

# John 09 - Messianic Miracle #3 (Healing a Man Blind from Birth); Investigation by the Pharisees; Former Blind Man Comes to Faith

## II. Public Ministry (John 1:19—11:57)

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## John 9

- (17) Healing of the Blind Man (9:1-41)
  - (A) The Disciples' Misunderstanding (9:1-5)

### Messianic Miracle #3: Healing a Man Born Blind (9:1-41)

- 1 As Jesus passed by, He saw a man who *had been blind from birth*.
- 1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.
- 1 As he was walking along, he observed a man who had been blind from birth.
- 1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

- This miracle likely took place in Jerusalem, since that was Jesus' location in John 7-8; in addition, Jesus tells the man after being healed to go wash in the pool of Siloam (v6), which is located in Jerusalem
- "...blind from birth" - this man knew nothing about the physical world other than darkness. This was his current state both physically and spiritually.
- This is the only record in the Bible of a healing of a person blind from birth
- In the Gospels, Jesus and the disciples healed more cases of blindness than any other affliction: 1 deaf and dumb; 1 sick of palsy; 1 sick of a fever; 2 cases of lepers; 3 dead raised; 5 blind healed (Matt 9:27-31; 12:22-23; 15:30-31; 21:14; Mark 8:22-26; 10:46-52; Luke 7:21-22)
- In the OT, giving sight to the blind is associated with God Himself (Ex 4:11; Ps 146:8); it is also messianic activity (Is 29:18; 35:5; 42:7)
- This incident occurred on a Sabbath day. Not only was it the time of the Sabbath, it was also the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, which makes this a "high Sabbath."

### **Messianic Miracles**

Prior to the Incarnation, the ancient rabbis separated miracles into two categories: miracles anyone would be able to perform if they were empowered by the Spirit of God, and miracles that only the Messiah would be able to perform ("Messianic Miracles"). Jesus performed miracles in both categories: general miracles and Messianic miracles. Because of the rabbinic teaching that certain miracles would be reserved only for the Messiah to do, whenever He performed a Messianic miracle, it created a different type of reaction than when He performed other types of miracles.

Messianic Miracle #1: Healing a Leper (Matt 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-16)

Messianic Miracle #2: Casting Out a Dumb Demon (Matt 12:22-37; Mark 3:20-30; Luke 11:14-26)

Messianic Miracle #3: Healing a Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)

2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, **this man or his parents**, that he would be born blind?"

2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"

2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that caused him to be born blind?"

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

- The question from the disciples reveals a common error both then and today: that someone who is sick or has some sort of handicap or problem in their life that cannot be

explained, it must be some type of judgment from God for something they (or their parents) have done

- The OT clearly teaches that sin brings personal suffering or divine punishment (Ex 20:5; 34:7; Ezek 18:4). This cause and effect relationship led many of the Jews, as well as people today, to conclude that every bad effect had an identifiable sinful cause.
- Suffering is ultimately part of God's exalted purposes and is always under His perfect, sovereign care (Cf. Job 1-2)
- However, the disciple's conclusion goes further than Scripture (Cf. Job; 2 Cor 12:7; Gal 4:13). While sin does lie behind all the suffering and evil in the world, the connection between sin and suffering is not always immediate or observable.
- This errant thinking goes all the way back to the Book of Job, written around 2000 BC, and is promoted today primarily through the Prosperity Gospel
  - The Prosperity Gospel believes that you are a child of the King (which is true), and because of that you deserve health, wealth and prosperity in your life. And if you're not realizing these things, there must be some sin in your background that you haven't confessed yet.
  - It is true that sometimes sickness is caused by sin (Cf. 5:14), but it is not a hard-and-fast principle in every situation. It wasn't true with Job and all the calamities that he suffered, and it isn't true for this man who was blind from birth.
  - There are many examples in Scripture where God uses suffering in the life of a believer to accomplish His purposes
    1. Joseph (Cf. Gen 50:20)
    2. NT believers (Cf. James 1:2-4)
    3. Paul (2 Cor 12:7-10)
  - We have to always keep in mind that God's ways are not our ways; God does things in a certain way, a way that often doesn't make any sense to us, in order to achieve His perfect purposes (Is 55:8-9)
  - There are goals that God has in mind for our lives that take priority and preference over our immediate comfort. By and large, God is interested in our comfort, but there are times where there is a result that He is seeking to bring forth (as in the case with Joseph and Paul) which supersedes my comfort. This is when God may, in His sovereign will, bring about a sickness, disease or some other circumstance in my life that is not the result of some known sin.
  - Such is the case of this man, who was blind from birth. His blindness was not the result of some sin in his life or his parents life, but because God had a higher purpose in mind.
    - "...this man or his parents" - this is the strange part of the question. The fact that his parents may have sinned is a principle in the Mosaic Law (Ex 34:6-7).

- How could the man have sinned first, then be born blind? This question by the disciples reflected the Pharisaic Judaism in which they had been raised.
- The disciples did not look at the man as an object of mercy, but rather as a subject of theological discussion
- The disciples here are guilty of two fallacies:
  1. Their acceptance of the Pharisaical teaching that a child could have sinned in his mother's womb and therefore be born blind.
  2. Their belief that a birth defect, such as being born blind, must be due to some specific, terrible sin.

### **Why Do Christians Have Trials?**

1. To glorify God (Dan 3:16-18,24-25; John 9:1-3)
2. Discipline for known sin (Heb 12:5-11; James 4:17; Rom 14:23; 1 John 1:9)
3. To prevent us from falling into sin (1 Peter 4:1-2)
4. To keep us from pride—Paul kept from pride by his “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor 12:7-10)
5. To build faith (1 Peter 1:6-7)
6. To cause growth (Rom 5:3-5)
7. To teach obedience and discipline (Acts 9:15-16; Phil 4:11-13)
8. To equip us to comfort others (2 Cor 1:3-4)
9. To prove the reality of Christ in us (2 Cor 4:7-11)
10. For testimony to the angels (Job 1:8; Eph 3:8-11; 1 Peter 1:12)

3 Jesus answered, *“It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.*

3 Jesus answered, *“It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.*

3 Jesus answered, *“Neither this man nor his parents sinned. This happened so that God's work might be revealed in him.*

3 Jesus answered, *Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

- Jesus' dispels the disciples' pharisaical beliefs very quickly. Here is a unique case where sin was not the cause of suffering. Sin can often result in suffering (Gal 6:7-8), but all suffering is not the result of sin.

