

## John 8:50-59 to 9:1-11

As the sun rose over the city, Jesus made  
His way to the temple.

He had spent the night in the Mount of  
Olives, but He would be keeping His  
morning appointment with God's Chosen  
People.

No, those faithful few would not be  
disappointed, and would find Him  
waiting for them in the treasury.

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I would like to take a few minutes to talk  
about the temple where Jesus was  
waiting, and the place that He had  
chosen for His lesson.

First of all, this wasn't the original  
temple that Solomon built, nor was it

the one that had been rebuilt by the returning captivity.

No, this was a more recent structure that had been built for the Jews by King Herod.

Although it was a beautiful building, it was much inferior to the original temple that Solomon built.

And there was something else that was lacking, which had nothing to do with architecture.

Please turn with me to 2 Chronicles 5:6-14, where we can take a look at the circumstances surrounding the dedication of Solomon's temple ---

**"Also king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could**

not be told nor numbered for multitude.

7: And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, to the oracle of the house, into the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims:

8: For the cherubims spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

9: And they drew out the staves of the ark, that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this day.

10: There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they

came out of Egypt.

11: And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course:

12: Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:)

13: It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets

and cymbals and instruments of musick,  
and praised the LORD, saying, For he is  
good; for his mercy endureth for ever:  
that then the house was filled with a  
cloud, even the house of the LORD;  
14: So that the priests could not stand  
to minister by reason of the cloud: for  
the glory of the LORD had filled the  
house of God."

So, the real difference between this temple  
that Jesus was teaching in and the one  
that Solomon had built was the complete  
absence of the Shekinah glory.

Yes, it was nothing more than a hollow  
building, housing a hollow religion.  
However, this deficiency was not original  
with Herod's temple.

In actual fact, the glory of the Lord had  
departed long ago.

Yes, the Shekinah glory had exited that first magnificent temple, and had never returned.

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That morning, as Jesus taught the people, He was seated **"in the treasury."**

I am told that the court of the women was right next to this treasury.

And in this court, the Jews had placed a large golden candelabra, the lamps of which were lit on the night of the Feast of Tabernacles, and perhaps at other times.

No doubt it had been placed there to remind the Jews of the Shekinah glory that had once inhabited their temple.

Yes, it was a substitute, but that morning it proved to be a fitting backdrop for Jesus' words --- **"I am the light of the**

**world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."**

Yes, the Shekinah Glory had returned to the temple, but it was about to depart once more.

In fact, at that very moment, the Pharisees were attempting to snuff it out. But their attempts would only manifest His glory.

Yes, Jesus was soon to take His place as **"the light of the world"--- "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."**

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As we pick up their conversation, the subject is still the same.

The Pharisees were still opposing the very idea that Jesus was anything more than Joseph's son.

And it is a question we must all settle.

If Jesus is only a man, then He must be a sinful man, **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."**

And if that is true, all hope is lost, for without a spotless Lamb, there is no redemption.

Yes, it is a pivotal question, for **"if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."**

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If you look closely at those words in John 8:24, you will find that the little word **"*he*"** is in italics.



That means it was supplied by the translators, and wasn't in the original text.

So, more correctly, Jesus was saying, *if ye believe not that I Am, ye shall die in your sins.*

Yes, if the Jews refused to believe that Jesus was the Eternal One, the I Am, they would die in their sins.

The message was clear, for they all knew that God had revealed Himself to Moses as the I Am.

It is the name of God that speaks of His eternal presence.

Their only response was to say **"Who art thou?"**

And Jesus' only response was to say, **"Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning."**

Yes, it was a deadlock, and no one was budging.

They refused to believe that He had an eternal origin, and He refused to believe that they were Abraham's seed.

And He said so --- **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."**

This revelation was quite startling, and so was His description of Satan's character.

Yes, Jesus knew all about Satan, and on this particular occasion, He spoke very plainly --- **"He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."**

Every graveyard in the world gives testimony to the fact that Satan is a liar and a murderer.

No, the human race was never meant to end up in graveyards.

It all started when Adam was given a commandment --- **"of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it."**

And then God clearly told him what the consequences of disobedience would be --- **"in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."**

Yes, God said **"thou shalt surely die,"** but Satan, who is both a liar and **"a murderer from the beginning"** said, **"Ye shall not surely die."**

Eve believed the lie, and as we sometimes say, the rest was history.

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Yes, Jesus knew the devil very well, and He also knew the Pharisees.

