

The Light and the Darkness (John 9)

I. God's Light Shines Even in Our Suffering (1-5)

A. God's Works are Glorified in Our Weakness (1-3)

1. Jesus Encounters a man born blind (1)
2. The disciples ask why he was born blind (2)
 - a. They attribute his blindness to some specific sin
 - b. They wonder if his sin or his parents' sin caused his blindness
 - c. They believe that someone did something to bring this blindness upon him
 - d. While all sickness and pain is due to sin, many make the mistake of thinking that all suffering is specifically in response to a particular sin. In reality, all of us will suffer sickness eventually. The world is fallen and we must live in it until we die or Christ returns. There is no point in asking what caused this tragedy or suffering.
3. Jesus gives the disciples the purpose of His blindness (3)
 - a. Jesus doesn't bother answering what caused his blindness
 - b. Jesus tells them the reason he is blind is to demonstrate God's works
 - c. Regardless of what suffering we experience – God has a purpose and that purpose is for our Good (Rom. 8:28)
4. This should give us comfort knowing that none of our suffering is outside of God's purpose. He is using all things for the good of His children.
 - a. Would you trade 30 years of eyesight if God asked you to so that He could be glorified?
 - b. Would you endure any suffering God would ask in order to make His name known and give Him glory?
 - c. If the answer is no, then perhaps you don't treasure God's glory. Perhaps you love this world more than Him

B. God's Works are Displayed Through Christ (4-5)

NOTE: There is a textual variant here –some manuscripts say “We must work...” others say, “I must work...” – Either way, the point is that the work of God must be carried out while there is time.

1. Notice that Jesus and his disciples are the instruments through which God's works are carried out.
 - a. The man was blind so that God's works might be displayed
 - b. God's works must be done by Christ and his followers
 - c. Jesus is telling his disciples to stop discussing why this man is suffering and start doing something to help him
 - d. We are to comfort the suffering and help the needy not engage in speculations about why they are in that condition
 - e. God uses His people as His hands and feet.
2. Jesus is the Light of the World

- a. The world is in darkness – because of the fall of man, suffering, sickness, and death are present everywhere
- b. Jesus is the light that dispels the darkness
- c. Jesus brings comfort and healing to those who suffer
- d. Jesus uses his body (the church) to minister that light to those who are hurting.
- e. This doesn't mean everyone gets physically healed in this life – but death is defeated and all those who trust in him will be healed perfectly forever.

II. The Testimony of the Light (6-15)

A. Jesus Heals the Blind Man (6-7)

- 1. Jesus anoints the man's eyes with mud
- 2. Jesus commands the man to wash
- 3. The man obeys Jesus and is healed

B. The Blind Man Gives Testimony to His Healing (8-15)

1. The Healed Man Tells What He Knows (8-12)

- a. Many people didn't recognize the man (8-9)
- b. Jesus healed him and he was changed
- c. People couldn't believe the transformation
- d. This is the same in our lives

2. The Man Testified to Jesus' Work (9b-11)

NOTE: The man was healed but not yet a believer yet. He only gave testimony to what he knew so far.

- a. He affirmed that he had been born blind (9b)
- b. He testified about what happened to Him (10-11)
 - i. The people asked how he was healed
 - ii. He told them of Jesus who put mud in his eyes.

3. The Man Was Not Yet a Believer (12)

- a. He didn't where Jesus was
- b. Later we will see his understanding of Jesus growing and toward the end, Jesus finally reveals himself to the man and he worships him.

C. The Blind Man Gives Testimony Before the Authorities (13-15)

1. The man is taken before the Pharisees (13)

- a. The Pharisees were actively opposing Jesus
- b. The people brought the man to them to authenticate this as a work of God or not

2. The Pharisees question his illegal healing (14-15a)

- a. Once again Jesus is healing a man on the Sabbath
- b. This is what got him in trouble in John 5
- c. The Pharisees are not just questioning him to testify – they are calling him as a witness in a crime

3. The Man Testifies to What Jesus did (15b)

- a. The man simply gives them the facts
- b. He put mud in his eye, the man washed, now he can see

- c. For most people, this would have been very frightening. The Pharisees could condemn him and excommunicate him if he said something they didn't like
- d. Excommunication meant he could not worship in the Temple, go into the synagogue, or be considered clean by Jewish standards. – this may not seem like much to us, but for them, it would have been terrifying. As far as they were concerned, the excommunicated man could never be received by God.

