



**John 9:35-41
But Now I See**

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"

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

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

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

39 And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind."

40 Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?"

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

If we could ask the man born blind today regarding all that had happened to him, "was it worth it?" I have no doubt that he would say without hesitation, "of course", especially today!

But what if you had asked his parents that question after their son had been cast out of the synagogue? I'm sure that they would say, "*worth it*, are you crazy? It's just been disaster after disaster!" I mean think about. First the thrill of giving birth to a son, *the thought now at last we have an heir to carry on the family name, to help out his father in the business, and then to take care of us when we are old!* And then the thrill gives way to horror as they realize, their son is blind! He will never marry or have children to carry on the family name, he will never learn a trade, all he can do is beg, and who will take care of *him* when they are gone? As he grew up all the tears and frustration. Shunned and made fun of by other children. And then the humiliation of all those meetings in the marketplace, "did I mention my son Eleazar is studying to be a Rabbi? Such a *shame* about your boy..." The hopes of another child to take his place gradually fade away. Our son, the blind beggar.

And now this, excommunicated by the Pharisees. **At least before he could beg!** Some at least pitied him, now they will be pitiless towards him. Now what is he going to do? And oh, the shame of it.

Very different viewpoints on the same set of circumstances. And you know what brothers and sisters, if Jesus Christ is not the Son of God, then the blind man's parents are right. But because He is the Son of God, they are tragically wrong. Christ changes *everything*. As we talk about those events, I want you to think about that.

The fact that Christ is God changes everything in the life of the man born blind.

He had been cast out for Christ's sake. No sooner was this poor blind man cast out of the Jewish Church than Jesus finds him and speaks words of comfort. We have here one among many beautiful illustrations of the mind of Christ. He sees all that His people go through for His sake, and feels for all, from the highest to the lowest. He keeps account of all their losses, crosses, and persecutions. "Are they not all written in His book?" (Psalm. 56:8.)

Jesus had done a great miracle in opening the man's physical eyes, now he will do an even greater one, in opening his spiritual eyes to the truth. This will be the far greater miracle, even though the world doesn't see it that way. You see it was not to heal men's bodies or to raise men from the dead, or provide the hungry that Jesus came to earth. He did those things out of his great compassion, but it was to save men's souls that Jesus came, and that is why the preaching of the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ is so much more important. As Gordon Keddie put it ***"People who have received physical help from Christ and from his people will still die and face an eternal destiny. Welfare, even of the most exalted kind, puts no one in heaven. The blind man's restored vision did not save him. Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ is the sole instrument of being saved."*** We need to remember that as the church, because we are seeing a disturbing trend in evangelical churches to simply say when it comes to the world, charity is enough, we don't want to offend people by telling them they need to believe in Jesus. But as we see again and again in the gospels, merely caring for men's bodies and leaving them to go to hell, is not what Jesus did.

So Jesus asks *"Do you believe in the Son of God?"* now some of your bibles may say "Son of Man" that is because, early copies of the gospel of John have Son of Man, it doesn't really matter, both are specifically *messianic titles* and Christ used both of them or simply *"the Son"* in speaking of himself and the man knows what Jesus The man knows what Jesus is talking about, he is talking about the Messiah, and earlier you remember the man had confessed that he believed that Jesus was sent from God and prophet, and therefore he trusts Him so he asks, *"Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"* Jesus in a very simple and straightforward way, very similar to the way he spoke with the Samaritan woman at the well says "You're talking to Him"

Now if you have any doubts about the deity of Christ yourself, please note the blind man didn't, he did something no Jew would do to a mere man, he worships Him. Now in the book of Revelation when John fell down to worship an angel, the angel rebuked him saying ***"See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."*** But Christ does not do that with this man, he accepts his worship, just as Christ accepted the worship of Thomas when he called Him "my Lord and My God!" The Blind man worshipped Him because He believed Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and the Jesus accepted that worship because He is.

The fact that Christ is God changes everything for the Pharisees as well, it condemns them.

Christ's words in verse 39 sometimes confuse people. How can Jesus say that He came into the world for judgment when he says elsewhere that he came to judge not to save. Well the gospel of John constantly sets before us the way Christ divides men. Christ declares plainly "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6) and how you react to His words, divides and judges. If you believe, you are saved, if you reject that message, then on the last day you will be judged and condemned. That is what Jesus said that in

John 12:47 "And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world."