They were just like their father, and He told them that also --- **"the lusts of your father ye will do."**

It was straight talk, but it only solicited a barrage of name calling.

Yes, they called Him a Samaritan, and said He was demon possessed.

And it is in this very hostile environment that we continue our lesson.

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John 8:49-51 **"--- I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.**

**50: And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.  
51: Verily, verily, I say unto you, If**

**a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."**

Obviously, Jesus wasn't talking about physical death, for multitudes of Christians have already experienced that.

In fact, for some, physical death was the direct result of keeping His sayings.

Rom.8:36 **"As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."**

However, for a Christian, death is not the end.

No, as David once said, it is merely a valley that we must pass through ---  
**"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."**

So Jesus said, **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."**

I'm sure His words were an encouragement to His class, and throughout the ages, they have become the hope of every believer.

However, that morning, they simply infuriated His enemies.

Yes, He was doing it again!

V 52-53 **"Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.**

**53: Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?"**

Well, He was making Himself the Son of God,  
and He had witnesses to prove it.

V 54-55 **"Jesus answered, If I honour myself,  
my honour is nothing: it is my Father  
that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that  
he is your God:**

**55: Yet ye have not known him; but I  
know him: and if I should say, I know  
him not, I shall be a liar like unto  
you: but I know him, and keep his  
saying."**

Pretty strong words, weren't they, but they  
were all true.

In spite of the fact that He had healed the  
sick, raised the dead, and fulfilled  
scripture in every detail, they  
continued to lie to themselves and to  
the people.

They had all the evidence, but He just didn't fit their criteria.

Truly, they were **"blind leaders of the blind."**

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But He did fit Abraham's criteria, and He told them so.

V 56-58 **"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.**

**57: Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?**

**58: Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."**

He was doing it again, wasn't He?

He was making Himself equal with God.

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We are creatures of time, so we can only say, *I was, I am, or I will be.*

However, God is the great I AM Who dwells in the eternal present --- **"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."**

And because Jesus, like His Father, is the Eternal One, He didn't say **"Before Abraham was"** I was.

No, He said, **"Before Abraham was, I am."**

For the Jews, that was the last straw.

V 59 **"Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."**

How did He do that?

He had done the very same thing in His own hometown when they tried to throw Him over a cliff.

Luke 4:30 **"But he passing through the midst of them went his way."**

There isn't any normal way of doing that, is there?

You just can't walk through a crowd of people who are trying to kill you and go on your way.

So, how did it happen?

Well, perhaps **"their eyes were holden that they should not know him"** -- as they were on the road to Emmaus -- or perhaps He simply disappeared.

They had picked up their rocks, but there was nothing to aim at.

How could a carpenter's son do something like that?

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As we begin John 9, the scene has changed completely.

Jesus is walking with His disciples.

V 1 **"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth."**

Yes, he had always been blind.

It's bad enough to lose your site and never see the light of day again, but this man had no idea what light was.

In that respect, he was a picture of the unsaved, who likewise have always walked in darkness.

They should awaken our compassion.

And this man awakened Jesus' compassion, but not His disciples'.

No, his pitiful condition only awakened a cold theological discussion on their part.

V 2 "--- **Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?**"

Apparently it was a foregone conclusion that his blindness was the result of sin. The only question was, Who was the guilty party?

And one of their options made no sense at all.

How could the man be guilty of his own misfortune if he had been born blind? And that wasn't the only problem with their theology.

Certainly, God does use physical affliction to chastise sin.

In fact, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:30, concerning unconfessed sin in the church --- **"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."**

Nevertheless, it is a serious mistake to assume that all physical affliction is the result of sin.

Many times the godliest believer in the world is called upon to suffer.

King David had a problem with that.

In Psalm 73:12-14 he wrote, "**Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.**

**13: Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.**

**14: For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning."**

So what about affliction?

Where does it come from?

Well, I don't have all the answers, but here are some of the causes.

Sometimes, as the disciples suggested, people do bring suffering upon

themselves, either in the form of God's direct judgment or due to the natural consequences of sin.

Proverbs 13:15 says **"Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard."**

And sometimes we suffer because of other people's transgressions.

Yes, our actions do affect others, and the Old Testament does speak about the iniquities of the fathers being visited upon the children.

And then, what about the misdeeds of the children?

A lady once asked her friend if she thought high blood pressure was hereditary.

*Certainly,* said her friend, *I got mine from my children.*

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Yes, there are many sources, but what about affliction itself?

Is affliction just a necessary evil that we must put up with?

Let's listen to Jesus' answer to the disciples' question.

