

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind John 9:1-41

by David Servant

David Servant explores the healing of a man born blind to reveal insights about suffering, faith, and the nature of Jesus' miracles.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 24:16, John 9:3-39, 1 Corinthians 12:9

Topics: "Divine Healing", "Suffering Purpose"

Description

David Servant delves into the topic of birth defects and why God allows suffering, using the story of the blind man healed by Jesus to illustrate that physical ailments are not always a result of sin, but can be a means for God's power to be displayed. He emphasizes that while we may not have all the answers to suffering, Christians find comfort in the promise of a new, perfect body in eternity and the availability of healing in this life through faith. Servant highlights the importance of faith in experiencing God's healing power, drawing attention to the blind man's obedience in following Jesus' instructions for healing.

Transcript

Have you ever wondered why some people are born with what are called "birth defects"? That is, they have something wrong with them physically, like the man blind from birth that we just read about. It doesn't seem fair, because most people with birth defects have to live with their problems all their lives. Why does God allow such things?

The Jews of Jesus' day thought they had the answer to this question, and Jesus' disciples expressed it when they passed a blind beggar. They assumed that God was punishing the man either for his own sin or his parents' sins. But their answer to the question wasn't a very good one. If God was punishing the man for his own sins, then the man must have sinned in his mother's womb, because he had been born blind. What could a baby in its mother's womb possibly do that would make God that angry?

And if God were punishing the man for his parents' sins, that would be completely unfair of God. He Himself stated in His own Law that no child should be punished for its parents' crimes (see Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18:19-20).

Jesus' disciples were wrong in their assumptions, and He told them so. The man wasn't born blind because of his or his parents' sins. Jesus said it was so the power of God could be seen in him. That is, the man was born blind so that Jesus could heal him.

This still doesn't answer every question we might have because we might wonder why God would have a man suffer blindness for years just so His supernatural power could be demonstrated in him. Something about that doesn't seem right, even though we know God has the right to do anything He pleases. And what about the many people born blind whom Jesus has never healed? Since they don't fall into the category of being afflicted so God's power could be demonstrated in them, why are they born blind?

God has not given us the answers to all these questions, but the one major consolation that all Christians share is the knowledge that Jesus died for everyone. And any person who believes in Him is guaranteed one day to receive a new body that has no defects. And for those Christians like myself who strongly believe in God's healing promises, we take heart knowing that healing is available in this life. We believe that everyone who has been born with birth defects is a potential candidate for God's power to be displayed in them, just as everyone whom God has declared a sinner is a potential candidate to be saved---if they'll only believe. In Jesus' day, every single person who came to Jesus requesting healing was healed if they believed. Our problem today is lack of faith. Unfortunately, unbiblical teaching has fueled our doubts.

Nothing is mentioned in this story about the blind man's faith being the reason for his healing, so his healing probably fell under the category of what the Bible calls "gifts of healing" (see 1 Corinthians 12:9). Gifts of healings are sovereign acts of God that don't necessarily require any faith on the part of the person needing healing. However, notice that the blind man in today's story did have to obey Jesus by walking to the Pool of Siloam and washing his eyes. That required some faith on his part.

John recorded this story, not only to glorify Jesus, but also to show the various reactions to the miracle. Most of the proud Pharisees refused to believe that Jesus was from God, because He performed this miracle on the Sabbath, breaking their interpretation of God's Law! And at first, the healed man thought Jesus must be a prophet. Later, however, Jesus spoke to him privately and told him that He was the Son of Man. Some of the ancient manuscripts of John's Gospel record that Jesus told the man that He was the Son of God. Regardless, the healed man believed in Him. How do we know? Because he confessed his faith in Jesus and then proved his faith by worshipping Jesus. If the man had believed that Jesus was only a prophet, he would have shaken His hand or hugged Him, but he wouldn't have worshipped Him.

Q. Why do you suppose Jesus put mud on the blind man's eyes in order to heal him? Why didn't He just lay His hand on the man, or simply declare him healed?

A. As Jesus said, He only did exactly what His Father told Him to do. So He must have been following the orders of His Father. Perhaps His Father was trying to help people realize that Jesus was not just a prophet, but God. The original human being was made from the soil. Now some new eyes were being made from soil, something that only God could do!

Q. What did Jesus mean when He said, "I have come to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind" (John 9:39)?

A. Jesus was talking about two kinds of blindness, physical and spiritual. Jesus came to give sight to the physically and spiritually blind. To be spiritually blind means to be ignorant of the truth that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God. The problem is that, unlike physically blind people, spiritually blind people often don't even realize they're blind.

Application: People may be able to argue against your theology or what you believe, but they can't reasonably argue against what has happened to you since you believed in Jesus. That's your testimony. Just like the man in today's story said, "I was blind, and now I can see!" (John 9:25), so you can tell others how God has changed your life. For some people, your testimony could be what sparks their interest in learning more about Jesus!

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