

## John 9:12-41

For Jesus, the morning had started with an attentive class, and ended when the Pharisees tried to stone Him.

One might ask, *Was that long walk back to Jerusalem really worth it?*

I'm sure Jesus' answer would have been, yes. Even though His promise of spiritual freedom had been misunderstood, His lesson continually interrupted and His statements vehemently opposed, He would have said, *Yes, it was worth it.*

He had faithfully proclaimed God's Word, and as John 8:30 tells us, **"many believed on him."**

God's Word had been spoken by God's Son, and it had brought forth new life.

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That's the wonderful thing about God's Word,  
isn't it?

Certainly, our personal testimony is  
important, but it is God's Word that  
brings life.

Isaiah 55:10-11 **"For as the rain cometh  
down, and the snow from heaven, and  
returneth not thither, but watereth the  
earth, and maketh it bring forth and  
bud, that it may give seed to the  
sower, and bread to the eater:  
11: So shall my word be that goeth  
forth out of my mouth: it shall not  
return unto me void, but it shall  
accomplish that which I please, and it  
shall prosper in the thing whereto I  
sent it."**

I would like to conclude this section by  
reading Edwin Hodder's tribute to the  
Word of God.

*"O may I love Thy precious Word, may I  
explore the mine;  
May I its fragrant flowers glean, may light  
upon me shine.  
O may I find my armour there, Thy Word my  
trusty sword,  
I'll learn to fight with every foe the  
battle of the Lord."*

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In last week's lesson, we met a blind man  
who had been marvellously healed.  
He had been given the gift of physical  
eyesight, but, as yet, he was lacking  
in spiritual eyesight.  
He only knew that the man who had healed him  
was a prophet and a man of God.

Unlike the Pharisees, he wasn't resisting the truth. He simply was unaware of the truth.

However, in spite of this deficiency, he was a living testimony to the power of Jesus.

He could see, and he quickly became the talk of the neighbourhood.

John 9:12 **"Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not."**

Everyone wanted to meet Jesus, but he couldn't help them.

No, he had no idea where Jesus could be found, and even if he had, he wouldn't know Him if he saw Him.

You see, he had only met Jesus once, and that was when he was totally blind.

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V 13-14 **"They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.**

**14: And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes."**

I wonder if this desire to know Jesus' whereabouts had been prompted more by fear than by curiosity.

In the very near future, and perhaps already, withholding this kind of information could get you in a lot of trouble.

Yes, John 11:57 says, **"Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him."**

However, even though they might have been acting in fear, they also might have

been looking forward to watching their  
leaders squirm.

Yes, this kind of evidence would be hard to  
explain away.

V 15-16 **"Then again the Pharisees also asked  
him how he had received his sight. He  
said unto them, He put clay upon mine  
eyes, and I washed, and do see.  
16: Therefore said some of the  
Pharisees, This man is not of God,  
because he keepeth not the Sabbath  
day."**

They had found a loophole!

Any man who would mix up a handful of clay  
on the Sabbath certainly couldn't be of  
God!

However, there was a hole in their *loophole*,  
if you know what I mean.

V 16 --- **"Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them."**

I don't know who these **"others"** were, but they certainly had common sense.

No, the Sabbath-breaking loophole just didn't cut it.

So, the hardliners had to find something else.

And there were a lot of possibilities.

Maybe the man had never been blind in the first place.

Maybe he had only pretended to be blind in order to collect alms.

Or, it could simply be a case of mistaken identity.

How did they know *this* man was the blind man?

And if all else failed, they would simply apply enough pressure to squelch the evidence.

After all, they had to do something!

V 17 **"They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet."**

I don't think that was the answer they were looking for.

This beggar was going to be hard to intimidate.

Maybe they had better try somebody else.

V 18-19 **"But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.**

**19: And they asked them, saying, Is**



**this your son, who ye say was born  
blind? how then doth he now see?"**

This statement appeared to be a question,  
but, in reality, it was a challenge.

Yes, those words "**who ye say**" were quite  
intimidating.

If you're going to stick to that story,  
you're going to have some explaining to  
do.

Yes, they better be sure of their facts, and  
they better walk carefully.

Well, they were sure of their facts, as only  
parents could be.

Their hearts had been broken many times as  
they watched their precious baby  
struggle his way into manhood.

V 20-21 **"His parents answered them and said,  
We know that this is our son, and that  
he was born blind:**

**21: But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself."**

They were sticking to the facts.

They hadn't witnessed his healing, and they couldn't be expected to answer that second question.

Yes, they were walking a fine line, and they knew it.

V 22-23 **"These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. 23: Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him."**

Being **"put out of the synagogue"** was more serious than we might imagine.

In that Pharisee dominated society, being  
**"put out of the synagogue"** would  
probably involve being cut off  
spiritually, socially, and  
economically.

In other words, you would be an outcast.  
Believe it or not, it had become a crime to  
acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah.  
The Pharisees hadn't accepted Him, and woe  
betide any one who did!