John 9:3, **"--- Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."**

That's right. Affliction isn't always the result of sin, and it isn't always a bad thing.

Believe it or not, affliction can be a blessing.

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When Fanny Crosby was a baby, she was blinded for life by a man who wasn't a qualified doctor.

What a recipe for bitterness that could have  
been!

And unlike the man in our lesson, Jesus  
didn't heal this dear lady.

No, He didn't give her sight, but He did  
give her light.

And He gave her so much light that we are  
still basking in the glory of it today.

♪♪ Blessed Assurance Jesus is mine.

♪♪ To God to be the Glory, great things  
He has done.

♪♪ All the Way My Saviour Leads Me.

No, there's no cry of despondency here.

Only the testimony of one who was convinced

**"that the works of God"** were being

**"made manifest in"** her.

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V 4 "I must work the works of him that sent  
me, while it is day: the night cometh,  
when no man can work."

Here we see the timeless God of eternity,  
looking at His watch.

He had 3½ years, a mere capsule of time, in  
which to complete His public ministry.

"I must work" --- do you hear the urgency in  
His voice?

Granted, it was the Sabbath in which only  
essential work could be done; but this  
was essential work.

"I must work the works of him that sent me."

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Do you have essential work to do for the  
Master?

How much time do you have to do it?

Yes, He "must work," and we "must work."

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V 5 **"As long as I am in the world, I am the  
light of the world."**

The glory had departed from the temple many  
years ago, and now it was about to  
depart once more.

No longer would Jesus walk the dusty roads  
of Israel, but in the future, His  
church would walk throughout the earth.

And because He would leave the Holy Spirit  
in their midst, He could say --- **"Ye  
are the light of the world. A city that  
is set on an hill cannot be hid."**

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V 6-7 **"When he had thus spoken, he spat on  
the ground, and made clay of the  
spittle, and he anointed the eyes of  
the blind man with the clay,  
7: And said unto him, Go, wash in the  
pool of Siloam, (which is by**

**interpretation, Sent.) He went his way  
therefore, and washed, and came  
seeing."**

The hands that mixed the clay, were the same  
hands that had "**formed man of the dust  
of the ground.**"

Yes, "**All things were made by him; and  
without him was not any thing made that  
was made?**"

So why didn't He simply speak the word and  
heal the man?

After all, there were no healing properties  
in the clay.

Well, there was a reason, and it was a very  
good one.

Even though this seemed to be a rather  
unusual procedure, it had this  
advantage.

It required a definite response on the part  
of the blind man.

If he was to receive his eyesight, he must  
go to the pool "**of Siloam**," which name  
means Sent.

And Jesus (who is the one sent by His  
Heavenly Father) is the only source of  
spiritual light.

We must go to Him if we want to be saved.

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So the question naturally arises, What if  
the man hadn't gone?

What if he had wiped the mud out of his eyes  
in disgust and simply walked away?

After all, the whole idea of putting mud in  
your eyes to cure blindness is quite  
bizarre.

And, in like manner, the Gospel message is  
quite unbelievable.

As Paul once said, "**But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness.**"

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This brings us to another question.

What if the blind man had changed the washing instructions just a little?

After all, there were other sources of water that would have been much closer, and to a blind man, that would be important.

Wouldn't any water to be quite sufficient to wash away mud?

And aren't there many ways to Heaven, so long as we are sincere?

Well, you know the answer.

If the blind man hadn't obeyed Jesus' instructions, he would have remained blind.

And we must go to the pool, whose name is sent, for Jesus has clearly told us ---  
**"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."**

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Fortunately, the blind man obeyed Jesus' instructions.

**"He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing."**

As far as he was concerned, Jesus' way would be **"his way,"** and he **"came seeing."**

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His first glimpse of the world must have been breathtaking!

However, this miracle, which had given him such a wonderful gift, would radically alter his life.

As a blind beggar, he had dwelt on the fringes of society, but now he had been thrust into the limelight.

V 8-9 **"The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?**

**9: Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he."**

The change had been so great that some folks even thought he was a different person.

And you know what? When Jesus gives us spiritual light, when He opens our eyes, the change should be apparent.

2 Corinthians 5:17 says **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:**

**old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."**

Yes, he was a new man, and he willingly used this change in his life to tell everyone about Jesus.

V 10-11 **"Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?**

**11: He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight."**

No, he hadn't taken *Witnessing 101*. He simply knew what Jesus had done for him.

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In next week's lesson, he will get another opportunity to talk about Jesus, but this time, there will be a cost.