— It is wrong to conclude that every instance of suffering springs immediately from a particular act of sin. It is also wrong to conclude that God permits every instance of suffering because He intends to miraculously relieve it. Jesus was talking about this particular man's case.

- God chose this man to bring about a result that would ultimately glorify Him, which the man knew nothing about, his parents knew nothing about, and the people around him knew nothing about
- God was seeking to bring about a result that could not have been achieved absent suffering in the eyes of this man born blind
- "...so that the works of God might be displayed in him" - God works in history to glorify Himself; we call this the doxological purpose of God. Everything God does, He does to glorify Himself.
- If this man was not suffering with blindness, this miracle could not have occurred and therefore God would not be glorified
- God's purposes to glorify Himself are so awesome, so overarching, so profound that sometimes they are brought into existence by human suffering that God Himself allows (Cf. Ex 4:11)
- Sometimes, God wants people to have problems, sometimes God wants people sick, sometimes God wants pain to come into people's lives to such an extent that they cry out to the Lord 3x for it to be taken away, and God each time says No, My grace is sufficient.
- And if we think this temporary suffering, sickness, or pain is because of some sin in our life, that is wrong theology (sometimes). Right theology is the doxological purpose of God, which is to glorify Himself in every situation.

4 **We must carry out the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.**

4 We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.

4 I must do the work of the one who sent me while it is day. Night is approaching, when no one can work.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

- "We" - Jesus and His disciples

- "...as long as it is day" - Jesus understood that His time on earth was limited; there was an opportunity here to perform a miracle and heal this blind man to glorify the Father, but this opportunity would not exist forever

— After His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, Jesus would go back to heaven with the Father and His opportunity to glorify the Father in this specific way would no longer be possible

- "...when no one can work" - we often think that the opportunities we have today will always be available...opportunities to share your faith, opportunities with your unsaved neighbor, friend or family member

- And we often put off these opportunities when they arise, thinking we'll do them next week, next month, next year
- We need to be good stewards of the opportunities that God gives us, not fall into the sin of presumption, thinking that tomorrow is going to be just like today (Cf. James 4:13-14). There are opportunities that you have right now that you may not have tomorrow, and you may never get them back.
- Three opportunities to serve God that we have today that we will not have in heaven are:
  1. The opportunity to evangelize. There will be no evangelism in heaven.
  2. To deny our sin nature
  3. Teaching the Word of God. In heaven, sanctification, the building up of the body of Christ, will not be necessary. Sanctification and growth in Christ is an issue now, and it has a limited shelf life because we will not be doing this in the next life.

### **Glory in Suffering**

The manifestation of God's glory is not limited to miraculous healing. God refused to remove the apostle Paul's "thorn" of suffering so His grace might be seen and proven sufficient (2 Cor 12:7-9). Though no one would choose hardships, there is no greater proof of God's power and grace than when He gives a person supernatural strength within the pain. Such men, women and children experience God's glory in a way about which most of us know nothing. Often, this brings even greater impact from God than would a miraculous healing.

### **5 While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."**

5 While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."

5 As long as I'm in the world, I'm the light of the world."

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

- "While I am in the world" - indicates a transitory, not permanent, nature of Jesus' time on earth

- "...Light of the world" - a title Jesus claimed for Himself (Cf. 1:4-5; 3:19-21; 8:12)

— Jesus repeats His title of the Light of the world because He is about to give light (sight) to a man who has been blind from birth, a man who has never seen light

— Jesus doesn't just give physical sight to people as the Light of the world, but He gives spiritual sight as well

### **(B) The Healing (9:6-7)**

6 When He had said this, He spit on the ground, and made mud from the saliva, and applied the mud to his eyes,

6 When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes,

6 After saying this, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he spread the mud on the man's eyes

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,

- This speaks to the sovereignty and variability of God...He doesn't choose to work in the same manner in every situation, but can work any way He deems relevant to any situation

7 and said to him, **"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam"** (which is translated, Sent). So he left and washed, and came *back* seeing.

7 and said to him, **"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam"** (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came *back* seeing.

7 and told him, **"Go and wash in the pool of Siloam"** (which is translated "Sent One"). So he went off, washed, and came back seeing.

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.

- Here, Jesus asks the man to do something (wash in the pool of Siloam) in order to be healed; in other healings Jesus did (Cf. John 5), the person was healed instantaneously, without some subsequent action)

- The common denominator in Jesus' healings is obedience. If the man decided he didn't want to go wash in the pool of Siloam, he would not have been healed

— The reason Jesus does this is to mitigate and humiliate pride, which is so dominant in the human spirit. We want God to work our way, do things the way we want them done, and to work on our schedule.

— God comes back and says, I'll give you what you want, but I'm going to give it to you in My way and in My timing. This requires us to abandon conventional human wisdom and abandon traditions that we hold dear.

- Naaman the Syrian came to Elijah with his horse and chariot and stood at the doorway of Elijah's house with a skin condition, likely leprosy (2 Kings 5:9-14). Elijah sent a messenger to tell him to go wash in the Jordan River 7x and your flesh will be restored to you.

— Naaman went away furious that Elijah didn't even have the respect for him, a ruler in Syria, to come out to speak with him but instead sent a messenger. And he believed that the rivers in Syria were much better than the rivers in Israel, so he reasoned why couldn't he just go wash in those rivers instead of the dirty Jordan River.

— So Naaman walked away in a rage, his ego damaged. And his servants came to him and said, If Elijah would've asked you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more should you be willing to do this since what Elijah instructed was so simple? So

Naaman took their advice and dipped himself 7x in the Jordan River and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a newborn baby.

