



Sunday, May 31, 2026

John 9:1-5 / 39-41

Good morning and welcome to church today, if you were with us last week, you would have heard the story of a blind man who was blind from birth being miraculously healed by Jesus with the elements of spit, mud, and washing in the pool of Siloam (which was called sent.) This story is a remarkable story, not only of the power of God, but it is an incredible picture of His kingdom breaking into our broken world and revealing to us what the kingdom of heaven looks like. This is our great hope. This is what we have to look forward to. Jesus is just giving us a taste of what is to come for all eternity.

We also learned that as soon as the miracle happened, this man was tested and pressed by the Pharisees. And interestingly, it was this pressure that proved to strengthen his faith and actually move him from seeing Jesus as just a man with a name or a prophet sent by God to ultimately believing in Him as the Messiah. The same is true in our lives. Trials, tribulation, suffering – this pressure which the Bible calls ‘Thlipsis’ is important in our lives as it also causes us to grow and mature as we cling to Jesus, draw closer to Him, trust more and more in Him to do what only He can do. Cue clamps and wood: you can’t just stick glue in a wood joint and expect maximum strength. It has to be under pressure in order for it to cure strong.

Now, last week, I also mentioned that this whole entire chapter can be viewed as a sandwich of sorts where the outer layers help to give structure to the middle part just like how the outer layers of bread help to contain the peanut butter and jelly in your kids sandwich. Last week we focused on the middle section, and today we’re going to focus on the outer sections, the first five verses, and the last three verses.

So if you have your Bibles with you this morning, I’d like to invite you to turn with me to John chapter 9. Where we will be reading the first five verses and the last three.

John 9:1-5 / 39-41

‘As he was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

3 “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” Jesus answered. “This came about so that God’s works might be displayed in him. 4 We must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

39 Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, in order that those who do not see will see and those who do see will become blind.”

40 Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things and asked him, “We aren’t blind too, are we?”

41 “If you were blind,” Jesus told them, “you wouldn’t have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.’

Now this last part is interesting because Jesus makes a very bold statement. He says, ‘I came into this world for judgment.’ At first glance, that can seem surprising because we often think of Jesus coming to bring grace, mercy, and forgiveness. And He did. But the reality is that Jesus also came to deal with sin.

And throughout this chapter, we have watched two very different responses to Jesus.

The blind man encounters Jesus and moves from calling Him a man with a name, to a prophet, and then ultimately to worshipping Him as Messiah.

The Pharisees on the other hand move in the exact opposite direction. The more evidence they receive, the harder their hearts become. Rather than receiving Jesus as the Messiah, they reject Him entirely.

This is why Jesus says that He came so that the blind may see and those who think they see may become blind.

The Pharisees are those that think they see. In their world, they are the authorities for anything religious - and they are adamant that Jesus is nothing but a deceiver. They believe the Messiah will come someday, but they are convinced that Jesus is not Him. So what Jesus is saying is that because they think they see, but actually don't, they are spiritually blind and need to come to the place where they realize that they are blind in order to fully see Jesus for who He is.

But because they refuse to do that, Jesus says their sin remains.

The irony being that it is only when a person realizes they are blind that Jesus can then open their eyes. It is only when a person acknowledges their sin that Jesus can forgive it. But the Pharisees' hardened hearts and would not admit that they were wrong.

So at the end of the day, the blind man receives sight because he ultimately receives Jesus. The Pharisees remain blind because they ultimately reject Jesus.

The issue was never eyesight. The issue was whether or not they would see Jesus for who He truly is.

And that right there is the theme that runs through this entire chapter. And even as we walk through the first section now, we see that even the disciples are wrestling with seeing Jesus for who He truly is as well.

Last week we mentioned that the disciples' biggest question was how and why this man became sick and even though that wasn't the primary point for Jesus notice that Jesus doesn't simply disregard the disciples' question. He actually spends the first five verses walking them through His answer. But likely not the answer that they were expecting.

So notice the line of reasoning for the disciples:

'Who sinned? This man or his parents?'

Isn't that interesting? They immediately attributed this man's condition to sin. Either his own sin or his parents. But because he was blind from birth, it's hard to imagine that he himself could be responsible, so it's far more likely that the disciples assumed there must have been some kind of hidden sin in his parents' lives that caused their son to be born this way.

And this wasn't unusual thinking in the ancient world either. In both Jewish and ancient Near Eastern culture, sickness and suffering were often viewed as direct punishment from God. So in the minds of the disciples, this man's blindness had to be the result of somebody's sin. In other words,

this was God's way of punishing the sinner - either the man himself, or his parents.

We need to pause here for a minute. Because if this way of thinking is true, then it raises some very difficult questions about the nature and character of God. Because what the disciples are essentially implying is that some children are born sick or suffering because God is punishing their parents for sin.

And to be fair, this is where we need to make an important distinction biblically.

