinking sand. They continue with their questions, because they are looking for anything but the truth. So, he says, "you didn't listen the last time I told you, what's going to change this time?" Then, he goes, "oh, maybe you want me to tell you again because this time you want to become Jesus' disciples too?" This response is full of sarcasm.

Pharisees: *And 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." 9:28-29*

Jesus divides people. Parents and children can be divided over Jesus. Friends can be divided over Jesus. The Pharisees drew their line in the sand. They say, "you may belong to Jesus, but we belong to Moses. God used Him to do all those miracles when God brought our nation out of Egypt. God revealed the truth of His Word through him. We know Moses was a man of God. We don't know about Jesus though. We don't even know where He comes from."

The interesting thing is that Moses' ministry was verified by his miraculous signs and wonders, and Jesus' ministry was verified by his miraculous signs and wonders.

Man: *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." 9:30-33*

The man is basically saying, "do the math here. If Jesus is not from God, I don't think he could do this miracle. My conclusion: Jesus is not a sinner. He is from God, and God listens to Him."

Pharisees: *They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out. 9:34*

They blurt out, "You deserved to be born blind you awful sinner!" Remember that was the concern of the disciples in verse 2. They wanted to know who was at fault for this man's blindness. Jesus said it wasn't the man's fault or his parents' fault. The Pharisees, however, had a different take. They said of course that man's sin made him be born blind. They probably would have added, and his parents too. This man was born in utter sin.

They say, we're the teachers here. You're the sinner. You don't have the authority to teach the Word of God, and they cast him out. Coming to faith in Christ can cause you to lose everything this world offers you. For some people it's more severe than others. This man experienced first hand the cost of having his eyes opened to Christ.

Discussion #2 - Jesus finds the former blind man to give spiritual healing. 9:35-38

Jesus: *Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 9:35*

Jesus said in Luke 19:10 "*the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.*" Jesus is in the business of finding people who are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1), opening their eyes to the truth (2 Cor. 4:4-6), and awaking them from death unto eternal life (Eph. 2:5).

The phrase "son of man" is a title that Jesus used often of Himself. Scripturally speaking, it takes us back to Daniel 7:13 where we read a vision of the prophet Daniel seeing one like a son of man be given dominion, glory, and an eternal kingdom that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. This one, like a son of man, is given this by the Ancient of Days - God the Father. Son of man indicates this person has taken on human flesh (John 1:1,14), being made in the likeness of sinful humanity (Phil. 2:7). That is exactly what the son of God has done. Jesus, the second member of the eternal, triune Godhead has taken on human flesh, so that He is fully a man, and yet, He remains to be fully God. And God the Father, the Ancient of Days, has designed a plan in which the Son will rule over everything in His kingdom. And Daniel went on to say that "*saints of The Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever, and ever* (Dan. 7:18)."

How does one become a saint of the Most High so that he or she will have a part in that forever kingdom of the Son of Man? According to Jesus, it is those who believe in the Son of Man. It is sinners who believe in Jesus that become saints and are given eternal life. Faith in Jesus provides everlasting life.

Man: *He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" 9:36*

The man is finally able to lay eyes on Jesus. I'm sure he recognizes Jesus' voice, but now he gets to see Jesus face to face. And Jesus asks him, do you believe in the son of Man, and the man responds saying, who is he, sir? So I can believe in him. At this point, this man believed Jesus to be a prophet, but he didn't know Jesus yet as Savior, so he tells Jesus, "look, you're a man of God who's opened my eyes to see, whatever you say I will trust. You want me to believe on the son of Man? Who is this man? You name him, I'm in. I'm ready to believe."

God has been making this man's heart fertile soil for the gospel. This man has seen the Light. This man's heart and mind have been softened to the words of Christ, and this man is prepared to believe.

Jesus: *Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." 9:37*

Jesus says, "it's ME! I'm Him. You're looking right at Him. I'm the one talking to you. I'm the Son of Man whom the Ancient of Days will give a forever kingdom to and you can have your part in that kingdom, do you believe this? Do you believe in Me?"