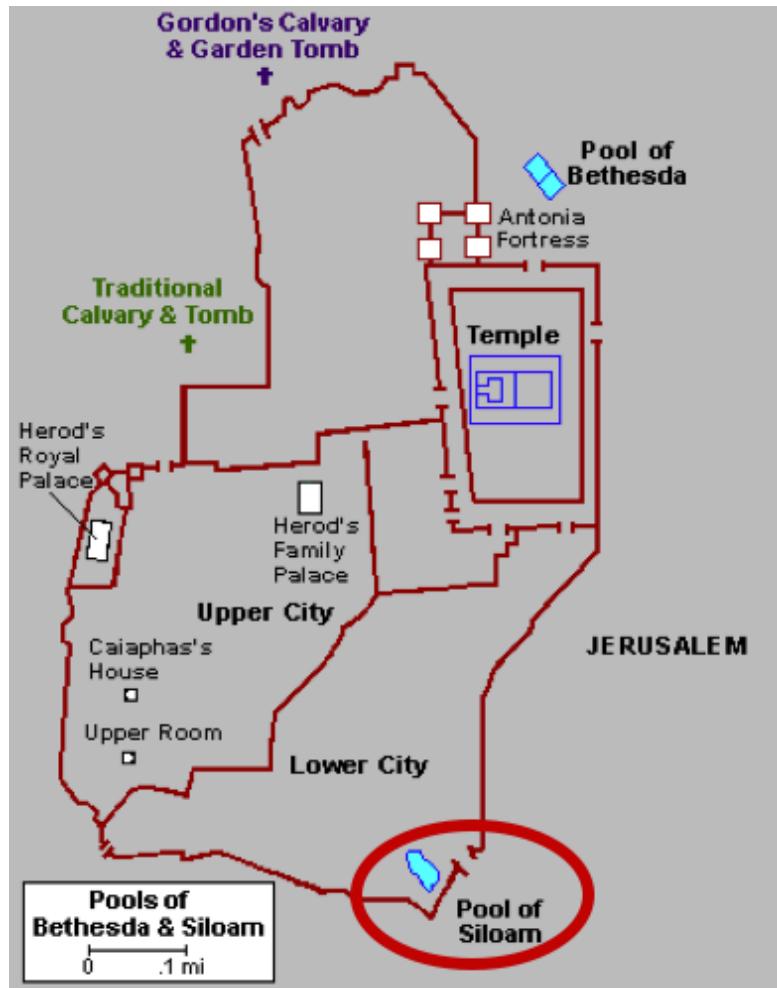
— Naaman was furious that Elijah didn't pay him the respect he thought (his pride thought) he deserved, and he walked away from Elijah in a rage, unwilling to follow his instructions to be healed. If it wasn't for the wisdom and reason of his servants, he would've left the opportunity for a healing because of his pride. He wanted his healing to be done according to his expectations rather than allowing God to work in His way.

— How many people in human history have allowed their pride and arrogance to keep them from something they so desperately need, whether that is healing, knowledge, wisdom, etc.?

- It's not just this issue of physical healing...it works the same way with spiritual healing. The gospel was specifically designed by God to injure, to wound, to put down man's pride. The gospel was designed such a way that when we receive spiritual healing, boasting was excluded (Rom 3:27). I have nothing to boast about regarding my spiritual healing because salvation was gifted to me in such a way that seems silly (foolish) to man.

— What has God called us to do to receive spiritual healing? Follow His instruction, which is to believe in what Jesus has done. But to many unbelievers, this simple instruction causes them to be angry because it is just too easy. It doesn't appeal to my desire to boast, to be involved, to have some part in my own salvation. How many people have found themselves in hell because of their rejection of the gospel from their pride?

— No obedience? The man born blind would have continued to suffer in blindness. Naaman the Syrian would've continued to suffer from his skin condition/leprosy. No obedience, no spiritual healing, which will cause many people to end up in hell, eternal separation from God, because of their pride.





It is very significant that of all the places Jesus could have sent the man to wash his eyes, He sent him to only one pool of the many in Jerusalem—the Pool of Siloam. This pool was not easy to get to from the main part of Jerusalem because he had to walk down a steep hill. This was the week of the Feast of Tabernacles and during this feast, there was a special ritual called “the outpouring of water.” In this ritual, the priests came down from the Temple Mount to the Pool of Siloam, filled jugs with the water from the Pool of Siloam, marched back up the Temple Mount, and poured out the water into the Laver within the Temple Compound. This was followed by great rejoicing. During the Feast of Tabernacles, the main pool, which was the center of Jewish attention, was the Pool of Siloam, the one pool that had the greatest number of Jewish people present who would observe this third messianic miracle.

The man went to the Pool of Siloam, washed his eyes, and when he opened his eyes, for the first time in his entire life, he was able to see! Since everyone knew this man and knew he was born blind, this created a tremendous stir.

(C) The Neighbor's Inquiry (9:8-12)

8 So the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, "Is this not the one who used to sit and beg?"

8 Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, "Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?"

8 Then the neighbors and those who had previously seen him as a beggar said, "This is the man who used to sit and beg, isn't it?"

**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 Others were saying, "This is he," *still* others were saying, "No, but he is like him." The man himself kept saying, "I am *the one*."

9 Others were saying, "This is he," *still* others were saying, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the one."

9 Some were saying, "It's him," while others were saying, "No, but it's someone like him." But he himself kept saying, "It's me!"

**9** Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

- A good example of the two reactions to faith: people will either accept what God has done, or they will make up some type of excuse (which can often be quite brilliant)

— If someone doesn't want to believe something, they have an unbelieving mind, their mind can actually suppress truth, revise history, or rewrite facts. This is what some in the crowd who saw him do.

10 So they were saying to him, "**How** then were your eyes opened?"

10 So they were saying to him, "How then were your eyes opened?"

10 So they asked him, "How, then, did you gain your eyesight?"

**10** Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

- The beggar discovers a world unfriendly toward him...

- "...How" - 4x in this chapter people asked, "How were you healed?" (v10,15,19,26)

— But this was the wrong question: They should have rearranged the letters and asked Who?

