

The Word Became Flesh
(Week 27)
John 9:35-41
“Do You Believe in The Son of Man?”

Introduction

But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case, the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

When the Apostle Paul wrote these words to the church at Corinth, I cannot help but wonder if he had the story of Jesus restoring sight to the blind beggar in mind. And yes, before anyone says it, I am aware that the books of **1 and 2 Corinthians** predate the writing of John's Gospel. However, I am also fairly sure the story had been told many times over before The Gospel of John was formally introduced. The disciples of Jesus were speaking of these miraculous events to anyone who would take the time to listen to their preaching. So, I am quite sure that Paul was familiar with the story. But whether he was or no, The Spirit of God, Who inspired the Word of God, was more than familiar with the works of Christ!

The narrative of the blind beggar juxtaposed against the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees is a powerful illustration of the difference between someone whose spiritual eyes have been opened and one who is still wandering in spiritual blindness. And the Apostle Paul reminds us that those who are spiritually blind have been made so by “the god of this age”, namely Satan. How tragic that a person could be such a religious zealot and still not understand the truth about Christ.

Unfortunately, we see it all around us every day. It seems like every time we turn on the news, we hear of some religious fanatic involved in a suicide bombing in order to wipe out those he or she has deemed as “infidels”. They are actually convinced that they are doing God a service by murdering those who disagree with their faith. (As if God would need man's help to carry out His judgment?!) These people are deceived, and yet, they are so devoted to their deception that they are willing to give their lives for it! This is a perfect illustration of what spiritual blindness can do to a person.

The Pharisees in **John Chapter 9** were equally as blind. They could not see Jesus for Who He is, and as a result, they actually wanted to murder Him! They believed that by doing so, they would be performing a service to God! And not only that, they were determined to vent their wrath upon any who would dare to follow after Jesus. When the beggar healed of his blindness appeared before them and gave his testimony as to what The Christ had done for him, rather than be astonished at the wondrous miracle, they warned him that he would be excommunicated from the faith, if he did not change his story. He was to be condemned to live life as an outcast among his very own people. But he already knew what it meant to be an outcast, and therefore, all the accusations and threats hurled at him by the Pharisees were unable to dissuade him from his gratitude to the One Who had restored his sight.

So, the Pharisees, as promised, excommunicated him from the synagogue. Now comes the best part of the story! When Jesus heard that this poor man had been thrown out, He came back to look for him! I LOVE that! Child of God always remember this truth; If you place your trust in Jesus, He will never abandon you. This world may turn its back on you, but He never will. The blind man had never seen Jesus with his eyes. He had only heard His voice, but that was about to change. For The Son of God was about to reveal Himself to the man on a much deeper level. He had been healed of his physical blindness, and now the Son of God would return to him and open his spiritual eyes as well.

This story is a wondrous picture of the salvation experience. And honestly an entire series of sermons could be written from this very short passage that closes out the **Ninth Chapter of John's Gospel**. But today, I want you to pay close attention to three elements in this story that are necessary for anyone to be truly saved by the grace of God. First, Christ **Found** the man. Then the man responded in **Faith**, and as a result he became a **Follower**. Let us look closely at these three words today: **Found, Faith, Follow**.

Found (vs. 35)

Jesus heard that they had thrown the man out, and when he found him, he asked, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" **John 9:35**

This is my favorite verse in the whole passage! After the man had been abandoned by his own family, after he had been thrown out of the synagogue and lost any connection to his Jewish heritage, he might very well have felt abandoned. But he was not. For One far greater had not forgotten him. Jesus will never abandon those who have trusted in His Word. King David said it as well as it can ever be said:

Even if my father and mother abandon me, The LORD cares for me. **Psalms 27:10**

This man had been cast out of his community of faith, simply for obeying what Jesus told him to do, and then giving a completely honest report of what had occurred as a result. This was his "crime". He gave Jesus the credit for what had been done for him. But that was not all that Jesus was going to do for this man. The best was still yet to come!

Jesus came looking for him! Do not miss the significance of this truth. The only way that anyone will ever receive the salvation that God has offered is for God Himself to initiate it. *The Bible* is very clear on this subject. No one has ever found God, but rather, it is God Who seeks out those that He intends to save. This man's life was completely changed when Jesus **found** him.

There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away; all alike have become worthless. There is no one who does what is good, not even one. **Romans 3:11-12**

Now keep in mind that this young man had still never actually **seen** Jesus, he had merely heard Him speak. When the man received his sight, Jesus was not there. But then, Jesus came to him with a very important question.

"Do you believe in The Son of Man?" **John 9:35b**

The man's physical eyes had been opened, and now his spiritual eyes were about to receive their sight as well. The term "Son of Man" comes from the **Seventh Chapter of The Book of Daniel**. And every Jew, who knew anything about the scriptures, knew that it was a reference to The Messiah that God would send into the world. So in essence, The Son of God was asking this man, "*Do you know Who I AM?*" The answer to this simple question is the determining factor to where each of us will spend eternity. There is no more important question than this under all of heaven. And Christ Himself came to ask this of the man in person. He sought him out for this reason. It is the same question that He asks of each of us today.

"Who do you say that I AM?" **Matthew 16:15**

Your very soul depends upon your answer.