Jesus is not denying that suffering entered the world because of sin. Scripture is clear about that from Genesis 3 onward. If sin had never entered the world, suffering would never have entered the world either. Disease, death, pain, and brokenness are all ultimately the result of humanity's fall into sin.

At the same time, that does not mean every sickness, disability, or hardship can be traced back to a specific sin. And this is where the disciples got it wrong.

Now, as a point of clarification, this doesn't mean our actions never affect our children. Of course they do. There are real consequences to how we live and how we raise our families. For example, if a pregnant mother abuses alcohol or drugs during pregnancy, the harm that comes to the child is directly connected to those choices. That is a real consequence of destructive behaviour.

But that is very different from what the disciples are suggesting here. They're not talking about natural consequences. They are assuming this man's blindness is a direct spiritual punishment from God because of somebody's sin.

And that idea was partly rooted in passages like Exodus 20 where God says...

Exodus 20:5b

'...I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of the fathers' iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me...'

But this verse needs to be understood in the context of the Ten Commandments as a response to the commandment to not have any idols before the Lord. This is worship-based language that clearly says only God is to be worshipped and if something or someone else takes His rightful place, then the spiritual effect of that will be felt for generations.

In other words, sin can absolutely have generational impact - but that does not mean every sickness, every tragedy, or every disability is God specifically punishing somebody for sin.

And yes, Scripture does show that sinful lifestyle choices, destructive ways of living and even spiritual strongholds can absolutely affect generations of families. But that's not what's happening here. Jesus response makes it very clear:

John 9:3

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” Jesus answered. “This came about so that God’s works might be displayed in him.”

In other words, Jesus says that the explanation for this man’s blindness is not found by looking backward for blame, but by looking forward to what God is about to do through it.

And that shift is enormous.

But.....it also raises more questions because it seems to create a layer of confusion around how the man became blind in the first place. If neither this man nor his parents sinned, resulting in blindness, but as Jesus indicated, this happened so that God would be glorified in his healing, then did God create this man without vision SO THAT He could heal him? Or did he know that this man was going to be born blind, and then step into that situation later SO THAT He could heal him?

This is a question that theologians have been wrestling with for centuries.

And it's the 'SO THAT' part that people often get hung up on. What's interesting, however, is that this isn't the only time in Scripture we see Jesus use this kind of language.

A few chapters later in John 11, Lazarus - one of Jesus' closest friends - becomes deathly ill. The disciples come to Jesus and beg for help, to which Jesus replies:

John 11:4b

“This sickness will not end in death but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

Sound familiar? In both stories Jesus uses the sickness as an opportunity so that God may be glorified through it.

What's interesting is that Jesus doesn't spend any time explaining where the sickness came from. Instead, He immediately focuses on what God is about to do through it.

And that's important because it helps us understand what Jesus is doing in John 9.

At the end of the day, the point for Jesus is not how the man became blind, but that he can now see. And through that miracle, the glory of God is revealed.

So the point of John 9 and John 11 therefore is the glory of God being revealed.

Whether it's a blind man or a sick man that has died, whatever the miracle is to restore sight and life, that's not ultimately the point. The point is that both of those actions are revealing the glory of God.

But here's where it gets even more interesting...

Because when you look at Scripture, healing is not the only way that God reveals His glory. Otherwise, there would be no sick people on the face of this earth.

Just look at the Apostle Paul - He pleaded with the Lord three times to remove what he called a thorn in the flesh. Yet this is how the Lord responded:

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness." Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may reside in me. So I take pleasure in weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and in difficulties, for the sake of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.'

So in Paul's case, God put His power on display, not by healing him, but by sustaining him.

And Paul isn't the only example of this in Scripture.

Think about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. God did not spare them from the fiery furnace. Instead, He met them in the furnace. His glory was revealed not by removing the fire, but by sustaining them through it.

Think about Daniel. God did not keep him out of the lions' den. He protected him in the lions' den.

Think about Joseph. God did not spare him from betrayal, slavery, or prison. Yet through every hardship, God's hand was upon him until eventually he was elevated to #2 in the country.

Do you see the pattern?

The blindness is for the glory of God. The thorn in the flesh is for the glory of God. The healing is for His glory, and the endurance and perseverance is for His glory. It's all for His glory.

(PUT ON SCREEN) Sometimes God does not deliver us or save us or heal us from our affliction, but He delivers us, saves us, and heals us through the affliction.

What a difference it makes when we realize that God can reveal His grace and power through every circumstance we walk through.

Here is the Hope. One day, we will all be completely free. No pain, no sickness, no sorrow. As Christians, this is our assurance as Hebrews teaches us. Until then, we all have life experiences that we have to walk through. God in His sovereignty removes what needs to be removed and permits what needs to be walked through in order to bring us into right relationship with Him.

But here's the kicker of the story of the blind man being healed:

(PUT ON SCREEN) Everybody focuses on what the man gained, but very few people stop to consider what he lost.