11 He answered, "**The man who is called Jesus** made mud, and spread *it* on my eyes, and said to me, '**Go to Siloam and wash**'; so I went away and washed, and I received sight."

11 He answered, "The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, '**Go to Siloam and wash**'; so I went away and washed, and I received sight."

11 He said, "The man named Jesus made some mud, spread it on my eyes, and told me, '**Go to Siloam and wash**.' So off I went and washed, and I received my sight."

**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.

- Here the man confirms that he indeed is the man they thought he may be, that he was previously blind, but Jesus did something, gave me instructions that I obeyed, and now I see

- "...The man who is called Jesus" - at this point, the man does not understand who Jesus really is

— It's important to see the growth of this man in his theology, the growth in his Christology, his growth into accurately pinpointing who Jesus is. This knowledge didn't come to him instantaneously, but it gradually began to develop after his healing happened:

- In v11, the man called Jesus
- In v17 he refers to Jesus as a "Prophet"
- In v25 he answers "whether He is a sinner, I do not know"
- In v33 he says that if this man (Jesus) was not from God, He could do nothing
- Finally, in v35-38, he came to full awareness of the deity of Christ...Jesus asks the man if he believes in the Son of Man. The man said, Show me who He is so I can believe.

Jesus says, You're looking at Him, so the man believed and worshipped Him.

— This is a typical pattern of someone who comes to know Christ; the same pattern is present with the Samaritan woman at the well (a Jew (v9) > Sir (v11) > a Prophet (v19) > the Messiah (v42)

— There are unbelievers all around us who are on the same path...they don't know what you know, they haven't studied the Bible, but God is bringing them around slowly, adding more and more details until they get to the point where they have the proper recognition of who Jesus is, and consequently believe in Him for eternal life

— When you share the gospel with someone, don't be discouraged when they don't comprehend it right off the bat. God views evangelism as a process that gradually unfolds (Cf. 1 Cor 3:6).

**12** And they said to him, "Where is He?" He \*said, "I do not know."

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

**12** They asked him, "Where is that man?" He said, "I don't know!"

**12** Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

- When Jesus sent the man away to wash, he was still blind; he never saw Jesus. Even after he was able to see, the man still did not know who Jesus was or what He looked like.

(D) The Pharisee's Investigation (9:13-23)

(a) Pharisees question the blind man (9:13-17)

13 They \*brought the man who was previously blind to the Pharisees.

13 They \*brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind.

13 So they brought to the Pharisees the man who had once been blind.

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

- The purpose of the Pharisees' investigation is not to get to the bottom of how this miracle happened; their purpose was to discredit it

14 Now it was a **Sabbath** on the day that Jesus **made the mud** and opened his eyes.

14 Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and healed his eyes.

14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

- "...Sabbath" - uh oh, another healing by Jesus on the Sabbath

— The Pharisees will focus on this faux pas (in their eyes) by Jesus rather than the miracle itself

- "...made the mud" - when you get down to it, this is where the Pharisees believed Jesus went wrong; He violated one of their pharisaical regulations for the Sabbath

— According to their regulations, you could not do work of any sort on the Sabbath. So once again we have a conflict between Christ's actions (healing on the Sabbath) and the Pharisee's manmade laws regulating what you can and can't do on the Sabbath.

15 Then the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, "He applied mud to my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

15 Then the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, "He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

15 So the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had gained his sight. He told them, "He put mud on my eyes, then I washed, and now I can see."

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.

- The Pharisees are interrogating the man about the events that led up to his sight being restored. The man's response recounts the events perfectly, just as they happened.

— The man did exactly what Jesus told him to do...this is how we please God: obedience

— The manner in which Jesus performs miracles is different from person to person, but the common denominator is always obedience to His commands. If we abandon what He has told us to do in that instance, if we elevate our pride over the simple instructions of God, then we simply remain in our spiritual state of blindness (see note on v7).

16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner

perform such signs?" And there was dissension among them.

16 Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And there was a division among them.

16 Some of the Pharisees began to remark, "This man is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath."

But others were saying, "How can a sinful man perform such signs?" And there was a division among them.

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.

- The man's testimony causes a division among the Pharisees...one group believed that because Jesus did not follow their manmade rules and traditions, He could not be from God

— The other group wondered...how in the world could this Man perform these signs, which we've never seen or heard of before, if He is a sinner?

— The second group is somewhat attracted to Jesus for the same reason that John says they ought to be attracted to Him...on account of His signs (Cf. 20:30-31)

— After the blind man's healing, there was also a division among his neighbors (v8-9)

17 So they \*said again to the man who was blind, "What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "**He is a prophet.**"

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

17 So they asked the formerly blind man again, "What do you say about him, since it was your eyes he healed?"

He said, "He is a prophet."

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.

- "...He is a prophet" - notice the theological development happening in this man...in v11 he identified Jesus by name; now, he identifies Him as a "prophet"

— Not only is this gradual movement toward Christ happening in John 4 (woman at the well) and John 9 (blind man), but it is happening to people all around you

— There are people that God will bring into your life who have a partial glimpse of the story, but not the whole story. And God has them on a trajectory whereby that person that you are in contact with will eventually trust Jesus Christ.

— But we need to understand how the Spirit of God works in the heart of unbelievers, and what God expects of us in terms of evangelism (our role). We need to keep in mind 1 Cor

3:6-9. The immediate conversion, the perfectionism that we often put ourselves under, is not the pattern of God in evangelism.

(b) Pharisees question the blind man's parents (9:18-23)

**18** The Jews then **did not believe** it about him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight,

**18** The Jews then did not believe *it* of him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight,

**18** The Jewish leaders did not believe that the man<sup>9</sup> had been blind and had gained sight until they summoned his parents

**18** But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

- The Pharisees, dissatisfied with the answers they received from the formerly blind man, now go to his parents...

