

Signs
Healing a Blind Man
John 9:1-34

August 13, 2017 pm

HDBC

Four gospel. Four writers. Four perspectives. Four audiences. Three are very similar. Matthew, Mark, Luke are called the ***synoptic gospels***. John took a radically different approach. Began not with the physical birth of Christ, but with the pre-existent deity of Christ. Weaves that truth all through his account.

One of the ways he demonstrates that Jesus is divine is by recording seven of the miracles of Jesus. He calls them **Signs**. A Sign is a pointer. Each miracle is a pointer to the deity, divinity of Christ. He is the son of God. Seen Five already.

Jesus turned **water into wine** during a wedding in Cana.

Jesus **healed a man's son** who was sick with a serious fever.

Jesus **healed a man** who had been an invalid for 38 years.

Jesus **fed 5000 men** with a boy's lunch

Jesus **walked on water**.

Once again we find Jesus doing the supernatural by healing someone.

Because so many of his miracles involved healing the sick, I want to point out **Six characteristics of his healing.**

- 1) He heal with a word of touch.**
- 2) He heal instantly.** There was no question about the healing
- 3) He healed completely.** He healed Peter's mother-in-law and she immediately got up and began to serve them.
- 4) He healed everyone who came to him for healing.** Unlike some fake healers he was never unable to heal a person.
- 5) He healed organic, physical diseases and infirmities,** not invisible ailments.
Back pain, neck problems, etc.
- 6) He healed dead people by raising them back to life.**

Read the Text: John 9:1-7

1. The Question (1-2)

Man born blind. Blindness was all too common during Bible days. Very little could be done for them. Most for left to a life of begging. This man had been born since birth. We are not told how they knew this. Maybe he had been begging in that some spot for years and it was common knowledge. Maybe he told them. This is the only case recorded where Jesus healed a congenital condition.

His condition (being blind from birth) created a theological problem. Why did it happen to him? Why was he blind? **Whose fault was it?** Disciples posed an interesting question. The question was fine until they offered what they thought were the only two options. **His parents or himself?**

How could a pre-born child commit sin that would result in punishment of blindness? There was widespread belief among the Jews that it was possible for **a preborn child to sin while still in the womb**. They may have had this in mind.

They may have been influenced by the Greek culture that was open to the idea that the **soul of a person existed before that person's life**. Maybe it was for some sin created in a previous life or existence.

No scriptural justification for any of those notions.

There was the prevailing belief then and to a great degree even now, that **every bad thing that happens can be traced directly to some cause**. Every bad thing that happened was the result of some sin by some person. Nothing was random or by chance. So, in a need to understand this situation, but almost certainly were assuming the parents were at fault.

They assumed the parents. The bible does speak of the sins of the parents being passed down to the third and fourth generation. We know that many children suffer because of the sins of their parents. Babies born addicted to drugs, birth defects, because of the way mom abused her body, etc.

Great question. Human nature to want to know why things happen. Somehow feel that if we can make sense out of the reasons then it will lessen the pain, or help us better cope. Often causes more pain and frustration. **Job.**

2. The Answer (3-5)

A. Rejects Human Reasoning (3a)

Which is it? A or B? Jesus chose C. None of the Above. He rejects their defective reasoning. Not every tragedy can be directly linked to a particular sin or action. There certainly is a connection between all suffering and all sin, but only in the general sense that all suffering is ultimately the result of sin being introduced to God's creation.

On another occasion Jesus taught that neither the Galileans who were slaughtered in the temple by Pilate nor those killed with the tower of Siloam fell on them suffered because they were particularly vile sinners, as his audience had smugly decided. *Like some foolish believers declared that Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans because it was a particularly sinful city.*

B. Points to a Divine Purpose (3b-5)

On the surface this sounds troubling. *FF Bruce offers what I think is a great explanation of the meaning of Jesus' words.*

This does not mean that God deliberately caused the child to be born blind in order that after many years, his glory should be displayed in the removal of the blindness; to think so would again be an aspersion on the character of God. It does mean that God overruled the disaster of the child's blindness to that, when the child grew to manhood, he might, by recovering his sight, see the glory of God in the face of Christ, and others, seeing this work of God, might turn to the true Light of the world.