Man: *He said, "Lord I believe," 9:38a*

He may have said sir, or Lord, back in verse 36 in the respectful way we say sir today, but now, in verse 38, there is an entirely new attitude toward this word. He says, "Master/Lord. My trust, my allegiance, the one who is the authority over my life is now You. I believe. My trust, my faith, my confidence rests upon you. In order to be made right with the Holy God of the universe, my trust is on you, Jesus."

It doesn't matter what your past is. It doesn't matter what people think of you. It doesn't matter how low you think you've fallen. If you admit that you've been blind, you acknowledge that you are a sinner in need of a Savior and that Savior is Jesus and Him alone, and then you believe in Him, you will be saved. That is the good news.

(Result) *and he worshiped him. 9:38b*

In light of the fact that Jesus opened his eyes, and He told this man that it's not a matter of his works, but rather, it was a matter of his faith, this man said, "I believe." In response to what Jesus had done for him, this man worshiped Jesus. This man had a radical transformation. David Thompson pointed out, "In verse

11, he said Jesus was a man who could heal, in verse 17, he said Jesus was a prophet who could teach, and by 38 verse, he said Jesus is the Lord who is to be worshiped."

Jesus said that God the Father is seeking people who will be true worshipers (John 4:23). Salvation is not a speed bump in life that slows us down for a few moments. Salvation should produce in us a complete 180 degree turn where we stop worshiping our hobbies, our jobs, our money, our sin, our works, and we worship God alone - Father, Son, and Spirit - with all that we are. Has your salvation produced true worship in your life?

And notice, the man worshiped Jesus, but Jesus didn't rebuke him for that. Jesus accepted the worship even though the Bible is clear that only God is to be worshiped (Exodus 20:1-5; 34:14; Isaiah 42:8; Matthew 4:10). Why did Jesus accept worship of Himself if the Bible tells us that only God is to be worshiped? Because Jesus is God.

Discussion #3 - Jesus declares doctrinal truth to confront the Pharisees. 9:39-41

Jesus: *Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." 9:39*

Jesus didn't come to sentence people to judgment. He came to save. He came in order that the world might be saved through him, but the result for so many people of this world won't be salvation, it will be judgment - eternal condemnation under the wrath of God. Warren Weirsbe wrote, "The reason for our Lord's coming was salvation, but the result of His coming was condemnation of those who would not believe." Jesus was saying this to the Pharisees: You Pharisees have become blind because you think you see, but this man now sees because he knew he was blind.

Pharisees: *Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, "Are we also blind?" 9:40*

With so much sarcasm in their attitude they say to Jesus, you're calling us blind?

Jesus: *Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains." 9:41*

Jesus said to these men, "you guys are seeing the truth right in front of you. You see that this man has been changed. You are seeing that I am who I say I am, and yet, you are still rejecting me. You claim to see that I am not worth putting your trust in even though the evidence points otherwise. And because of your rejection of me, you remain in your guilt and your sin. But if you would just admit that you are blind and that now you are seeing the truth, then you would do what this man did. You would believe in me. You would worship me like this man has done."

Jesus may be making the point that because these men had been exposed to the truth and still rejected it, that made them all the more accountable. They couldn't claim blind ignorance. They were accountable because they were seeing what was taking place and still continuing in unbelief. Jesus may be making that argument, but I'd suggest to you that we think about this in light of the Biblical doctrine of salvation.

When you come to faith in Jesus, all of your sins and all of the guilt of your sin is removed from you. God, who is the judge, looks at you because you have placed faith in Jesus. He says you are not guilty of sin, and you are qualified for eternal life. But, if you never place your faith in Jesus, then God says to you, you are guilty.

And for these men, they were guilty on a great level. They refused to believe in Jesus even though the truth was right in front of them. But for the man who was formerly blind, he believed in Jesus. That man, in the mind of God, was no longer guilty of his sin. Those who think they see become blind, but those who know they are blind gain sight.