

Man's Eyes Opened (Part I and II)

The material in today's sermon is so extensive that I've divided it into two parts. Part One is from **John 9:1-7**, which I've titled "The Mission of Jesus." Part Two is from **John 9:8-41**, which I've titled "The Stages of Spiritual Sight."

Ok, let's start with Part One, "The Mission of Jesus." Humanity's eyes are spiritually blind, and they need to be opened. "The Mission of Jesus" is to open eyes. And that mission is divided into **four** parts. The **first** part of that mission is to teach the truth. The **second** part is Jesus came to do the works of God. The **third** part is for Jesus to be the light of the world. The **fourth** part of Jesus' mission was to give sight to mankind. As Part One begins, Jesus is passing by and he sees a man who had been blind since birth. It is with this man that Jesus will fulfill the **first** part of his mission to teach the truth. There was something about the man that attracted both Jesus and the disciples. Jesus **saw** him, which indicated interest, care, concern, and compassion. The disciples apparently felt the same interest and concern for the man. It was a common belief that a person suffered

because of sin, either his own or his parents' sin. Was he suffering because of some great sin committed by his parents, or because God had foreseen that the man would be a greater sinner before he was born?

Apparently, Jewish belief was that a person's sin is foreseen; therefore, the person was "born in sins" and thereby punished. **Two** things should be noted. **One**, Jesus said that the man's suffering was not due to sin, but that he suffered so that the works of God could be demonstrated in his life. Very often a person suffers not because of sin but because God desires a unique opportunity to show his works. That was the case in **Luke 5:18-20**: "Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven.'" The **second** thing that should be noted is that Jesus carried the discussion beyond the man's blindness.

The disciples were asking how a man such as this could be punished from birth. Jesus picked up their question and moved it to the **second** part of his mission to do the works of God.

It was God's works that had to be done. And **four** works are stressed in this passage. **First**, there is the work of seeking man. We find this in **Luke 19:10**, where it reads: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." **Second**, there is the work of caring for man. God cares that the man is blind, which is what we're told in **1 Peter 5:7**: "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." **Third**, there is the work of loving and having compassion. God loves and has compassion for man in his blindness and darkness. And **fourth**, there is the work of delivering from darkness and giving sight. Which what we are told in **Colossians 1:13**, "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves." Now we'll look at the urgency of Jesus' mission. And that urgency is stressed by two things. **First**, the word "must" means compulsion and necessity.

There are no questions, no suggestions, no urgings about the matter. The works of God **must** be done. **Second**, the time for work is limited. Christ and his followers do not have forever to do the work. Whatever is to be done must be done today, while there is still some daylight left. Night is coming, the time when no man can work. Time will end and the opportunity will be gone forever. This is what we read in **Ephesians 5:16**: "Making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil."

The next note relates to the word "we" in **verse four**: "we must do the work of him who sent me." That word "we" tells us a wonderful truth. Jesus ties us to his mission from the Father. We, too, are in the world to do the works of God. Our very purpose for being on earth is to proclaim and show forth the works of God. Which is what is says in **John 20:21**: "Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'" The **third** part of Jesus' mission is to be the "Light of the World." If a man wishes to be delivered from darkness, he must come to Christ. Christ is the only one who gives sight to man and to His world. Which is exactly what it

says in **John 8:12**: “When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”

The **fourth** and final part of Jesus' mission in Part One is for Jesus to give sight to man. Jesus came to demonstrate the power to give sight. Note that Jesus did not just speak of **healing** to the man. His word alone was the method he often used in healing, but this was not the case with this man. He did much more, and by his act he demonstrated **two** things to the world. **One**, he will do everything he can to deliver a man from darkness and give him sight. **Two**, he has the power to deliver man and to give him sight. The man's faith needed to be aroused and stirred. Jesus used **two** things to awaken the man's faith. **First**, he used a point of contact, the touch of his hands upon the man's eyes. **Second**, Jesus sent the man to the pool of Siloam. Jesus was using the pool as a symbol of the Messiah who was sent by God to give sight to the world. The blind man, by obeying Jesus and going to the pool, would receive his sight. His

obedience would demonstrate to the blind of the world, that they, too, could receive their sight by coming to Jesus and obeying him. The man washed and “came home seeing.” He received his sight because he did exactly what Jesus said.

So, our eyes can be opened; and we can be delivered from the darkness of sin and shame, death and corruption, hell and destruction by coming to Jesus Christ and by obeying him. Which is what is says in **Isaiah 50:10**, “Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.”

Now to Part Two of today's sermon from **John 9:8-41**, “The Stages of Spiritual Sight.” The blind man has been delivered from darkness and given sight by the compassion of the Lord Jesus. In this passage, the delivered man is confronted by his neighbors (vv. 8-12), by the Pharisees (vv. 13-34), and by Jesus (vv. 35-41). The scene flows rapidly, and the man's growing

knowledge of Jesus is easily seen and grasped. The following outline on the “**Six Stages of Spiritual Sight**” should be adequate to carry us through this passage. **Stage One** will see Jesus as a man; **Stage Two** will see Jesus as a helper or healer; **Stage Three** will see Jesus as a prophet; **Stage Four** will see Jesus as the Savior; **Stage Five** will see Jesus as being “from God;” and **Stage Six** will see Jesus as the “son of God.” I will then **conclude** with the lesson of Jesus’ revelation. So, the **first stage** of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as a man (v. 11). All the healed man knew was that “a man they call Jesus” had commanded him to do certain things, and he did them and received sight. The blind man was blessed by Jesus despite an inadequate understanding of Christ. But note the crucial point: his heart was right toward Jesus. It was tender and willing to do what Jesus said. The first stage of a man’s spiritual journey is to **learn about Jesus**.

