

**9/19/17**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

Often when we see someone struggling or suffering, we wonder: Why? Why is that man homeless? Why is that woman sick? Why does that family fight so much? Whenever we see unpleasant situations—whatever they might be—we wonder why.

But why do we want to know why? It makes us feel better, safer, and more secure when we can root out the cause. If a man is homeless because he has abused drugs, we feel out of harm's way. If a woman is sick because she ignored early symptoms or her doctor's advice, it's easier to convince ourselves that we will escape her condition. If a family fights because of the sinful way they treat one another, we might consider ourselves distant from such troubles.

*As [Jesus] went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So, the man went and washed, and came home seeing. John 9:1-7*

Jesus speaks about sin's connection to struggles and suffering in the case of the man who was born blind: "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," he said. Not every hardship is caused by a particular sin. The struggles and sufferings that many people experience are beyond their control.

So why was he blind? That man was blind for two reasons. The first reason was because he was born in a sinful and cruel world. The impact of sin is terrible and enormous. It can be sickening and distressing. Suffering is the result of living in this sinful world, but Jesus teaches that not every experience of suffering in our lives is due to a particular sin we have committed.

The second reason this man was blind is far more beautiful. He was born blind so that God could work through him. Jesus saw him and had mercy on him. He reached out to the man and healed his physical malady. Through this miracle Jesus revealed his power as the Son of God to give sight and heal.

But the work of God wasn't done there. Jesus came to this earth to suffer for sins he did not do—all the sins of the world. Our sins caused his pain, his suffering, and his death. But he was wounded willingly to heal us from our sin-sick condition and free us from the power of sin. This is why God sent his Son. Sin destroys but Jesus restores.

***Prayer:*** *Jesus, we know that, by nature, we are blinded by sin. Thank you for reaching out and healing us from our blindness through your Son and your Word. Open our eyes that we might see Jesus as the light of the world. Amen.*

*(WELS E-Devotion, adapted)*

*...See you in church.*

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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