God sovereignly chose to use this man's affliction for His own glory. Interesting difference in perspective between Jesus and the disciples. They were focused on **looking back**. What caused this problem? Jesus was interested in **looking forward**. What do we need to do now?

Originals had no punctuation. Up to translators to try to decide where to create new sentences. Re-read this text in another way.

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. Night is coming when no man can work.

Instead of focusing all the attention on the cause, Jesus points them to the **potential results**. No one sinned to cause this blindness. **Period.**

Now that this is a reality, God will use this man's affliction as a platform from which to do his great work. The backward look is not nearly as important as the forward look. God is about to do a great work here.

As long as it is day points to an urgency. The day will not last forever. When night comes there are things we can no longer continue to do.

Not coincidental that Jesus here declares himself to be the **light of the world**. He is standing before a man who has never seen the physical light. Literal darkness. About to have that darkness removed.

3. The Miracle (6-7)

The light of the world would now bring physical light to this man who had spent his entire life in darkness. This, then, becomes a living illustration of what the gospel does. It brings spiritual light to those who have lived their entire lives in spiritual darkness.

Jesus did not follow a prescribed pattern when healing the sick. Sometimes he touched them and at other times he did not. Sometimes required action on their part and at other times he did not.

Jesus now turns his attention to the blind man. Why Jesus used the particular method in this case is not stated. He had done similar things before. John makes note of the name of the pool, Siloam, which means **sent**. Symbolizes God's blessings which were sent to Israel. As Jesus instructed, the man went to the pool and washed his eyes. Suddenly, he could see, for the first time.

Imagine the emotions this man must have felt as he opened his eyes there at the pool of Siloam and saw water for the first time.

His reflection. Rocks. Trees. People. Sky. Colors. Etc. Verse 12 tells us he could not even find his way back to Jesus. He was used to navigating by sound and touch. All the sights probably confused his sense of direction. The point is, the man was blind, but then he could see.

4. A Variety of Responses (8-41)

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Jesus has just done a great work. He has changed a man's life and given him a new beginning. Demonstrated once more his miraculous power.

How would the people respond to Him?

A. The Doubters (8-12)

Some thought it was the same man, but just could not believe it. They were doubters. Saw the facts, but could not believe. Must be mistaken. Something wrong. Natural sceptics. Quite frankly, I identify with them.

They knew what they were seeing, but the **facts were outside the boundaries of their own acceptable truth.**

Many in America did not believe we put men on moon. Could not believe it because it was **outside the boundaries of their own acceptable truth.**

B. The Defenders (13-16)

Defenders of their own religious system. They were determined to defend their heresy no matter what it costs. They had elevated their interpretations to the level of divine inspiration and thus, refused to budge.

They were In darkness and were determined to stay there.

1) Attacked Christ (13-16)

He did not keep their law, therefore He is not of God. Note the key phrase. It was done on the Sabbath. That was their sacred pet.

2) Attacked the Man (17-18a, 24-34)

Because this man testified that Jesus was prophet they discounted him. Claimed that it was all a hoax. Silly assertion. No one would believe this man had faked it all those years, just to fool them.

They continued to harass him and ultimately kicked him out of their fellowship. They excommunicated him. I have a feeling he did not care. I just knew what had happened to him and he liked it.

C. The Dodgers (18-23)

When they could get no satisfactory answers from the man they went to his parents to try to get them to confess to this fraud. They acknowledged that this was their son, he was born blind, and is healed and they did not know how. They sent them back to him. John adds the testimony that they were afraid of the Jews. They were unwilling to take a stand. They were dodging the issue. They were gutless. Afraid of what others would say.

D. The Disciple (35-38)

Praise the Lord there was one who reacted properly. Responded by becoming a disciple of Christ. He lost Christ in all the confusion, but Christ sought him out and led him to salvation. Later Jesus found him, gave him more truth and the man had his spiritual eyes opened also. He became a disciple of Christ. A follower.

What are you? ***Classify yourself!!***

Doubter? Just can't believe. Ask God to give you faith to believe.

Defender? Unwilling to take the risk. Don't want to rock the boat?
Want to maintain you world the way it is. Refusal to think of truth about eternity.

Dodger? Unwilling to confront the issue. Just want to pass the buck.
Worried about what others will say?

Disciple? Chosen to put your faith in Christ.