

Jesus, the Light of the World (*Part 2*)

John 9:8-23

Thought for the Day. Jesus came into the spiritual darkness and blindness of this world to open our spiritual eyes so that we might see Him for who He is and accept Him as the Savior of our soul and the Lord of our life.

In John 9 the Apostle John recounts the story of Jesus giving sight to a man born blind. This is the sixth of seven signs recorded in his Gospel. In John 20:31, John tells us that he recorded these miracles so that "... [we] may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing [we] may have life in his name." Jesus certainly healed the man because of His love and compassion for him. But even more important, He healed the man because He wanted him, and us, to be saved! He wants us to recognize that, apart from Him, we are lost and spiritually blind. He alone can restore our sight and give us God's gift of eternal life.

8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man."

- When Jesus heals our spiritual blindness, people should notice that something is different. Over time, they should see changes in our attitudes, values, goals, and behavior.

10 So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight."

- "His testimony was simple, yet convincing. He recited the facts of his healing, giving credit to the One who had performed the miracle. At this time, the man did not realize who the Lord Jesus was. He simply referred to Him as "a Man called Jesus." But later on the man's understanding grew and he came to know who Jesus is." (*MacDonald, p. 2142*)

12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

- At first, the man knew very little about Jesus. But, "From this point on, the formerly blind man began to see more clearly who Jesus was, while the Pharisees became more spiritually blind. While sin did not cause the man to be born blind, sin did cause the Pharisees' blindness." (*The Life Application Commentary Series*)
- His spiritual vision steadily improved while that of the Pharisees deteriorated! We should respond to the light when we see the light; otherwise, we will become even more blind to the truth.

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

- As we saw in John chapter 5, when Jesus healed the man who had been lame for thirty-eight years, He deliberately healed this man on the Sabbath. He was challenging the man-made religion that exalted legalism over mercy and compassion.

15 So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

- Like this man, our testimony should glorify the Lord; it should be simple, short, accurate, and to the point.

16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.

- Jesus' teachings and miracles created division among the people. (Cp. Matthew 10:34-39)
- Jesus' challenge to the Pharisees and to us is this: Are we following the traditions of men, or the teachings of God? And now as then, our answers create a division between those who believe and follow Jesus, and those who reject Him. We are either for Him or against Him.

17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

- The Pharisees are moving from the miracle to the Man; from What did the man do to you? to What do you say about him; who is he?
- We see the man's faith in Jesus growing throughout the story.
- He believed that Jesus was a prophet sent by God with a divine message for the people.

18 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 19 and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

- The Pharisees had already made up their minds concerning Jesus. They could not be bothered by inconvenient facts.

20 His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. 21 But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."

22 (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) 23 Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

- The parents feared the rejection of men more than they were willing to give glory to God for the miracle that had been performed on their son.
- Again, the Pharisees had already made up their minds. Like many today, the facts were not going to change their minds concerning what they considered to be "settled science."
- "Verse 22 explains the timidity of the parents. They had heard that any man confessing that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. This excommunication was a very serious matter for any Jew. They were not willing to pay such a price. It would mean the loss of a means of livelihood, as well as a loss of all the privileges of the Jewish religion. It was for fear of the Jewish rulers, therefore, that the parents shifted the testimony back to their son." (*MacDonald, pp. 2143-44*)
- Peer pressure and loss of social status are powerful motivators! Do we desire the approval of people more than the approval of God?
- What price are we willing to pay for our faith in Jesus Christ?