In Matthew 23:13, Jesus condemned that kind  
of oppression --- **"But woe unto you,  
scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for  
ye shut up the kingdom of heaven  
against men: for ye neither go in  
yourselves, neither suffer ye them that  
are entering to go in."**

Yes, Jesus had hit the nail on the head when  
He said --- **"Ye are of your father the  
devil."**

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V 24-26 **"Then again called they the man that  
was blind, and said unto him, Give God  
the praise: we know that this man is a  
sinner.**

**25: He answered and said, Whether he be  
a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I  
know, that, whereas I was blind, now I  
see.**

**26: Then said they to him again, What  
did he to thee? how opened he thine  
eyes?"**

They needed time to think, so they decided  
to re-examine the evidence.

However, the blind man was unwilling to  
oblige.

V 27 "--- I have told you already, and ye  
did not hear: wherefore would ye hear  
it again? (And then he added) **Will ye  
also be his disciples?"**

He knew they were dancing around the truth,  
and he just couldn't help needling them  
just a little --- **"Will ye also be his  
disciples?"**

Boy, did that get a reaction!

V 28-29 **"Then they reviled him, and said,  
Thou art his disciple; but we are  
Moses' disciples.**

**29: We know that God spake unto Moses:  
as for this fellow, we know not from  
whence he is."**

Well, that should put him in his place. But  
it didn't.

And not only was he very brave, but he had a  
head on his shoulders.

V 30-31 "--- **Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. 31: Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.**"

By this time, the neighbours must have been holding their breath.

This blind beggar was actually giving the Pharisees a course on common sense theology.

And he was right on.

Actually, his reasoning made a lot more sense than theirs.

Only the other day the conventional wisdom was --- **"we know this man whence he is."**

Now they were saying --- **"as for this**

**fellow, we know not from whence he is."**

Now you can't have it both ways, can you?

And the man wouldn't shut up!

V 32-33 **"Since the world began was it not**

**heard that any man opened the eyes of  
one that was born blind.**

**33: If this man were not of God, he  
could do nothing."**

His argument was just too compelling, even  
for the Pharisees, so they resorted to  
character assassination.

They didn't call him a Samaritan, or say he  
was demon possessed, as they had with  
Jesus.

No, their retort was much more hurtful.

Applying the same theology that the  
disciples had used, they actually  
condemned him for being born blind.

V 34 "---- **Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.**"

Yes, they pitched him out on his ear.

However, that wasn't the worst part.

As you will remember, **"the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue."**

Now, technically speaking, he hadn't said a word about Jesus being the Christ.

In fact, he didn't know He was the Christ.

He had only called Him a prophet and a man of God, but, apparently, that was close enough.

Yes, he was cast out of the synagogue--with all its spiritual, social, and economic implications.



For the first time in his life, he was physically able to hold a job, but no one would dare hire him.

He was back on the fringes of society once again, and, probably, without the option of begging for alms.

It was a very serious situation.

However, I don't think the spiritual aspect of this rejection would have been too devastating.

Any synagogue that would reject a man of God like Jesus was of little value to him.

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I heard about an elderly gentleman who had landed a job as the custodian of a very wealthy church.

Only the rich and famous went there, and their minister was both eloquent and well educated.

John loved the quiet majesty of this beautiful sanctuary, and he was particularly enamoured by the stained glass windows that depicted his Saviour.

Yes, John was a believer, and the sight of those stained glass windows simply filled his heart with love.

One day when the minister was passing through the sanctuary, he sort of bumped into John by accident.

*"Reverend, I was just wondering if I could join this church?"*

The building had always been empty when John was on duty, so he didn't realize the social gap that existed between himself and the congregation.

However, the pastor certainly did, but he didn't know how to tell him.

Stalling for time, he said, "Maybe you should pray about it, and we'll talk later.

Well, John wasn't rich, but he wasn't stupid.

He immediately realized why the man was stalling, but he didn't say anything.

It was about a week later, when the pastor accidentally encountered John.

Once again, he was taking a shortcut through the sanctuary.

A little startled, he said, "*Well, John, have you prayed about our little conversation?*"

*"Yes sir, I did."*

*"And did you get an answer?"*

*"Yes sir, I did. The Lord said, John this church isn't the right place for you."*

*But don't worry, John. I've been trying to  
get in here for years myself."*

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So, the bad news was --- the blind man had  
been kicked out of the synagogue.

The good news was --- Jesus was looking for  
him.

V 35 **"Jesus heard that they had cast him  
out; and when he had found him, he said  
unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son  
of God?"**

The words **"found him"** certainly indicate  
that Jesus had been looking for him.

Of course, Jesus already knew where he was,  
and God already knew where Adam was  
when He called out --- **"Where art  
thou?"**

And in both cases, the purpose was so much  
the same.

Both men had a spiritual need, and both men needed help.

Certainly the blind beggar had been well aware of his physical need, even though he didn't know help was available.

However, until Jesus looked him up and asked him the question --- **"Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"** he didn't know he had a spiritual need.