- "...did not believe" - the Pharisees did not believe the testimony of the formerly blind man because they didn't want to believe his testimony

— We need to understand that unbelief is just as powerful as belief. If a person wants to not believe, then their natural mind will work overtime to explain away the obvious (Rom 1:18-23). The unbelieving mind is not neutral (that is a myth)...if a person has made up their mind to not believe in Jesus Christ (because they don't like the idea of Christ or the idea of accountability), their mind will work overtime to explain away the obvious, all the while masquerading as some sort of quest for truth.

— These Pharisees are not interested in the truth...they are interested in discredited the miracle that Jesus obviously performed

— The Pharisees have already made up their mind not to believe, so now they are attempting to explain away the obvious

**19** and they questioned them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?"

**19** and questioned them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?"

**19** and asked them, "Is this your son, the one you say was born blind? How does he now see?"

**19** And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

- The Pharisees interrogate the parents with three questions:

1. Is this your son?
2. Was he actually born blind?

3. If he was born blind, how does he now see?

20 His parents then answered and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;

20 His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;

20 His parents replied, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.

**20** His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

- The parents answer the first two questions easily...yes, he is our son, and yes, he was born blind

21 but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself."

21 but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself."

21 But we don't know how it is that he now sees, and we don't know who opened his eyes. Ask him. He is of age and can speak for himself."

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.

- The third question, the parents could not answer...they didn't know. Instead of answering the question, they "punted" the question back to their son to explain

— Their motive for doing this is given in v23...

22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already reached the decision that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be excommunicated from the **synagogue**.

22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, since the Jewish leaders had already agreed that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be thrown out of the synagogue.

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.

- This demonstrates that the Pharisees who are investigating this are not interested in the truth...they are interested in re-writing the truth

- The Pharisees put the people under coercion whereby if they acknowledged anything about Jesus Christ being from God, they were to be put out of the synagogue
- "...synagogue" - after the temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC and the Jews returned to the Land 70 years later and began to slowly rebuild, they did not have a place to worship, so they began building synagogues throughout the Mediterranean world these gathering places for the Jews.
- These synagogues function much like a local church does today during the time when the temple was being rebuilt. Once the temple was rebuilt, these synagogues continued to operate. They became important places in the lives of Jews.
- If you were kicked out of the synagogue, you were refused a place of worship, fellowship, and sometimes your career/trade was denied because business contacts in many cases were made in the synagogues.
- For the Jew, to be put out of the synagogue meant he was ostracized by everyone [Scofield Study Bible]
- So these parents answered the third question in this way out of fear. There was no objective pursuit of truth here...there are all sorts of biases involved.

23 *It was for this reason that* his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

23 For this reason his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

23 That's why his parents said, "He is of age. Ask him."

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

(E) The Pharisee's Denunciation (9:24-34)

(a) Denunciation (9:24)

24 So for a second time they summoned the man who had been blind, and said to him, "**Give glory to God**; we know that **this man** is a sinner."

24 So a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner."

24 The Jewish leaders summoned the man who had been blind a second time and told him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner."

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.

- The Pharisees go back to the formerly blind man a second time, to question him again about the healing

— They are not in search of facts, they are not looking for truth, they are only looking for a way to discredit both this healing and Jesus Himself. They couldn't care less that this formerly blind man was healed.

- This is why they are coming back to him a second time...to put pressure on him to say something that they can use to indict Jesus
- "...Give glory to God" - the Pharisees assumed that he could glorify God the Father without acknowledging Jesus Christ
- They have it backwards: they think denying Jesus Christ is the pathway to glorifying God
- Whatever attitude you take toward Christ is the attitude you take toward the Father because the Father sent the Son into the world, therefore to honor the Son is to honor the Father
- There are many people who today believe that they have a relationship with God, that they are right with God, but they reject Jesus Christ. It doesn't work that way: if you want a relationship with God the Father, you have to go through God the Son. There's no alternative avenue to the Father except through the Son (Cf. 14:6).
- To honor God the Son is to honor God the Father, and to dishonor God the Son is to dishonor God the Father
- "...this man" - the Pharisee's title for Jesus Christ; they refuse to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the unique God-Man

(b) Defense (9:25)

25 He then answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

25 He then answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

25 But he responded, "I don't know whether he is a sinner or not. The one thing I do know is that I used to be blind and now I can see!"

**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.

- The man sticks to the straight facts of the case and doesn't waiver

— We can get into a theological discussion as much as you'd like, but all I can tell you is that I was born blind, but now I can see

— The man relayed the one thing that he was sure of...I used to be blind, but now I can see

- Our personal testimony is something that is powerful in the eyes of unbelievers

— We often think that we don't know enough about the Bible to evangelize someone, but the fact of the matter is we can take what little we know and couple it with our personal testimony and the Holy Spirit's work, and we should be confident to have a gospel conversion with anyone.

(c) Denunciation (9:26)

26 So they said to him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

26 So they said to him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

26 Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he heal<sup>16</sup> your eyes?"

**26** Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

- The Pharisees already knew about the miracle and how it happened because this is now the 4th testimony of this miracle (v10-11; v15; v19-20)

— The Pharisees keep asking the same questions hoping to that the man would disavow Jesus, or that they would find one small loophole in his testimony that they could use to either discredit this miracle or Jesus Himself

— This is the power of unbelief...unbelief in the human mind is so strong that if you make up your mind to not believe in Jesus Christ, it will work overtime to generate empty philosophy and speculation to confirm your unbelief

(d) Defense (9:27)

27 He answered them, "I told you already and you did not listen; why do you want to hear *it* again? **You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?**"

27 He answered them, "I told you already and you did not listen; why do you want to hear *it* again? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?"

27 He answered them, "I've already told you, but you didn't listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You don't want to become his disciples, too, do you?"

**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?

- The man becomes frustrated...how many times do I have to retell you the same story? Did you not listen to me when I told you the same thing earlier?

- "...You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?" - some interpret this as sarcasm, but it's likely instead a misunderstanding of the motives of the Pharisees by the formerly blind man

— The motives of the man were pure, and it's likely that he is transferring his motives to the Pharisees, whose motives were anything but pure

(e) Denunciation (9:28-29a)

28 They spoke abusively to him and said, "You are His disciple, but **we are disciples of Moses.**

28 They reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

28 At this, they turned on him in fury and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses!

**28** Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

- "...we are disciples of Moses" - the fact of the matter is, the Pharisees were not disciples of Moses (the Law giver). What they were actual disciples of was the manmade traditions

and rules that were piled on top of the Law of Moses, which watered it down and made it unrecognizable (Mark 7:13).

