

The Rock: 09-18-2022

A year with the Master

Title: The man born blind

Scripture: John 9:1-17

(Black bible Pg. ESV)

Theme:

Holding to the right "view" of God, in other words, our Biblical theology, comes at a cost. We are going to see healing, belief, pride and finally persecution for belief.

Introduction:

We come to this story, this event that happened just as Jesus was leaving the temple, having had an argument with the Pharisees there.

If you could call it an argument, as I don't know how you argue with God Himself, but it seems, as we continue reading in John's gospel into chapter nine, that they continue to do so.

Jesus has just told them that before Abraham was, "I am." A clear declaration that He is the eternal God, the one who called Abraham, the one who spoke to Moses in the burning bush, and more.

Yet, here these men are, pride-filled and charging full steam ahead in an effort to stone Jesus, or at least get the Romans to tend to this nuisance from the north.

There is a lot here in this powerful chapter. From a world view perspective, we see weird views of God and how he punishes people.

We see persecution for believing in Jesus, and the challenge to stand up to the crowd, especially when the crowd presses in and threatens.

The thought of performance-based acceptance and generational sin is clear here, as Jesus tries to correct their perspectives, and these problems are just with His disciples.

We haven't even gotten to the Pharisees yet.

This beautiful story of grace, mercy and compassion in the middle of Jesus Himself being threatened, helps me a lot.

He is rock steady, just doing the right thing even though the crowd continues to yell and threaten. Ahh-God's got this. I can almost hear Jesus saying: "They don't like that I am the 'I am', let's just see how they handle this little miracle. While I am in this world, I am the light of the world."

Jesus gets His guys sorted out first.

-John 9:1-5 (ESV)

"As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

The Story:

This has nothing to do with his sin, her sin, their sin. It has to do with God and His works He wants the world to see.

Some would say that is a bit arrogant, and perhaps it is, but I suppose if you created the entire universe from nothing, you've got the space to boast a little.

But, that's not what is really being said. God wants His power displayed among His people, because it is for our benefit and for His glory.

This will unpack itself as this man will find, and we will find out as well. It is important for us to know what our view and opinion of God is.

Because it is going to help or hinder our understanding not just of Him, but of our world and the things that happen in it.

It seems that the Jewish people had adopted some sort of mid-set that God was this "cosmic benefactor". As though we are here for His entertainment.

Performing for His pleasure, and punished when we don't. That's where these questions come from: Who sinned? Him or His parents.

He's blind and being punished for something, right? That's how the "god's" work, isn't it." We perform, we sacrifice just right and the mighty smiter will refrain from smiting us, right? Wrong!

God wants to display His kindness and goodness to us, through us and within us. Remember what Jesus said, quoting from Isaiah, at the very outset of His ministry, we repeat it often:

-Luke 4:18-19 (ESV)

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

This worldview and perspective is so important. We need to know what our view of God is. His sovereignty and His purposes in our lives. This view will affect everything we do and think as we go about our day to day living.

We see here in this text this morning four things that we will do our best to work through and apply:

1-The people were confused (vs. 8-12)

2-The Pharisee's were angry (vs. 13-17)
Deflection and confusion and finally outright pride and denial

3-The parents were scared (Vs 18-23)

4-The boldness of the blind man (Vs 25, 30-33)

So, all of a sudden, heaven breaks in and this man born blind has mud rubbed into his eyes and washes in a public pool and can now see.

Not something that happens every day. John simply says that he came back seeing. I am not so sure about that.

How would you have responded? Oh, this is nifty, a minute ago all I saw was black, and now I can see light, shade, people, a beautiful building. How quaint, home I shall go to tell the Mrs.

I don't think so. Yes, he came back seeing, but I suspect he was quite loud in doing so because it unsettled people:

-John 9:8-9 (ESV)

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

"LISTEN! It's me, how many times I gotta tell ya! It's me." When they finally listen, they have to know how. Why? Well, it's not everyday something like this happens.

-John 9:10-12 (ESV)

"So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

All of a sudden, they want to meet Jesus. Where is He. "Beats me, when He sent me to rinse here at the pool, I was blind. So not too sure."

Not trying to be humorous here, but let's be honest, it's kind of funny. The shock

and the line of questioning right at the beginning is one of amazement.

It's like all of a sudden, our prayers are answered, and we are just dumfounded. Well, why should we be? After all we prayed believing God would answer, right? Well...

Not always. Dave shared with us a beautiful story of answered prayer, and even better, specifically answered prayer. Even a blind man would see God's hand in that, and yet, sometimes, no actually most times, I doubt.

I wonder if you do too. Be encouraged, because the works of God are displayed even during the times of our doubts. In fact, if we watch close enough, we will see that it is usually in the middle of our doubts where God shows up and works on our behalf.

