

The Gospel of John Pt. 15

John 9:1-41

Big Idea

We don't always understand God's plan or even His methods, but He is always at work sovereignly and providentially to display His mighty hand by working in His creation.



Exposition – John 9:1-41

This chapter transitions almost seamlessly from the narrative in the previous chapter. Jesus has just proclaimed that people can be set free by knowing Him and the Jews attempted to stone Him. As He departs the temple, Jesus wastes no time in moving on to His next subject, a man born blind. In healing the man, Jesus performs the sixth miracle that is recorded in the Book of John. As per usual, the miraculous work of Jesus brings questions. God answers questions when we ask. With His answers come new understanding – “Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

1. Jesus Heals the Man Born Blind (V1-13)

- A. (V1-3) – Maybe the most difficult question to ever be pitched at the Christian faith is the question of suffering, “If God is good, why do bad things happen?”
- In Bible times it was understood that all bad things happen as a result of sin. There is an entire realm of Christian counseling that presupposes that a person's negative circumstances are the result of sin. Jesus puts that notion to rest here (See also Job's story in the OT).
 - Negative circumstances are not necessarily a direct result of sin. Although, blindness and things like it are a result of man's fall.
 - Jesus recognizes the man's condition. The man is seen by the Savior. God specifically designed the man's circumstance so that God's power might be displayed.
- B. (V4-5) – Jesus makes three specific points here
- We should see an urgency to the work God has given us, “While it is day...”
 - When Jesus addresses the work of the Kingdom He uses the term “We” to describe the players. While Jesus was on Earth He was the Light of the World, as His ascension drew near He referred to His followers as the light of the world (Matthew 5:14-16). We are not peers, but we are His workmanship (Eph. 2:10).
 - There is a parallel at work here – Jesus is the light of the world in the spiritual sense, but He plays on the Feast of Tabernacles metaphor of lamp-lighting once more.
- C. (V6-13) – The miracle and its response

Christ's Healing Methods Varied

As is true of God's healings in the OT, Jesus used a variety of healing methods in the NT. The power of God healed; nothing magical or cure-producing is connected to the method itself.

- Christ touched (Matt. 8:15)
- Christ spoke (John 5:8-9)
- The afflicted touched Christ's cloak (Matt. 9:20-22)
- Christ used spittle (Mark 8:22-26)
- Christ plugged a man's ear with His fingers and placed spittle on his tongue (Mark 7:33-35)
- Christ anointed with clay (John 9:6)

- a. Jesus uses the dust of the ground just like He had at the creation. This begs questions about the healing – were the existing eyes repaired or replaced by new eyes?
- b. Predictably, people are confused by the miracle. Some say it is a different man, others realized it was the man but were confused by the process. Miracles are difficult to believe because of their very nature. They are ABOVE the natural order, or at least a suspension of it.
- c. When the man born blind describes the event, he speaks with an amazingly clear acceptance of the facts. His response to Jesus' unconventional work is immediate

2. Belief or Unbelief? (V14-34)

- A. (V14-16) – Again, Jesus does a good deed on the Sabbath. Again, the Pharisees decry that He cannot “be from God because He does not keep the Sabbath.” Reminder = The Law did not prohibit doing good deeds on the Sabbath / the man-made law of the Pharisees did – therefore Jesus rejected it.
- B. (V17-27) – The Pharisees question the man born blind and his parents
 1. At the first questioning, the man said Jesus was a prophet. In their spiritual darkness the Pharisees begin to question that the man was actually ever blind, so they call for his parents.
 2. The Pharisees felt that the man's testimony about himself was worthless and that the neighbors may be mistaken about his real identity. When the parents respond to the questions, they affirm that he is their son, he was blind but now sees, but that they don't know how this happened or who did it. They say the son is of age and his testimony is the one that matters.
 - As V22&23 say, the parents feared the Pharisees because they held sway over a person's religious life and standing in the community (Jn 7; 16:2).
 3. The Pharisees question the man born blind once more. He dodges their trickery by simply saying, “one thing I do know, that thought I was blind, now I see”.
 4. In the man's glee, almost humorously, given all the questions they were asking, he assumed the Pharisees wanted to be Jesus' disciple also!
- C. (V28-41)
 1. The Pharisees attempt to raise Moses higher than Jesus. The man born blind rebuts by saying ‘if you are so spiritual how come you don't know who He is?’
 2. Ultimately, the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees is clear. The OT that they revered so highly told of a coming time when the arrival of the Messiah would be known for the restoring of sight. (Is. 29:18; 35:5; 42:7; Matt. 11:4-5; Luke 4:18-19).
 3. The man's final testimony – The Jew's believed in the rightness of the one praying. The immense nature of the work required total rightness with God. Only one from God could do that!
 4. “You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?” – total spiritual arrogance.

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