



Jesus, the Light of the World - Part 2

Lesson 15 John 9

REVIEW

1. Jesus claimed to be the light of the world for those in spiritual darkness. He claimed to be God (I Am), He claimed to be the light of the world, and He claimed that those who followed Him would have the light of life. - 8:12
2. His claims led to a discussion about Fathers in which Jesus argued that His Father was God, while they did the works of their Father, Satan.
3. His claim incensed the Jews to the point where they tried to stone him, but Jesus escaped.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. We will discover how Jesus illustrated the second "I Am" saying of John in the sixth sign of John's Gospel, the healing of the blind man.
2. We will study the controversy caused by this healing and how it relates to the growing tension between Jesus and the Pharisees.
3. Through this event we will readily see the similarity between skeptics in Jesus' day and ours.

JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD FOR THOSE IN PHYSICAL DARKNESS (9:1-34)

A. Setting for this miracle

1. Time
 - a. Sabbath Day - 9:14
 - b. After Jesus escaped from the hostile crowd in the temple - 8:59
2. Location
 - a. Near a road, "As Jesus passed by" - 9:1
 - b. In Jerusalem, "Pool of Siloam" - 9:7

B. The Dilemma - 9:1-5

1. A problem recognized - 9:1
 - a. "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth."
 - a. "Jesus passed by"
 - b. He saw this man
 - c. He saw this man's problem. "Something about this poor man's need arrested Jesus. His was a congenital disease, the only one recorded in the gospels. The man was born blind. He had never seen the light of day, the silver gleam of Galilee, or a sunset over Carmel. He had never seen a daisy, a bird or a human face. He had grown up from babyhood through boyhood to manhood in the impenetrable darkness of the totally blind."¹
 - d. "Jesus and the disciples were passing and observed this pitiable man, into whose soul no light of heaven had ever penetrated. Such a case never escaped the sympathetic observation of Jesus. The disciples might have passed the poor man casually but Jesus would not."²

¹ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1989), 183.

² J.W. Shepard, *The Christ of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1946), 359.

2. The problem questioned - 9:2

9:2 “And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?”

- a. “*Master*” is the word translated “Rabbi” elsewhere in John’s Gospel. John uses this word before an inadequate action or question. - 1:38, 49; 3:2, 26; 4:31; 6:25
- b. “Whose sin caused this problem - his or his parents?”
 - i. In Scripture, suffering is sometimes directly related to sin - 5:14; 1 Corinthians 11:30
 - ii. There was “a Jewish concept that physical disability was a divine judgment for sin”³ The Pharisees’ statement in John 9:34 demonstrates this idea.
 - iii. In Scripture, however, there are cases of suffering which are not directly related to sin - Job, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

3. The problem explained - 9:3-5

9:3 “Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. **4** I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. **5** As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

- a. This man’s blindness was not a direct result of his or his parent’s sin - 9:3
- b. He was blind so “*that the works of God should be manifest in him*”
 - i. God’s purpose in the works of Jesus was to prove Jesus was the Son of God
 - ii. This man’s blindness was allowed by God for this moment when Christ’s identity would be further revealed
 - iii. Jesus used the works of God to glorify God, therefore this man’s blindness was to glorify God - 9:3, 11:4
- c. Christ must work the Father’s works while it is day. Jesus is speaking metaphorically. - 9:4
- d. “*The night cometh*” is a reference to the time when Christ is taken from the earth
- e. “Jesus as God’s Son is always the light of the world, but here the reference is limited to his manifestation ‘in the world.’”⁴ - 9:5
- f. In other words, His being “*the light of the world*” (divine) is not contingent upon His being in the world.

C. The Healing - 9:6-7

9:6 “When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, **7** And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”

1. Principle of Division of Labor, “God expects us to do what we can; then God will do what only He can do.”⁵

³ J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 288.

⁴ A.T. Robertson, *Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament*, Vol. 5 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1932), 161.

⁵ Elmer Towns, *The Gospel of John: Believe and Live* (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2002), 20.

2. Jesus
 - a. He made clay - 9:6, Genesis 2:7
 - b. He anointed (rubbed) his eyes with the clay - 9:6
 - c. He gave the command to wash in the water - 9:7
 - d. He restored his sight

3. Blind man
 - a. He went
 - b. He washed

D. The Response of the Neighbors - 9:8-13

9:8 “The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? **9** Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. **10** Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? **11** He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. **12** Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not. **13** They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.”

1. The neighbors witnessed the aftermath of the miracle and were astonished, “*Is not this he that sat and begged?*” - 9:8
2. Some believed - 9:9
3. Some doubted
4. They wanted to know how the miracle took place - 9:10
5. He retold the story - 9:11
 - a. He named Jesus, but it is obvious he doesn't know everything about Him
 - b. We see the Principle of Division of Labor in his recounting of the event
6. They wanted to know Jesus' location - 9:12
7. They brought him to the Pharisees - 9:13
 - a. They were the religious authority of that day
 - b. They knew the tension that existed between Jesus and the Pharisees
 - c. They wanted answers

E. The Response of the Pharisees - 9:14-34

1. The Pharisees questioned how he received his sight - 9:15

9:14 “And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. **15** “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.”