- They were disciples of tradition rather than disciples of Moses
- If the Pharisees were disciples of Moses, they wouldn't be bent out of shape that Jesus healed a blind man on the Sabbath because Moses clearly taught that the Sabbath was given by God to man for man's benefit
- The Sabbath was given by a loving Creator who knows the fragility of our bodies and minds, and knows that we need periods of rest and refreshment; we're not designed to work 7 days a week
- If the intent of the Sabbath was to benefit man, why would a healing of a blind man on the Sabbath be problematic to Moses? Fact is, it wasn't problematic to Moses, but it was problematic to the layers and layers of manmade tradition and rules that the Pharisees piled on top of Moses.

#### (f) Denunciation (9:29b)

29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from."

29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from."

29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but we do not know where this fellow comes from."

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

- Any basic investigation would've revealed to the Pharisees the birthplace of Jesus Christ, but because they were agenda-driven, they didn't care to figure out where Jesus was born  
— God holds us accountable to search the Scriptures to learn about Him. He has designed the Bible in such a way that the truth can be known by the heart that is motivated.

— If a person is wandering into confusion after confusion, one works system after another, trying this unbiblical experiment then that unbiblical experiment, at some point you say to yourself that this isn't an intellectual problem any more, it is a heart problem.

#### (g) Defense (9:30-33)

30 The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is the amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes!"

30 The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes."

30 The man answered them, "This is an amazing thing! You don't know where he comes from, yet he healed my eyes.

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.

- After hearing the Pharisee's denunciations, the man drops a truth bomb on them...

— The Pharisees are talking about not knowing where Jesus was from, but the man brings the conversation back to the heart of the issue...who cares where He was from, He restored my sight, He opened my eyes!

31 We know that God does not listen to sinners; but if someone is God-fearing and does His will, He listens to him.

31 We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him.

31 We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but he does listen to anyone who worships him and does his will.

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.

- It is likely that this man is drawing upon a number of OT verses that predict that the Messiah will pray for things and those things will come into existence because of His perfect relationship with God the Father (Ps 34:15-16; 145:19; Prov 15:29)

32 Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.

32 Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.

32 Ever since creation it has never been heard that anyone healed the eyes of a man who was born blind.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

- The OT testifies that the Messiah will heal the blind (Is 29:18; 35:5; 42:7):

Is 29:18: On that day those who are deaf will hear words of a book, And out of *their* gloom and darkness the eyes of those who are blind will see.

Is 35:5: Then the eyes of those who are blind will be opened, And the ears of those who are deaf will be unstopped.

Is 42:7: To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.

33 If this man were not from God, He could do nothing."

33 If this man were not from God, He could do nothing."

33 If this man were not from God, he couldn't do anything like that."

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

- The Pharisees made Jesus out to be a sinner, but Jesus healed my sight, so how could He be a sinner that you religious leaders are making Him out to be?

— How could He be a sinner when we know that God only hears the prayers of the righteous, and this Man healed my sight?

If you talk to an investigator, they will tell you that they try to not develop a conclusion too early on in their investigation. If you do that, the human mind has a tendency to see all evidence as corroborating the guilt of the person they developed the conclusion about. Our human mind is not unbiased. If we consider someone guilty before reviewing all of the evidence, our minds will tint every piece of evidence against the person we consider guilty, even if it's exculpatory.

Take for instance the theory of evolution. How this can still be taught in public schools today is unconscionable with all the scientific evidence we now have proving that it is impossible. What about all the missing links between apes and man? They haven't found a single one! If evolution has been going on for billions of years, we should find missing links everywhere, but we haven't found a single one (because they don't exist). But that doesn't deter an evolutionist because they get what they want from their theory...no recognition of or accountability to God. Their argument for evolution doesn't come from scientific proof because there isn't any...it's a heart issue. And it's the same problem with the Pharisees.

#### (h) Summation (9:34)

34 They answered him, "**You were born entirely in sins, and yet you are teaching us?"** So they **put him out**.

34 They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?" So they put him out.

34 They asked him, "You were born a sinner and you are trying to instruct us?" And they threw him out.

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

- "...You were born entirely in sins" - the Pharisees go back to the same faulty thinking, the same bad theology, that the disciples had (v2) when they first saw the man. Jesus corrected their faulty theology and thinking (v3), telling them that sometimes sin in our lives will cause physical problems, but that is not always the case 100% of the time.

— In the case of this blind man, sin was not the cause of his blindness, but rather to bring about God's glory

- "...yet you are teaching us?" - the Pharisees again resort to an *ad hominem* attack on this man

- There's a saying in the legal system: if the facts are on your side, pound the facts; if the law is on your side, pound the law; if neither is on your side, pound your opponent. That's exactly what the Pharisees are doing here.
- "...put him out" - they excommunicated him from the synagogue; this was an attack on a person's social, religious and economic standing in society; it essentially meant that he was excommunicated from society, he was now an "outcast" (Cf. 2 Tim 3:12)
- This is the first time in John's Gospel that we have a record of persecution coming against those who believe in Christ (Cf. 16:2). Many would follow.
- This shows that salvation is free, that a right standing with God is possible with belief in Jesus Christ. But walking with Him is costly. We can't walk with God without paying some type of temporal price (Cf. 15:18-20).

So the Pharisees try everything possible to dismiss this miracle and find a way to discredit Jesus...you can't heal on the Sabbath, we don't know where this Man is from, He is a sinner. Yet none of these accusations stick. Eventually, the nation will reject Christ's miracles and attribute them to Satan's power (Cf. Matt 12), which will lead to the unpardonable sin by the nation of Israel, and a wholesale change in Jesus' ministry, teaching and audience.

