

You Have Seen Him
February 12, 2023
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John 9:24-38

"There are none so blind as those who will not see." What is the meaning?

We've all had the experience of searching for something that was right before our eyes and we just didn't notice it. This week in sunny Southern California on the last day of our company meetings one of our golfers shot a hole in one. After I congratulated him one of his teammates said he had looked around for several minutes trying to find his ball only to notice it had gone in the hole!

Back to that saying, it's one thing to be distracted and miss something. It's another to be blind because you choose not to see the reality before you. John chapter nine begins as Jesus focuses on a man who was born blind. The disciples saw a topic for theological discussion. The religious leaders trailing Jesus saw another opportunity to trap Him. Jesus saw two needs: physical blindness and spiritual blindness. The man could not see; others would not see.

Here's the point: Jesus comes seeking to open the eyes of people blinded by sin. Those who receive His gift of healing will clearly see Him and never be the same. Those who refuse to acknowledge Him for Who He is will continue in spiritual blindness and perhaps in eternal darkness. Those of us whose eyes have been opened in salvation can sometimes be distracted from seeing what Jesus sees.

- The blind man was doing what blind men in that day had to do: begging.
- Jesus' disciples asked, *"Who sinned, the man or his parents?"* In the Jewish culture physical affliction was assumed to be the result of sin.
- Jesus said, *"It was not because of his sins or his parents' sins, but I'm going to use his blindness to display God's glory."*
- We should never assume physical sickness or handicap is punishment from God. Sometimes sinful behavior does result in illness or injury, but God in His sovereignty may allow affliction for reasons we don't understand. What we can know for certain is God can use that situation to draw people to Himself.
- Jesus used mud as a healing ointment and told the man to go wash. Though he could only hear Jesus' voice, the blind man trusted the instructions and his eyes were opened. A picture of faith and obedience.
- The neighbors were astounded. The Pharisees were incensed. This was the Sabbath and again this Jesus is violating the law to help this man!
- They had to get to the bottom of this infraction. There was investigation and division. *"This man is not from God because He doesn't keep the Sabbath!"* Others said, *"How can a man who is a sinner heal like this?"*

- What did the formerly blind man have to say about his healing? *“He healed my blindness. He is a prophet.”*
- They needed to discredit his testimony. Maybe he was never blind.
- They called the man’s parents to testify; they would only confirm his blindness but wouldn’t comment on the miraculous healing because recognizing Jesus as Messiah would get you excommunicated.
- Back to the formerly blind beggar. Look at verse 24.

John 9:24–38 (ESV) — 24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give glory to God. [This was a form of “swearing in a witness”] We know that this man is a sinner.” **25** He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

- What a simple testimony of his encounter with Jesus. At this point he only knew Jesus’ voice, soon he would see Him face to face.
- The man’s healing and their haranguing made him bolder in his reply.

26 They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

- Skeptics always look for evidence to verify their skepticism. In this case they needed evidence to discredit Jesus. They should have been seeking to know Who instead they were obsessed with how.

27 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?” **28** And they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. **29** We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” **30** The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. **31** 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. **32** Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. **33** If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” **34** They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out. [of the synagogue]

- The beggar wasn’t a trained theologian but he had personal experience that Jesus had changed his life. Verse 33: *“If this man were not from God...” he could not have opened my eyes.”*
- The beggar could see physically and was beginning to see spiritually.
- The religious crowd had to protect their institution. There is none so blind as those who will not see. They refused to see Jesus as Messiah.
- Warren Wiersbe writes, *“Religious bigots do not want to face either evidence or logic. Their minds are made up. Had the Pharisees honestly considered the facts, they would have seen that Jesus is the Son of God, and they could have trusted Him and been saved.”ⁱⁱ*

- Instead of going to Jesus to ask Him about how He had healed the man, they kicked the man out of the synagogue. They shunned him.
- Acknowledging Christ can cause conflict with those who are blind by choice, but Jesus always strengthens the heart of those who trust Him. Look at this beautiful snapshot of salvation in verses 35-38.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” **36** He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” **37** Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” **38** He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

- Let’s look to see what can we learn from the players in this drama.
- The disciples saw a reason to debate theology, Jesus saw the blind man’s need. The disciples were not against Jesus because they were following Him. What was their problem? What can we learn from this?
- What can we learn from the actions of the blind man in verse seven?
- What can we learn from how the former blind man responded to the Pharisees investigation?
- Even if we’ve trusted Christ, how might we be in danger of being like the Pharisees? How should we be more like the former blind man and less like them?

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- *“There are none so blind as those who will not see.”ⁱⁱⁱ*
- Sometimes even Christ-followers can be like that man looking all around for his golf ball that was in the hole all the time. We can get distracted from the amazing thing that just happened.
- Though we have eyes and ears that work, sometimes we don’t see people and situations the way Jesus sees them.
- The disciples saw a topic for theological discussion but Jesus saw a need.
- We must not get so distracted that we miss how Jesus is at work right in front of us. We need to ask Him to open our eyes to see what He sees.
- The religious leaders were too caught up in preserving their religious institution to see Jesus as Messiah and Savior. Instead of praising God for this miraculous healing they saw it as a threat to their institution.
- Sadly, churches and denominations can sometimes be so focused on the institution they become blind to how Jesus is working.
- If we as the church are blind to how Jesus is working, then the institution will not only be distracted from our mission, it may even begin working against what Jesus wants to accomplish. The souls of the unsaved are more important than protecting the institutional church.
- The real model for us is the blind man. He heard Jesus’ voice and did what Jesus told him to do and his eyes were opened. Then when others were skeptical, he simply testified about what Jesus had done for him. Finally, when he could clearly see Who Jesus is he fell down and worshiped Him as Lord and Savior. That is salvation in a snapshot.

- Lord, help us all to be like the blind beggar. Help us to take Jesus at His word and do what He commands us to do. Help us to keep our eyes on Jesus so we won't become distracted or blind to what He is doing.
- Help us to always put the spiritual needs of people above any agenda of our own making. Help us not to be blind because we will not see Jesus at work right in front of us.

ⁱ <https://quizzclub.com/trivia/who-wrote-the-proverb-there-are-none-so-blind-as-those-who-will-not-see/answer/439985/>

ⁱⁱ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 327). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://quizzclub.com/trivia/who-wrote-the-proverb-there-are-none-so-blind-as-those-who-will-not-see/answer/439985/>