III. The Light and the Darkness Grow (16-33)

A. The Light in the Blind man Grows – The Darkness in the Pharisees Grows

1. The Man Grows in His Understanding of Jesus (16-17)

- a. The Pharisees were divided over Jesus (16)
 - i. Some denied Jesus because He broke their Sabbath tradition
 - They said He couldn't be from God because He didn't keep the Sabbath the way they thought it should be kept
 - ii. Some said Jesus must be from God because of His miracles
 - They said sinners couldn't do the miracles He did.
- b. The Pharisees question the man about Jesus' Identity (17a)
 - i. He was the one supposedly healed
 - ii. They asked who He thought Jesus was
- c. The Man says Jesus is a prophet (15b)
 - i. He has grown in his understanding
 - ii. Now he knows Jesus has come from God
 - iii. He doesn't yet know the full truth about Jesus, but you can see he is moving in the right direction while the Pharisees are moving in the opposite direction

2. The Pharisees Grow in Their Unbelief (18-23)

- a. They Pharisees call his parents to testify (18-19)
 - i. They do not believe the miracle (18) so they desperately attempt to find a way to discredit him
 - ii. They already do not believe so they want to find a way around the evidence.
 - iii. Rather than investigate the truthfulness of the man, they seek to find a way around his testimony
 - iv. Man cannot discredit the testimony of those who have been changed by Christ.
- b. The Parents Refuse to Get Involved (20-23)
 - i. The Parents affirm that he is there son and he was born blind (20)
 - ii. The Parents refuse to testify about his healing (21)
 - a. They are aware that he can see

- b. They don't want to give Jesus credit even though their son says it is so –to do so would be to defy the Pharisees.
 - c. The Parents tell the Pharisees to ask their son himself
 - iii. The Parents are terrified of being excommunicated (22-23)
 - a. They didn't want to be put out of the synagogue
 - b. Even though they didn't believe in Christ, they refused to testify to the truthfulness of their son
 - c. They would only defer to his testimony
- B. The Man and The Pharisees Get Bolder in their Claims (24-27)
 - 1. The man cannot deny what happened to him (24-25)
 - a. The Pharisees demand the healed man repudiate Christ (24)
 - i. They admonished him to give glory to God by denying Christ
 - ii. They plainly stated their position that Jesus is a sinner – and they expected him to agree or face punishment.
 - b. The man can only testify to what Jesus did for him (25)
 - i. He cannot testify yet as to whether Jesus is a sinner
 - ii. He doesn't yet know Jesus
 - iii. All he can do is tell what Jesus did for him
 - iv. There can be no doubt that he was blind and now sees.
 - 2. The man gets bolder in his testimony (26-27)
 - a. The Pharisees ask again how Jesus opened his eyes (26)
 - b. The man complains that he has already told them (27a)
 - c. The man questions their motives in asking (27b)
 - i. He asks them if they want to become his disciples?
 - ii. This was a blatant smart remark
 - iii. He knew this would set them off
 - iv. He was risking their wrath and becoming bolder about his claims
- C. Light and Darkness Come to A Standoff (28-33)
 - 1. The Pharisees reject Jesus (28-29)
 - a. They reviled him for smarting off
 - b. They claim to be of Moses' religion
 - c. They know God spoke to Moses but they don't even know where Jesus has come from
 - d. They say they don't know if he has come from God
 - 2. The Man Rejects the Pharisees (30-33)
 - a. The man doubts the Pharisee's knowledge (30)
 - i. The man is getting bolder and bolder

- ii. He demeans them once again by saying they are the religious leaders and they don't know where this miracle worker has come from
- iii. Jesus' miracle is a fact – so by their own words they claim to be ignorant of God's work
- iv. They would have taken this as another back handed remark

- b. The man doubts the Pharisee's claims (31)
 - i. the man says that everyone knows God doesn't listen to sinners – He listens to those who follow him
 - ii. He is implying that Jesus couldn't be doing these works if he was just another sinner

- c. The man doubts the Pharisee's logic (32-33)
 - i. No one had ever healed a man who was born blind
 - ii. Jesus couldn't have healed him if he were not from God

- d. By his argument, the man effectively destroyed the Pharisee's argument and they know it.

IV. The Evidence of Light and Darkness are Manifested (34-41)

A. The Man Receives the Light (34-38)

1. The Pharisees cast him out (34)

- a. Now he is excommunicated from their religion
- b. For a Jewish man this would mean misery in this life and damnation in the next

2. Jesus Receives the Man (35-38)

- a. Jesus makes himself known to the man (35-37)
 - i. Jesus calls him to faith (35)
 - He calls himself the son of man
 - He is the messiah foretold in Daniel
 - He asks the man if he believes Jesus is this Messiah

ii. Jesus reveals himself as the Messiah (36-37)

3. Jesus is worshiped by the Man (38)

- a. He has been removed from worshiping in the Temple or the synagogue. But Jesus receives his worship
- b. The man's faith has grown into salvation – he now worships Jesus rather than simply believing he is a healer or a prophet.

B. Jesus Will Either give man light or Leave man in Darkness (39-41)

1. Jesus gives sight and makes others blind (39)

- a. He came into the world for judgment
- b. He is the basis of all judgment
- c. The blind receive sight and those with sight become blind

2. Jesus Condemns the Pharisees to remain in Darkness (40-41)

- a. They heard him speak and knew he spoke of them
- b. They asked if he was calling them blind

c. Jesus says that because they say they are not blind – they are guilty