48 "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him -- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

Now when the Pharisees overheard Jesus declaring said that he came to make that division between those who saw and those who were blind, they understand that Jesus is talking about spiritual blindness. And so they ask in offended tones "Oh So you think were "blind" too, right?"

The Pharisees probably expected Jesus to say, **yes you are blind**. So they could get properly huffy and indignant. But that's not what he says, he doesn't want to let them off that easy, because they weren't blind the way the man born blind's parents were blind. But had they been really blind, having no understanding of spiritual things they would have been better off. Had they been like the Gentiles without the law and the prophets, they would have been far less guilty. But they do have them, and they have claimed to be able to see and teach the great spiritual truths contained in God's word. Even though they are in fact spiritually blind guides. But now they have not only received the oracles of God, but they have seen God manifested in the flesh, and they have actively tried to deny his miracles. Therefore, their judgment will be far greater.

Applications: **First to You Who Believe** – When we are in Glory we will be able to look back and see how God used every trial and tribulation in our lives for our good, in crafting us and sculpting us and we will say of God, "He has done all things well" and give Him the glory. But here in our time on earth it is often the case that we don't understand. I am sure that blind man often wondered why God had made him blind, allowed him to go through so much pain, and be an outcast. How many times everyday of his life he must have wished, if I could only be like the *normal* people, then I'd be happy.

But on the day of his excommunication, it was the "normal people" who were either running scared like his parents, or sitting in judgment of Christ and his miracles and then casting him out of the synagogue. But the man who had been taught the hard way not to fear being an outcast, or be all self-conscious about being different or ridiculed. He stood firm for the truth. Even his excommunication was for his spiritual good, as Calvin points out: ***"If he had been allowed to remain in the synagogue, he would have been in danger of becoming gradually alienated from Christ, and plunged in the same destruction with wicked men."***

This was a man whom God had taught humility and perseverance, who when it came time to become a follower of Christ was not entangled by all of his accomplishments and titles and possessions. The rich young ruler had been given everything in life, and consequently he had everything to lose, and so he went away from Christ sorrowful. In the hindsight of eternity I'm sure that man cursed being born so privileged. But this man born blind will thank God everyday that he was made that way.

I hope you learn from that. Especially those of you who are tempted to be sorrowful about the way God has made you or the situations you find yourself in. I used to envy the kids who always fit in, the cool kids who were never in trouble, who were picked first at kickball as opposed to dead last every time. I don't any more. Most of them would never in a million years give up their comfort zone to follow Christ, and the ones who I met in seminary usually had no stomach for controversy, didn't want to do anything that might upset people. Many of them have already slipped into man pleasing or liberalism as a result.

Martin Luther example – Controversy, Excommunication, made him into the man God could use and whom Christ became very dear to. As Calvin wrote of him, comparing him to the man born blind,

“when Dr Martin Luther, and other persons of the same class, were beginning to reprove the grosser abuses of the Pope, they scarcely had the slightest relish for pure Christianity; but after that the Pope had thundered against them, and cast them out of the Roman synagogue by terrific bulls, Christ stretched out his hand, and made himself fully known to them.”

Psalm 27:7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

8 When You said, "Seek My face," My heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek."

9 Do not hide Your face from me; Do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation.

10 When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the LORD will take care of me.

11 Teach me Your way, O LORD, And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.

12 Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; For false witnesses have risen against me, And such as breathe out violence.

13 I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living.

14 Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!

To those of you who have not yet believed: All of your disasters, that would have been used of God for your good will most likely simply harden you, and all of your advantages like the rich young ruler, will do you no good.

Now I want to speak to you children, like the Pharisees, you are raised hearing the gospel, raised under the instruction of the word, if you do not believe, understand your guilt will be far greater than say that of children raised in Islamic households who are forbidden the bible.

Let us use diligently whatever religious knowledge we possess, and ask continually that God would give us more. Let us never forget that the devil himself is a creature of vast head-knowledge, and yet none the better for it, because it is not rightly used. Let our constant prayer be that which David so often sent up in the hundred and nineteenth Psalm. "Lord, teach me your statutes give me understanding--unite my heart to fear Your name."