

**The Man Born Blind**

Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Man, Neighbor, Pharisee 1, Pharisee 2, Parent

**John 9:1-41**

Narrator: As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

Jesus: Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Narrator: When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him,

Jesus: Go, wash in the pool of Siloam

Narrator: (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?"

Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying,

Man: I am the man.

Narrator: But they kept asking him,

Neighbor: "Then how were your eyes opened?"

Narrator: He answered

Man: The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight."

Neighbor: "Where is he?"

Man: "I do not know."

Narrator: They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them,

Man: "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see."

Pharisee 1: "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath."

Narrator: But others said,

Pharisee 2: "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?"

Narrator: And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." '

Man: "He is a prophet."

Narrator: The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

Parent: "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."

Narrator: His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him,

Pharisee 1: "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner."

Man: "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

Narrator: They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

Man: "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?"

Narrator: Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered,

Man: "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

Narrator: They answered him,

Pharisee 2: "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?"

Narrator: And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said,

Jesus: "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

Man: "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him."

Jesus: "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he."

Man: "Lord, I believe."

**Narrator: And he worshiped him.**

Jesus: "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind."

Narrator: Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him,

Pharisee 1 : "Surely we are not blind, are we?"

Jesus: "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

### **Proclamation of the Word**

I just love a Makeover story. In many ads there will be a Before and After Photo. The before shows the man dressed in large, un-tucked shirt at 300 pounds and the after shows a slim, svelte 150 version of the same man. Wow! I am amazed at the change. There is a total Transformation . Makeover shows- they are rampant on TV whether a personal makeover, a home renovation, or a relationship makeover. I love a before/after story.

Today's passage is just that- a makeover story. Actually, a better word for makeover would be transformation. A man born blind is found by Jesus, his sight restored, and he tells his story over and over. He thought he was to live out his days by the gate begging to be able to eat. It seems that his neighbors, his family, and his faith community has failed him. But along comes Jesus talking about sin with his disciples when Jesus sets his sights on the blind man. The man's life is transformed. The man himself does not even understand it at first.

- He didn't seek out the change in his life. Jesus found him.
- He didn't profess faith in Jesus, but Jesus chose to reveal God's work through him.

He doesn't even really understand at first. It is in the telling and retelling of what happened that the man begins to understand what God is doing. It is a slow conversion process even for the man. All he can do is tell what happened. They are asking the how and the why questions. The man says, here is what I know happened. I met a man. He put spit and mud on my eyes. I washed in the pool, walked out seeing and now I sing:

*Amazing Grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found. Was blind but now I see.*

It's a before and after story in itself.

Perhaps you relate to this man. Or perhaps you relate to another character. Notice how those around the man born blind really fail him.

The Family fails as his parents distance themselves out of fear of the opinions of others particularly those in positions of authority. When we met at PSA to discuss this passage, this perspective created the most conversation. The parents afraid to speak deflect the questions of the Pharisees. How often we neglect to speak up and get involved.

The community fails the man. When he became sighted the neighbors who, walked passed him each day, did not recognize him. Perhaps he blended into the woodwork as they tried to avoid seeing him there, his disability and condition made them uncomfortable. How often we don't look or get involved because we are uncomfortable.

The religious community fails the man. The Pharisees are more interested in the sin of the man or of Jesus, so that they miss the grace of God made evident in his transformation. Jesus names their sin. Their sin is that they are not open to the work of God and think they are right.

The one who does not fail the man is Jesus. Jesus shows mercy and is the one who can be trusted. As the man realizes who Jesus is he is moved to worship him, not out of habit or compulsion, but because he cannot help but give praise and thanksgiving.

Today you have heard of two women, Eva Henry and Pansy Duke, who were commended for how they have allowed God to use them to accomplish the works of God. They are open to the movement of the Spirit of God and allow Jesus to minister through them. Later you will hear from Jake Crowther about Walking for Water so neighbors can have clean drinking water and health. And after worship, you will hear from our Students who traveled to serve over their Spring Break. All testify to the work of God moving in and through them. Testify- it simply means telling the story, just as the man did. "I was blind, but now I see."

Sometime we need to see things rather than just hear them. Listen now to the testimony of our recent Medical Mission team to Guatemala where many, many people received the gift of sight through the

grace of God and by folks who simply offered themselves in service and were open to God working through them. But it is usually those of us who are sighted who have the revelations of God's mercy and grace revealed in these mighty works.

Watch and see:

Go to Video at <http://vimeo.com/channels/297009/89161872>

Jesus can be trusted. Indeed his grace is amazing. When Jesus touches our eyes of faith, we are forever changed. All of us who have experienced the muddy mess of faith and conversion, and who have been washed in a pool like Siloam called SENT are sent out into the world to see what God is doing and join in!