#### (F) Jesus' Identity (9:35-41)

**35** Jesus heard that they had put him out, and **upon finding him**, He said, **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"**

**35** Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"**

**35** Jesus heard that they had thrown him out. So when he found him, he asked him, **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"**

**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?**

- Notice that it is Jesus who is seeking out this man...this is a refutation of the social gospel taught so prevalently today

— The "social gospel" was born around 1920 and is the idea that Christian's would endeavor to give blankets to the homeless, to provide for the physical needs of the poor, to solve the "global warming problem," to cure cancer, etc.

— It started off on the right track, but eventually evolved into what it is today: societal needs are elevated within the priorities of the church, and inevitably what gets pushed aside, subtracted, and devalued is the gospel.

— A social gospel pastor will speak eloquently about the need to fix society, but they will rarely if ever talk about the most basic problem man has: sin and how it separates us from

God. They will not talk about how Jesus Christ paid the penalty for the sins of the world, how He rose from the dead, or the need to put your personal faith in Jesus Christ to be saved from hell.

— If Jesus promoted the social gospel, today's version of it, He would've left this man alone. This man's physical needs had been taken care of, he was no longer blind, but now the greatest need he had, his spiritual need, remains.

— Jesus knows of no such thing as the social gospel as it's preached today. After feeding the 5000, a great throng was following Him because He met their need for food, and Jesus rebukes them because He sees into the motives of their heart that they were only interested in Him because He met a physical need in their life (Cf 6:26-29). But their greatest need was their alienation from God, which can only be remedied by personal faith in Him.

— Jesus rejected the social gospel in John 6, and He's rebuking it here in John 9

— Is building orphanages, hospitals, meeting people's physical needs of thirst or hunger wrong? Of course not, but if that's all you do, you are not pleasing to God. Those good things should be used as a beachhead or platform to meet people's spiritual need, which is their greatest need. If we are only interested in meeting someone's social/physical needs, we are being unfaithful to the Word of God because we are withholding from them the remedy for the greatest need they have, which is spiritual satisfaction that only comes from trusting in Christ.

— What good is a meal for someone who is hungry, or water for someone who is thirsty, when you neglect to be concerned that this same person is under the judgment of God and headed for a Christ-less eternity in hell if they don't place their personal faith in Jesus Christ?

- "...upon finding him" - Jesus was not content with the social gospel, just meeting this man's physical need and then leaving him alone

— Jesus sought him out in order to meet his more important need...

- "...Do you believe" - what Jesus is looking for from all people is their personal faith and trust in Him

— Every person who ever lived is saved through their personal faith and trust in Jesus Christ. Salvation has never changed from the beginning of time. God has but one single plan for salvation for all of humanity for all time.

— Belief is the response Jesus is looking for in order to start up a relationship with man

— If Jesus would've left this man and moved on after healing his sight, without seeking him out in order to have a conversation with him about the biggest problem he had, He would have done him a great disservice. The man would've lived out his remaining years with sight in his eyes, but he would've then spent his eternity in hell.

- "...Son of Man" - Jesus reveals Himself to this man as the Son of Man

- The Son of Man (Dan 7:13-14) is the One who will come at the end of the ages to overthrow all of the kingdoms of man, including the Antichrist, and in its place He will setup His own eternal kingdom on planet earth
- Jesus' claim of this identity is a direct, unambiguous claim to deity. Jesus claimed this title for Himself many times during His ministry, including during one of His three Jewish trials (Cf. Mark 14:61-64).

36 He answered by saying, "And who is He, **Sir**, that I may believe in Him?"

36 He answered, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"

36 He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him."

**36** He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

- "...Sir"- *kyrios*, sometimes translated as "Lord"; it is used both to proclaim Jesus as "Lord" as well as a reverential title such as "Sir." In this context, "Sir" is the proper translation (Cf. v38).

37 Jesus said to him, "**You have both seen Him**, and He is the one who is talking with you."

37 Jesus said to him, "**You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.**"

37 Jesus told him, "**You have seen him. He is the person who is talking with you.**"

**37** And Jesus said unto him, **Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.**

- The Bible is written in such a way that it accommodates the human need for eyewitness testimony. In fact, the entire NT is set up based on the reality of eyewitness testimony.

— John writes his entire Gospel not as some secondhand stenographer, but as an eyewitness to the events he documented (Cf. 1:14; 1 John 1:1-3)

— This man that Jesus healed was given eyewitness testimony to Jesus Christ

- "...You have both seen Him" - the man could not see Jesus during his first encounter with Christ because he was blind, but as the story unfolds, Jesus finds this man after he can see and now reveals Himself to the man in physical, visible, tangible form.

— The same pattern of revelation is present in our lives today: right now we cannot see Christ, we are "blind" and we believe largely on faith. But there is coming a time in history where we'll no longer need to exercise faith, it won't be necessary, because we will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2). We will see Him face to face.

— This is why Paul says in the last verse of 1 Cor 13 says faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these things is love. Why is love the greatest? Because faith and hope are temporary, they will one day pass away, but love will continue on into the Eternal State.

38 And he said, "I believe, **Lord.**" And he **worshiped** Him.

38 And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him.

38 He said, "Lord, I do believe," and worshipped him.

**38** And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

— "...Lord" - *kyrios*, same word used in v36 (translated "Sir") but here it is best translated as "Lord" because later in the verse it says that the man "worshiped" Him

— "...worshiped" - *proskyneō*, denotes worship of God (Cf. Matt 4:10)

— This man was kicked out of the synagogue, he was denied a place of worship by the Pharisees, but now he is worshiping Christ face to face

— One thing about God is that He never takes something away without replacing it with something better. For this man, worship in a false sense was taken away by the Pharisees, but God replaced it with something so much better.

— Sometimes we grieve over something in this life that has been taken away from us, but just be patient as God will oftentimes replace it with something so much better

— The spiritual progress of this man is astounding:

- The man only knows Jesus' name (v11)
- He refers to Jesus as a prophet (v17)
- He denies the fact that Jesus is a sinner (v25)
- He recognizes that Jesus is more than a prophet; He was from God (v33)
- He calls Jesus "lord" (a reverential title) (v36)
- He calls Jesus "Lord" (a recognition of His deity) (v38)

— The woman at the well (John 4) went through the exact same process

— Notice that during this process, this man endured hardship...the Pharisees excommunicated him from the synagogue, which meant that he was an outcast in society. He had no hope of success, his relationships were cut off, he had little hope for financial prosperity, he had nothing.