For thirty years he had lived as a blind beggar. His location at the temple gates was intentional, as he would seek alms from those entering the temple. His daily routine, his income, and even his identity were all built around that reality. Every morning he knew exactly where he would go. Every day he knew how he would survive.

Then Jesus healed him.

And overnight, everything changed.

When he woke up that morning, he wouldn't need to go to the temple to beg for alms. In fact, that

life was completely over. There was no going back to the life of a beggar now. Who would give alms to a man who could see? The very thing he had depended on for thirty years was suddenly gone. He's not a carpenter, not a Stone Mason, couldn't build a roof, couldn't farm. Yes he could see, but now he could not depend on what he had depended on previously. Ultimate trust would now have to be placed in the hands of his newfound Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Yes, Jesus restored his sight. But the greater miracle wasn't simply that the man could now see. The greater miracle was that he was learning to trust Jesus with a future he could no longer control. Perhaps then, it could be argued that Jesus intentionally restored his sight in order to work on his heart.

Hear this: (PUT ON SCREEN) Sometimes God will heal us from something in order to get that part out of the way so that He can do a deeper work of restoration in our lives.

I know this to be true in my own life.

Years ago, God healed me from something, and it was one of the most freeing and liberating experiences I've ever had. I thought that was the end of the story. I thought God was finished.

What I didn't realize was that God was using that healing to expose a deeper issue that had been hidden beneath the surface the entire time. The thing He healed was real, but it had also become a mask that concealed a deeper area of brokenness.

And that deeper area of brokenness would require more trust, more reliance upon Him. More counselling....the introduction of freedom session....etc

This is why I appreciate Paul's words about the thorn in the flesh so much. Three times he pleaded with the Lord to remove it, yet God responded:

'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness.'

In other words, God chose to reveal His glory differently in Paul's life than He did in the life of the blind man. For the blind man, God's power was revealed through healing. For Paul, God's power was revealed through perseverance.

In one case, God removed the problem but in the other, He supplied the grace to walk through it. Yet in both cases, the goal was exactly the same: that Christ would be made known.

Looking back now, I can see that God was doing both in my life. There were things He healed immediately, and there were things He asked me to walk through. There were areas where He brought freedom in a moment, and there are other areas where He is patiently teaching me dependence.

And that's exactly what we see happening in the life of this blind man. Jesus didn't simply restore his vision. He began restoring the man himself.

Now, after all of this, I want to take you back to the very first line. We read in chapter 9. It says that as Jesus was entering into the temple, he saw a man that was blind. Jesus saw him. He noticed him. He wasn't annoyed by him. He wasn't embarrassed by him. He wasn't ashamed of him and He certainly wasn't too busy for him. Jesus saw him and was moved with compassion toward him.

And I believe that is a reminder for every person in this room today.

No matter what burden you're carrying...No matter what pain you're walking through...No matter what sickness, frustration, guilt, sorrow, disappointment, or struggle you're facing...

Jesus sees you. He notices you. He knows exactly where you are. And He cares.

And listen, our God is still a God who heals. He healed in Scripture, and He is the God who never changes. Healing is not something God used to do. It is part of who He is - even to this day. In fact, the New Testament even instructs us to pray for healing. We are told to call the pastors, anoint with oil, and pray in faith.

So when you put all of that together, faith should rise in our hearts for this incredible gift that God has given to His church.

And yes, we also know that God sometimes chooses to reveal His glory differently. Sometimes He gives healing. Sometimes He gives sustaining grace. Sometimes He gives perseverance and endurance, just as He did with Paul.

But notice that Paul's grace came after Paul's prayer for healing. He prayed first. Then God responded.

And that's why we always begin with prayer for healing and leave the outcome in God's hands. Our responsibility is to ask. God's responsibility is to answer.

And because He is good, we can trust whatever answer He gives - knowing that through it all His

glory will be revealed.

So here's what I'm going to ask us to do all across this place. I'm gonna ask you to stand and we're gonna enter into a closing time of worship and as we do if you're here today and you're asking God to heal a part of your life and you desperately need him to touch your life to bring a healing touch to bring restoration to do a miracle all of the above, then I'm gonna ask you as we worship to simply come to the front and worship him because something happens when we worship through our needs. It's a way of putting the ownership back on him saying God I'm powerless to do anything about this, but I'm created to worship you so here is the worship I can give to you.

And as we are worshipping, I'm going to have some of the pastoral staff walk around and pray for each and every single person we're gonna annoy your head with oil as the Bible instructs and pray for healing or whatever it is that you need. You can tell the person or you can say unspoken, but ultimately God knows. You can stay for as long as you need up at the front or you can go back after you've been prayed for.

Closing blessing:

May the Lord Bless you and Keep you
May He cause His face to Shine upon you
May He be gracious towards you
Lifting up His countenance before you
And may He give you peace
In Jesus name, Amen.

Josh Hageman

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