Yet, while some want to see Jesus for good reasons, there are those who want nothing to do with Him, no matter how clear the evidence is.

-John 9:13-14 (ESV)

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

Some logistical work here is being done. These people know now that a miracle has occurred, and part of the Law said that you have to have the priest, the Pharisee at the Temple validate it.

But Jesus, ever the one to pick a fight, healed the guy on the Sabbath. Not supposed to do that, as it "violates the Law." Apparently, God is not allowed to heal one of His kids on the day He created for us to rest.

-John 9:15-16a (ESV)

"So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath."

Pride does funny things, doesn't it? This is what their problem is. Half are arguing that it can't be a miracle, even though the miracle is standing right in front of them. Why? Happened on the Sabbath.

Half of them understand, at least in their egg-heads that God doesn't function that way:

-John 9:16b (ESV)

"But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them."

In typical government fashion they create a committee and kick the can down the road. Let's ask the guy.

-John 9:17 (ESV)

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

Now, he answers their question and they don't believe him. This is amazing, again, pride. They are angry and refuse to acknowledge the man standing right in front of them. This is where his parents come in:

-John 9:18-19 (ESV)

"The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

Very quickly, they throw their boy back under the bus because they are afraid:

-John 9:20-23 (ESV)

"His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

There is a cost for our belief. Especially when things get a bit weird and out of this world different. His parents didn't want to face that cost.

Persecution and suffering, as we learned last week are a promise. Not a fun one, but one that Jesus told us about. Our faith comes at a cost, and sometimes that cost is relationships with our families.

How many of us struggle in prayer for unsaved loved ones? Many, if not all of us. Our prodigals, whether they be our kids, our parents and so on.

They will not agree with us, perhaps even pick or make fun of. Why are you weird,

and why do you believe all that stuff?
Pride.

Jesus said that faith in Him would cost,
and that cost, hurts more often than we
like.

-Luke 12:51-53 (ESV)

"Do you think that I have come to give
peace on earth? No, I tell you, but
rather division. For from now on in one
house there will be five divided, three
against two and two against three. They
will be divided, father against son and
son against father, mother against
daughter and daughter against mother,
mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-
law."

This is painful to see and understand,
but our faith in Christ costs and
sometimes it costs us at home with those
who are closest to us. Our job is to love
in spite of it all!

This guy doesn't throw his parents under
the bus, nor does he get mad at them. Be
encouraged by this, and love anyway.
Jesus did.

What this guy does is to stand boldly
before the men who should know better and
should be celebrating, instead:

-John 9:24-25 (ESV)

"So for the 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." He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

Ahh- he won't give ground and change his story. He is holding the line, and because of that, things are going to get contentious:

-John 9:26-29 (ESV)

"They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from."

Then it happens. We see that this guy's understanding of God and how He works is more Biblical than all of their learning, and they don't like it:

-John 9:30-34 (ESV)

"The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out."

Why, what an amazing thing. Verses 30-31 are so powerful: the simple understanding and faith of a child. Worship Him, do His will, He listens to prayer.

A miracle happened, and just because they (or we) cannot explain it or understand it, does not make it untrue.

Divine healings always fall into this category. A miracle is a miracle because it defies science and the laws of nature and physics. That's how we know it's a miracle!

Because we know what is ordinary, science shows us that and we should never see these things as contradictory: Faith and science.

Nor should a person look at a rational and reasoned faith and say: That's

nonsense because you cannot prove it scientifically.

Much in this world cannot be proven scientifically -metaphysically. I love my wife. How do you know? Because I told you. Well prove it. I tell you how I feel, and that works itself out in action. But you still will have to take on faith that I love Lisa.

Their pride will not allow them to see any of this. A warning for us all, recorded here in Scripture, if we think we can never become a Pharisee:

Pride breeds arrogance, arrogance creates an unteachable spirit, and an unteachable spirit becomes the fool in the room who doesn't even know they are the fool.

That is just what is happening here. I have to always police myself, because I know myself and pride is a destructive and blinding thing.

But to close, we look at the beauty of this entire story. This once blind man is evangelizing by declaring his belief that Jesus is at least a prophet.

Jesus wants this man to believe Him for who He is, not just for what He has done: The great I Am:

-John 9:35-38 (ESV)

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him."

Lord, I believe. Humility and physical blindness opened up the spiritual eyes of this man to see that the "I am" was standing right in front of him and he could see clearly now, the rain is gone.

The Pharisee's blinded by pride and anger, in spite of all the evidence still refused to believe. Because of that, Jesus is very clear to them that their guilt remained.

Why? They refused to believe the work of God displayed right in front of them. This "uneducated" blind man understood the grace and goodness of God better than they ever could.

Jesus offered Himself to everyone He came in contact with, and He has filled His followers with His light and we get to shine in this world, holding out the same hope and healing that this blind man got to see and experience.