— This is what God does sometimes: He knocks us down so that we will look up. Often human beings, unfortunately, have to hit rock bottom before our minds come around and we clearly see our predicament. Had God not knocked this man down, perhaps he would not have looked up or saw his need for a Savior. Perhaps he would not have encountered Christ or come to know who Jesus is; perhaps him being knocked down was the reason he was open to spiritual things.

— You ask a room full of Christians and it's likely that most of them would tell you they came to Christ under the same circumstances. You had some sort of trial or problem, you came to the end of yourself or the end of your resources, perhaps God allowed you to succeed at something only for you to see how vain and empty success in the eyes of the world can be. It is during times like these that people often come to Christ.

— Perhaps God allows you to strive for something in your career, or relationally, or financially, and then the whole things craters and doesn't work out, and you're lying there in the ashes not knowing where to turn.

— This is the time that God goes to work. He can't work when we're prideful or working on our own because when we're like that, we don't allow Him to work. But when things in our lives are not materializing the way we want, suddenly we're asking the question, Is there more?

— This formerly blind man was in the same situation...but he finally received his spiritual sight, but only after he was disconnected and ostracized from society, family and friends

39 And Jesus said, **"For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind."**

39 And Jesus said, **"For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind."**

39 Then Jesus said, **"I have come into this world to judge it, so that those who are blind may see and so that those who see may become blind."**

**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.**

- "...judgment" - *krima*, this is why Jesus identified Himself as the Son of Man (v35), because the Son of Man is the one who will orchestrate the end times judgments

— After claiming that title for Himself, Jesus appropriately says that for judgment, because of judgment, He came into this world

— Why would Jesus say this? Part of the answer is in 3:17: **For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him.**

— Part of the reason God sent Christ into the world is to protect us, to shield us, from end times judgment, instead He experienced our rightful judgment in our place ("so that those who do not see may see").

- "...those who see may become blind" - another reason why Jesus came into the world was to push the spiritual blind, those who think they see but do not, those who do not think they need spiritual sight...essentially those who reject Him...to push them further into judgment

— When someone hears the gospel and rejects it, there is a spiritual penalty that is imposed. That penalty is not permanent (at least until the person dies) as God is merciful and gracious, always willing for all to come to repentance. But rejection of the gospel message further cements one's unbelief and judgment (Cf. Matt 13:10-17; Rom 11:7-10; 2 Cor 3:14-16).

Jesus said this "sign" resulted in judgment. He is not contradicting His earlier statement, "I pass judgment on no one" (8:15). Instead, He was speaking in harmony with all His warnings to those who refused to believe in Him (8:21,24). Those who admit their need and recognize the authority of Jesus receive His light, which brings spiritual knowledge and

insight. To reject Him is to close your eyes to the truth, to become even more spiritually and sinfully blind and to live deeper and deeper in darkness.

40 Those who were with Him from the Pharisees heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?"

40 Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?"

40 Some of the Pharisees who were near him overheard this and asked him, "We aren't blind, too, are we?"

**40** And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

- Evidently the Pharisees overhear the last part of Jesus' conversation with the formerly blind man

— The notion of judicial blindness that Jesus talked about in v39 evidently troubled them, because that is the path that they were on

— So they hear this statement and questioned Jesus on whether the last part of what He said ("those who see may become blind") applied to them

— Of course it applied to them...as the religious leaders, they were the ones leading the nation of Israel into judicial blindness because of their hatred and rejection of Jesus Christ. They didn't "see" because they didn't want to see.

41 Jesus said to them, **"If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now that you maintain, 'We see,' your sin remains.**

41 Jesus said to them, **"If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.**

41 Jesus told them, **"If you were blind, you would not have any sin. But now that you insist, 'We see,' your sin still exists."**

**41** Jesus said unto them, **If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.**

- What on earth is Jesus saying here?

- "...If you were blind, you would have no sin" - if you were blind, and understood that you were blind and had a need for spiritual sight, see your need for truth, see your need for enlightenment, see your need for understanding, then you would have no sin (you would believe in Christ; you would not be guilty of the sin of unbelief)

— "If" - second class condition, indicates the assumption of an untruth

— "sin" - *hamartia*, singular, describing a single sin; in John's Gospel, this is the sin of unbelief (Cf. 16:8-9); to "have no sin" here means that they would believe in Him and satisfy the single condition required to be saved

- "...We see" - by claiming to not be blind ("We see"), the Pharisees were claiming that they were already enlightened, they did not need enlightenment, the gospel message that Jesus preached was a message for others but not for them. They were self-sufficient.
- Consequently, their sin (singular, referring to unbelief) remained. They were in a condition of unbelief, and are now being hardened in that unbelief because of their lack of a humble and responsive heart.
- If a person is humble and seeking God, is interested in the things of God and comes to God without an attitude of self-sufficiency, then God begins to work in that person and they begin to understand what they did not understand before.
- But if a person comes to God with an attitude that they have it all figured out, with an arrogant and prideful heart, that person will be solidified in blindness and unbelief.
- Once you understand this, the beatitudes (Matt 5:3-12) make more sense
- If a person sees themselves as poor in spirit, hungering and thirsting for righteousness (spiritually speaking, Cf. Matt 5:3,6), that person will be blessed beyond measure because they have the right heart condition by which they will receive full spiritual sight. But if they come self-sufficient, not seeing or understanding their need for God, they will be solidified in their unbelief.
- What was blinding the Pharisees was pride...they were relying on themselves for salvation, not seeing their need for Christ. Their pharisaical pride placed them in the blinding category (Cf. Prov 26:12; Rom 1:22).

*The deceitfulness of sin makes those most in need of divine illumination think that they are the most enlightened. [Constable]*