Faith (36-38a)

"Who is he, Sir, that I may believe in him?" he asked. Jesus answered, "You have seen Him; in fact, He is the One speaking with you." "I believe, Lord!" he said... **John 9:36-38a**

I absolutely LOVE this man's response! For you see, his spiritual eyes had not been completely enlightened at this point, but he knew one thing for certain: The Man Who had the power to restore his sight could certainly be trusted. He answered the question simply by saying, "If you tell me Who He is, I will most certainly believe You!" I also love what Jesus said back to him.

"You have seen Him; in fact He is the One speaking to you." **John 37:b**

Isn't that awesome! Jesus simply told the man that not only could he hear the Messiah speak, but he could also behold Him with his very own eyes. Now the truth had been fully revealed. The Word of God had completely illuminated this man's heart. He heard the voice of God speaking to him personally, and he believed. So here we see the second element of salvation: **Faith!**

First, God seeks us out and illuminates the way for us with His Word. Remember that old verse from **Psalm 119**:

"Your Word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path."

Psalm 119:105

After God has come to find us, His Spirit takes The Word of God and opens our eyes to see its truth. Then we must respond as this man did; in **faith**. We believe what God has told us in His Word. And we receive the salvation that He offers.

"For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who BELIEVES in Him will not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16 (emphasis added)

So first, God seeks us out. We are "**found**" by Him, just like this one was found by Jesus, and then we must respond in **faith** to Him Who sought us out for salvation. The response that we must give to The Word is exactly as this man said to Jesus. "I believe LORD!"

Follow (vs. 38b-39)

...and he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, in order that those who do not see will see and those who do see will become blind."

John 9:38b-39

Would you like to know how many people deceive themselves into thinking that they are saved when they really are not? True salvation is the result of a three step process. First, God finds us and draws us to Jesus by The Spirit and The Word. Second, we respond to this illuminating truth by faith. *The Bible* tells us that we are "**saved by grace through faith**" (**Ephesians 2:8-9**). And Finally, true **saving faith** is always accompanied by a worshipful response. In short, true faith always follows Jesus.

Look at what happened after Jesus found him and his proclamation of faith. He worshipped! Now I know what some of you may be thinking here. There is a difference between worship and following. And I would beg to differ. For you see, genuine worship is a by-product of sincere faith. The word in the Greek language for "*worship*" is "*proskuneo*". The word literally means to "*fall down and kiss the feet*" of someone. It was a word that was also used to describe a dog loving licking its master's hand. It is a word that means not only submissiveness, but also intense adoration.

Now think about that for a moment. Jesus came to find us personally. His Spirit illuminated our spiritual understanding, so that we could truly see Him for Who He is. And as a result we came to faith in Him. The way that we can tell if someone's faith is genuine is by how they react as a result. In other words, a true believer will live a life of worship! If you truly love Jesus, then you will have no desire other than to follow Jesus. This is why He has said:

"The one who has My commands and keeps them is the one who loves Me. And the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father. I also will love him and will reveal Myself to him."

John 14:21

Serving Christ **IS** true worship. We follow, because we love. We love, because we believe, and we believe, because He came to find us! These are the three components of genuine salvation. Show me a person who claims to believe in Jesus, but still lives in their old sinful ways, and I will show you someone who is spiritually blind and is deceiving themselves. True faith will always culminate with following after Jesus. You cannot stay where you are and go with God.

Conclusion (vs. 40-41)

Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things and asked him, "We aren't blind too, are we?" "If you were blind," Jesus told them, "you wouldn't have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains. John 9:40-41

The Pharisees who watched this entire event were offended by it. They asked Jesus if He thought they were spiritually blind. The original text is worded in such a way that they were assuming He would have to say "no, you are not blind". They had assumed their spiritual sight to be superior to everyone else. His response must have angered them all the more. He told them that it would be better, if they were spiritually blind. At least then, they would know enough to call on Him for the same enlightenment that this poor beggar had received. But because they had convinced themselves that they had no need of The Light of The Word, they would remain in the darkness forever. How very tragic to be so blinded by self-righteousness that one cannot see the need for the Savior.

As we look at this entire story, I want to enlighten you to its spiritual implications. The man whom Jesus healed was a blind beggar, living in darkness. He heard the Word of Jesus and obeyed. When He did this, he received his sight. He stood among the crowd of persecutors and gave his testimony about the Man of God, Who had healed him. For this testimony, He was despised until Jesus returned, and he saw Him for the first time with his very own eyes. In that moment, everything that he had endured was washed away for the joy of knowing Christ and worshipping Him face to face!

This is the story of The Church. We have heard His Word, believed, and have received our healing. And this world may despise us for our testimony, but one day, we will see our Savior face to face when He returns for us. In that moment, all the suffering will be worth it all! Listen to the Apostle Paul's words:

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. Romans 8:18

Do you remember what Jesus told His disciples when they asked why this man had been born blind?

"This came about so that God's works might be displayed in him." John 9:3b

We the church were wretched, blind, and naked. Jesus came and spoke His Word to us, and we believed, and were healed, and clothed in His righteousness. He is coming back for us, and we will see Him face to face, to be with Him and worship Him forever. God has brought us from darkness into light, so that He may display His mighty works **IN US!** And this is the true spiritual meaning of **John Chapter 9**. Christ found us, we responded in faith, and now we live only to follow Him. We serve Him, as we anxiously await His return, as He has promised to come for us soon. Even so. Come LORD Jesus!

So let all the found, and faithful followers say... TRUTH!!!