**THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN**

***From Begging to Preaching***

***John 9***

Sunday School Lesson 13

*The Miracles of Jesus*

04/07/2019

**Introduction:** The healing of the blind man is one of the few miracles and works that Jesus performed in Judaea. In lesson 3, we studied the healing of the man by the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem. At the conclusion of that miracle, the Jewish leaders began to plot the death of our Lord. For this reason, Jesus mostly avoided Jerusalem until the final days prior to His crucifixion. The majority of the miracles were performed in the region of Galilee. The people in this region were considered more common and spiritually ignorant compared to those that resided in Jerusalem. While the Jewish leaders were not pleased to hear of the miracles that Jesus performed in Galilee, they were too afraid to apprehend the Lord there. They feared the reaction from the people. Instead, they were waiting patiently for an opportunity to present itself in Jerusalem. They were hoping that opportunity would come at the feast of tabernacles. Jesus’ brothers encouraged Him to come and present Himself to the people during the feast. Since Jesus knew the intentions of the Jewish leaders, He instructed His brothers to go to the feast without Him. Later, the Lord entered into Jerusalem discreetly. While the leaders and the majority of the people were at the feast, Jesus went to the temple to teach and to preach. It did not take long for word to spread that Jesus was in town. The Jewish leaders tried to apprehend Him, but the officers that they sent refused to touch the Lord. As Jesus passed by, He saw the plight of the blind man. While it was not convenient for the Lord to perform this miracle, He did it anyways. As we look at this lesson, we will make an observation from each of the four conversations in this story.

1. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN TEACHES US PLAINLY THE REASON THAT GOD ALLOWS HARDNESS FOR SOME IN THIS LIFE. (JOHN 9:1-5)
2. **Notice that the disciples had a hard time understanding the plight of the blind man (John 9:2).** When the disciples saw the blind man begging along their path, they pondered the reason for this man’s condition. They knew that he had been born blind. As we have seen before, the Jews assumed that poor health was always a result of sin. While sin is the ultimate source for all suffering on this earth, the Jews had a misconception of the way that God worked. Given that the condition was from birth, the disciples openly asked the Lord who was responsible for this man’s condition. Had the Lord punished the man for sin that He knew the man would commit later in his life, or had the Lord punished the child for the sins of his parents? Either way, it was really difficult for the disciples to understand the reason for this man’s condition. In their humanistic view, he was born with a major disadvantage compared to everyone else. This lack of understanding has lasted throughout the ages. Today, mankind still does not understand why God allows this to happen to a person.
3. **Notice that the Lord clearly explained the reason: that the works of God should be made manifest in him (John 9:3-5).** Jesus explained to His disciples that not everything was related directly to an individual’s sin. In this case, the Lord had allowed this man to be born blind so that His work could be seen through him. Others would believe because of what was done to this blind man. The name of the Lord would be magnified because of what was done to this blind man. God’s will is to bring all men back to Him. His desire is for every person to be saved. Then, He desires for our lives to be a testimony to others to bring them to Christ. Every problem or challenge that we face presents us with an opportunity to bring glory to God. Some people struggle with this concept. The problem is that they view it as God breaking something just to bring Himself glory by fixing it later. The reality is that God is not the One who broke it to begin with. He may allow something to remain broken for a greater period of time, but it is all done with the purpose of providing a better future for man. It is not done out of favoritism or cruelty on the part of God.
4. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN SHOWS US HOW BLIND WE CAN BECOME TOWARDS OTHER PEOPLE. (JOHN 9:8-13)
5. **Notice that nobody seemed to know the blind man’s name, and they argued over whether it was actually him (John 9:8-9).** This man had likely been sitting in the same spot every day, begging for some food from those who passed by his way. As he came back to the place that he so often frequented, the people thought that they recognized him. Of course, nobody knew the poor man’s name. They just knew that he looked like the guy who was always begging them for things. He was that guy that nobody wanted to make eye contact with. That’s probably why they were not even certain that it was him. It wasn’t until he confirmed it that they knew it was him. This shows us how easy it is to become blind to those that are around us. Sure, we see them, but do we really see them?
6. **Notice that they were skeptical of the blind man’s story (John 9:10-13).** The neighbors asked the blind man how his eyes had been opened. He told them what Jesus had commanded him to do. When they heard this, they desired to know where Jesus was at. The blind man had no idea where to find Him. Can you picture this story? This man had been begging and taking their food and money. Now, he was miraculously healed. Of course, he can’t tell anybody where to find the person who healed him. It’s pretty clear that the people were skeptical of his story. After the Pharisees questioned the man, the Bible says that the Jews did not believe his story. Notice, it wasn’t just the Pharisees that had doubts about the veracity of his claim. All of the people had serious doubts. One thing is certain: none of them were rejoicing with him over what had happened.
7. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN CHALLENGES US TO OPENLY PROCLAIM WHOSE SIDE WE ARE ON. (JOHN 9:14-23)
8. **Notice that there was a division among the Pharisees (John 9:14-18).** When the blind man shared his story with the Pharisees, there were many who proclaimed that Jesus was a sinner. In their eyes, He had violated the Sabbath. Yet, there were others who weren’t so sure. They questioned how a sinner could do such miracles. There were probably Pharisees like Nicodemus there. These were the one’s who believed in Jesus but were too afraid to share that belief with their friends. Instead, they would challenge their unbelieving friends’ assertions without clearly stating their own position. While the Pharisees argued among themselves, they asked the blind man for his opinion. This was his chance to state his position on the matter. Not knowing full who Jesus was, the blind man told them that he believed that Jesus was a prophet. This answer probably did not go over well with a good number of them.
9. **Notice that the blind man’s parents were unwilling to state their position on the matter (John 9:19-23).** When the parents were brought before the Jewish leaders, they were terrified. They knew that their son had been healed by Jesus, but they also knew that the Jews hated Jesus. When they were confronted by the Jews, they had to decide how they would answer. While they did not lie about their son, they also did not provide much of an endorsement. All they were willing to do was identify their son and that he was blind. They were so afraid of the Jews that they chose to lie and state that they did not know how their son had been healed. They chose their social status over the truth. They chose it over their son. They chose it over Jesus.
10. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN REVEALS THE WISDOM THAT WE GAIN WHEN OUR EYES ARE OPENED. (JOHN 9:24-41)
11. **Notice that the blind man recognized the foolishness of the Jewish leaders (John 9:24-30).** After their conversation with the blind man’s parents, the Pharisees called the man to them again. They did not have any answer for what had happened. Ultimately, they determined to just give God the credit for the miracle, as they were certain that Jesus was a sinner. The man saw their foolishness, and he would not accept it. While he did not fully know who Jesus was, he knew that Jesus was the one responsible. He told them as much. They again asked him what Jesus had done. At this point, the man began to mock the leaders. He asked them whether they would listen this time. He asked them whether they would become one of his disciples. He had figured out that the whole “investigation” was a sham. They had already decided that Jesus was guilty. He could see right through their false spirituality.
12. **Notice that the Pharisees didn’t have an answer to counter the blind man (John 9:30-34).** After he initially challenged them and was reviled, the blind man continued to speak to the Pharisees. He knew that he had them on the ropes. At first, he had stated that he did not know whether Jesus was a sinner or not. Now, he proclaimed that Jesus could not be a sinner. He concluded with this statement: “If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.” The Pharisees had no answer to this. Instead of making an effort to respond, the Pharisees just spoke down to the man and kicked him out of the synagogue. This is a classic response that people make when they do not have a valid argument.
13. **Notice that the man came to understand who Jesus really was (John 24:35-41).** After the man had been kicked out of the synagogue, Jesus sought the man out. The blind man had done something that very few were willing to do: he had stood up for Jesus. As a result, Jesus revealed who He was to the man. He didn’t just call Himself the Son of Man. He called Himself the Son of God. He made it clear to the blind man that He was the Christ. The blind man simply answered: “I believe.” Then, he worshipped the Lord. This man who had been written off by everyone showed wisdom and faith that even the disciples rarely exhibited. He started out as a beggar, but he ended up as a preacher!

**Conclusion:** As Christians, we are no longer spiritually blind. We readily see and believe in the One who died for our sins. Yet, we can be guilty of being blind to the purpose of God in allowing problems to arise. We can also be blind to the needs of others. Our blindness may even be seen in our thinking that compromise and “middle-ground” are acceptable positions to take. Let’s make sure that our eyes stay open, and we use the wisdom that God gives us.