 - a. This shows us that the story had been rehearsed to them by the neighbors who brought him
 - b. He retold the story to the Pharisees - 9:15

2. The division of the Pharisees - 9:16

9:16 “Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.”

- a. He is not of God because He doesn't keep the Sabbath; “*keepeth*” means “to observe”⁶
- b. Some acknowledged the difference in Jesus Christ. They acknowledged
 - i. The miraculous nature of His miracles
 - ii. The implications of His miracles (His miracles argue for His divinity)

3. The Pharisees questioned the blind man's convictions about Christ - 9:17

9:17 “They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.”

- a. “What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?” (NKJV)
- b. His answer, “*He is a prophet*”

4. The desperate Pharisees - 9:18-35

- a. The Pharisees refused to believe - 9:18a

9:18a “But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight,”

- b. They questioned the blind man's parents - 9:18b-19

9:18b “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?”

- i. “Is this your son that was born blind?”
- ii. “How does he now see?”

- c. The parent's answers - 9:20-21

9:20 “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.”

- i. “*We know that this is our son*”
- ii. “*We know...that he was born blind*”
- iii. “We don't know how he now sees”
- iv. “We don't know who opened his eyes”
- v. “*He is of age; ask him.*” “He is of sufficient age to give testimony. Among the Jews this age was fixed at thirteen years.”⁷

- d. The reason for their answers - 9:22-23

9:22 “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.”

- i. “*They feared the Jews*”
- ii. Confessing Jesus as the Christ meant religious and societal isolation, “*He should be put out of the synagogue*” - 9:22

⁶ Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 622, ref. 5083.

⁷ Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament, Luke and John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2005), 281.

e. The demand of the Pharisees - 9:24

9:24 “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.”

- i. “Give God the praise” for the miracle
- ii. They claimed perfect knowledge pertaining to Christ
- iii. If the blind man were to give God the glory and not Christ, this might nullify the position of those who are arguing for the unique nature of Christ.
- iv. Their demand shows a lack of desire to know the truth

F. The blind man’s response - 9:25

9:25 “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.”

1. Honest, “I don’t know if he’s a sinner”
2. Based on truth, “I know I’m healed”

G. The Pharisees repeat the question - 9:26; 9:15

9:26 “Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?”

H. The blind man’s aggravated response - 9:27

9:27 “He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?”

1. “I have told you already”
2. “Why do you want to hear it again?”
3. “Would you like to be His disciples?”

I. Their objection to the last question - 9:28-29

9:28 “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.”

1. “They reviled him” means “to reproach, rail at, revile, heap abuse upon”⁸ - 9:28
2. They accused him, “Thou art his disciple”
3. They identified themselves with Moses, “We are Moses’ disciples” because
 - a. God spoke to Moses - 9:29
 - b. We don’t know where Jesus is from

J. The blind man’s understanding of Christ deepened - 9:30-33

9:30 “The man answered and said unto them, 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. **32** 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.”

1. The miracle demonstrated His origin, “You say you don’t know where He’s from, but He has opened my eyes.” - 9:30
2. God doesn’t hear sinners. “Heareth” means “to attend to, to consider what is or has been said.”⁹ - 9:31

⁸ Thayer, 382, ref. 3058.

3. This miracle was unique - 9:32
4. He's from God because He does these things - 9:33; 3:2

K. The Pharisees' indignation for the blind man - 9:34

9:34 "They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out."

1. You were "*altogether born in sins*"
 - a. "In sins thou wast begotten (or born) all of thee...[which] teaches total depravity in this case beyond controversy, the Pharisees being judges."¹⁰
 - b. His blindness was their "proof" of this stance
2. "Yet you are going to teach us" showed their lack of understanding of their own unrighteousness
3. They cast him out because of his confession related to Jesus - 9:22

JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD FOR THOSE IN SPIRITUAL DARKNESS (9:35-39)

9:35 "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? **36** He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? **37** And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. **38** And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him. **39** And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind."

A. Jesus found him - 9:35

B. Jesus questioned the blind man, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

C. The blind man's answer - 9:36

1. "*Who is he?*" He needed the knowledge.
2. His answer showed a deep desire to believe on the Son of God

D. Jesus identified Himself as the Son of God - 9:37

1. "You have seen Him"
2. "You are talking with Him"

E. The man believed - 9:38

1. He said it, "*I believe*"
2. He worshiped Him (Jews worshipped no one but God)

F. The purpose of Jesus' judgment - 9:39

1. "*That they which see not might see*" means to open the eyes of those who understand their spiritually blind condition
2. "*That they which see might be made blind*" means to expose the spiritual blindness of the self-righteous

⁹ Ibid., 22, ref. 191.

¹⁰ Robertson, 168.

JESUS' TEACHING TO THE PHARISEES (9:40-41)

9:40 “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.”

A. The Pharisees' question, “*Are we blind also?*” - **9:40**

B. “If you would understand your blindness, you would see, but because you think you see, you are blind”

LIFE LESSONS

1. Believe that Jesus is over all diseases, sickness and nature.
2. Do not be afraid to confess Jesus as Lord, even in the face of persecution.
3. Believe in Jesus to be saved from spiritual darkness. In order to believe, a person must see their own spiritual blindness.