A man must learn **about** Jesus before he can ever learn **of** Jesus. Once a man has learned about Jesus, it is imperative that he move on and come to know Jesus personally. The blind man could have stopped at any

stage and failed in his spiritual journey, as we're told in **Matthew 11:28-29**: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls." There are many men like the blind man. They know **about** Jesus, but they do not **know** Jesus, not personally. They know his name, but little else. They have little understanding of his teaching and claims, presence and strength, love and care, power and promises.

The **second stage** of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as a helper or a healer (v. 15). The delivered man was brought before the religionists because the Sabbath law had been broken. This was a serious offense to the Jews. Note the man's answer to the religionist's question. He said that "He (the man, Jesus) put mud on my eyes . . . and I washed and now I see." He still saw Jesus only as a man, but as a man who had done a great thing by **helping** him and **healing** him. Note this is a confession. By giving an answer to some questioners, he was confessing Jesus to be a great helper and healer. Many

people confess that Jesus is a **great man**, a great teacher, helper, example, healer, and preacher. But note the critical point. The delivered man did not yet know Jesus personally. He had not reached the stage of belief, of true salvation, and worship. Which is what we read in **Luke 4:22**: “All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. ‘Isn’t that Joseph’s son?’ They asked.”

The **third stage** of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as a prophet. The man readily progressed in his view of Jesus at this point. But again, Jesus was still seen only as a man, a godly man yes, but only a man. The blind man's concept was still inadequate. He had not reached the stage of belief and worship. The **fourth stage** of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as the Savior. The man now confessed the immortal words, “One thing I do know, I was blind but now I see!” (v. 25). Note that he was confessing his personal experience: he was blind, but now he could see. He could not answer the theological question: “Is Jesus a mere man as all other men, or is he of God?” But he could answer one thing: his own

personal experience. Which is precisely what we can answer when anyone asks us about our faith – we can answer with our personal experience. The point is this: he had progressed in his view of Jesus. He saw that Jesus may be more than a mere man like other men, but he could not say for sure. Just like a child, he did not know the theological terms nor how to express the nature of Jesus, but he did know one thing: Jesus had delivered and saved him from blindness. Jesus was his Savior and Deliver from blindness to sight. Which is what it says in **Luke 19:10**, “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

The **fifth stage** of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as being “from God” (v. 32-33). This was the man's final answer to those who questioned his confession of Jesus. He confessed that Jesus was “**from God.**” He reasoned that helping and delivering a blind man was God's will and Jesus delivered him. God heard Jesus' prayer for him and empowered Jesus to heal him. So, Jesus was bound to be **from God**. The man knew that the works of Jesus

were proof that he was from God. Therefore, Jesus was not a liar and a deceiver; Jesus was not an evil man. He was bound to be who he claimed to be; he was bound to be **from God**. Which is told to us in **John 6:38**, "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me."

The **sixth stage** of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as the Son of God. Note **two** things. **One**, Jesus was the one who did the seeking. He sought the man who had been thrown out. Jesus also does this, no matter who the person is or what the person has done. **Two**, the climactic stage of spiritual sight is clearly demonstrated by the man's experience. It is seeing Jesus as the Son of God, which is what we read in **John 1:34**, "I have seen and I testify this is the Son of God." The man's experience also includes believing Jesus to be the Son of God and worshipping him. Which is what we read in **John 5:24**: "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

And now I will conclude with the lesson of Jesus' revelation. Note two significant points. **First**, Jesus stated that his mission upon earth was to bring judgment. Jesus judges man – all generations of men. He judges the man who knows he is spiritually blind and wants to see. He takes the man who is spiritually blind and gives him sight – if that man really desires to see. He also judges the man who claims to have spiritual sight away from him. The man who says he sees spiritually and claims to know God apart from Christ is judged to be blind. The **second** point is that the religionists expected exemption from judgment. They were opposing Jesus, so they expected him to say they were blind, but he shocked them. He said that blindness was an excuse. If they had been blind, they would have been excused; for they would have been acting in ignorance, not knowing what they were doing. But they knew the law of God, knew about spiritual things, claimed to see, and yet, did not recognize God's son. They were, therefore, guilty and judged **blind** and were to be condemned. Which is

what it says in **Romans 2:11-12**, "For God does not show favoritism. All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law."

Bow your heads as I pray.

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for this story of Jesus restoring sight to the blind man. Your Son's coming reveals who people are and that we are all really in darkness. We need the giver of sight and light. Help us to own up to this need and accept Jesus as the revealer and giver of light and sight. We ask this in your Sons' name. **Amen.**