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I'm sure Jesus would have been concerned for any Israelite in this situation, but I can't help thinking that this man had a very special place in Jesus' heart.

Even though Jesus hadn't been physically present when the man was on trial, so to speak, He had heard every word.

Yes, this dear man had bravely defended  
Jesus' honour, and now he was suffering  
for it.

And at the time he had stuck up for Him, he  
only knew Him as a prophet and a man of  
God.

That's why Jesus had looked him up, and why  
He had asked the question, ---"**Dost  
thou believe on the Son of God?**"

It was an important question, not only for  
this man, but for every Israelite.

Certainly, the nation was looking for the  
Messiah, but had they understood the  
scriptures correctly, they would have  
been looking for the Son of God also.

Yes, they were one and the same person, and  
Psalm 2 makes this abundantly clear.

Psalm 2:6-7 --- "**Yet have I set my king upon  
my holy hill of Zion.**"

Obviously, God's King would be their  
Messiah.

And then V 7 identifies this same person as  
the Son of God --- **"I will declare the  
decree: the LORD hath said unto me,  
Thou art my Son; this day have I  
begotten thee."**

So Jesus' question, **"Dost thou believe on  
the Son of God?"** was an important one.  
The man answered **"--- Who is he, Lord, that  
I might believe on him?"**

Obviously, he hadn't recognized the fact  
that Jesus was the Messiah.

In fact, had he not heard that familiar  
voice, he wouldn't have recognized Him  
at all.

Yes, his lack of sight had put him at a  
disadvantage, and in more ways than  
one.

For instance, he may have heard about Jesus' mighty works, but he had never seen them.

And as we often say, seeing is believing. No, he hadn't enjoyed the same advantages that his fellow Israelites had.

And they were advantages that they were responsible for.

For instance, when the Pharisees asked "**Who art thou?**" Jesus refused to supply them with any more information.

They and all Israel had been given all the proof they needed, and they would get no more.

However, this man was different.

And by the way, so was one other person, that I know of.

Remember the Samaritan woman that Jesus met by the well?



At one point in their conversation, she said, **"I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things."**

Jesus immediately responded, **"I that speak unto thee am he."**

Normally, Jesus didn't do that, but this time He did.

Because His mighty works had been performed exclusively for Israel's benefit, she had never witnessed a single miracle.

Nor had she been present when John identified Jesus as **"--- the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."**

She had never rejected God's witness. She simply didn't know.

Therefore, Jesus made sure she did know --- **"I that speak unto thee am he."**

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The blind man's situation was much the same. Oh, he was Israelite all right, but he was a blind Israelite.

He hadn't seen any of Jesus' miracles.

So once again, when he asked **"Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?"**

Jesus immediately responded, **"Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee."**

His reaction was instant.

He had already concluded that Jesus was a prophet and a man of God.

So, when Jesus opened his eyes for the second time, he immediately cried out **"--- Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."**

The pieces of the puzzle had finally come together.

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This man, worshipping at Jesus feet,  
contrasted sharply with his fellow  
countrymen.

Why, on that very morning, their religious  
leaders had dogged His every step,  
called Him a Samaritan, and even tried  
to stone Him.

They had seen it all, and they had rejected  
it all.

And so it was, as this humble believer  
worshipped at His feet, that Jesus  
pronounced judgment on the nation of  
Israel.

V 39 **"--- For judgment I am come into this  
world, that they which see not might  
see; and that they which see might be  
made blind."**

Recently, He had told the Pharisees, "**I judge no man.**"

He had been referring to the fact that salvation, not judgment, was to characterize His first coming.

He would further clarify this statement in John 12:47: "**I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.**"

But this was His first coming.

Why would Jesus suddenly say --- "**For judgment I am come into this world?**"

Well, the rest of the verse gives us the answer --- "**that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.**"

No, He wasn't talking about the judgment that would be meted out at the Great White Throne. He was talking about

judicial blindness --- **"that they which see might be made blind."**

It was a turning point.

For the rest of His public ministry, Jesus would speak to Israel in parables.

And it wasn't long before His disciples noticed the change.

Matthew 13:10-15 **"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?**

**11: He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.**

**12: For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.**

13: Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

14: And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

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Let's return to John chapter 9 once again,  
and Jesus' words "--- **and that they  
which see might be made blind.**"

V 40-41 **"And some of the Pharisees which  
were with him heard these words, and  
said unto him, Are we blind also?  
41: Jesus said unto them, If ye were  
blind, ye should have no sin: but now  
ye say, We see; therefore your sin  
remaineth."**

No, they weren't blind as this poor beggar  
had been. They had seen it all.

They had been given all the light that God  
could possibly give them: His  
prophets, His Word, and even His Son.

However, they had built up a religious  
system that had excluded **"The Prince of  
life."**

And in so doing, they had excluded  
themselves --- **"If ye were blind, ye  
should have no sin: but now ye say, We  
see; therefore your sin remaineth."**