

Slide 1

“In Your Light We See Light”

JOHN 9:1-7

Introduction

1. In the ninth chapter of John’s gospel, we encounter a miracle which stands out among all the recorded miracles which Jesus performed.
2. It is the only miracle in the gospels in which the sufferer is said to have been afflicted from his birth.
3. Twice in the book of *Acts* we read of people who suffered maladies from their birth:
 - a. The lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (*Acts 3:2*).
 - b. The cripple at Lystra (*Acts 14:8*).
4. However, this is the only person in the gospels who has been so afflicted.
5. Another point which stands out concerning this miraculous healing is that it is the second of only two recorded miracles which Jesus performed in Jerusalem.
6. The first, found in *John 5*, was the healing of the invalid man by the pool of Bethesda.
7. All other miracles of healing which we find in the gospels occur outside the city walls of Jerusalem.
8. Even, the restoration of Malchus’ ear in the Garden of Gethsemane following His betrayal by Judas was on the Mount of Olives, outside Jerusalem proper.
9. So, what are we to make of John’s account here, involving a man who was blind from birth.
10. D. A. Carson, in his commentary says that “this chapter portrays what happens when the light shines.”
 - a. “Some are made to see, like this man born blind . . .”
 - b. “Others, who think they see, turn away, blinded, as it were, by the light”

(9:39-41).

11. Tonight, time will not permit us to examine the entire chapter, so I want to break this down into smaller segments.
12. This evening, I would like for us to focus on the first seven verses of John 9, and see what John is presenting to us in the act of healing the man who had experienced a life of darkness from his birth.

Slide 2

I. The Man Born Blind

A. "AS HE PASSED BY, HE SAW . . ." (v. 1)

1. John does not provide us with information regarding the time or place of this encounter.
2. Through chapters 7 & 8, Jesus has been in Jerusalem during and after the Feast of Tabernacles.
3. It would seem that His interaction with this blind man falls somewhere between . . .
 - a. The Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2) — somewhere between late September & mid-October
 - b. The Feast of Dedication (John 10:22) — somewhere between late November & mid-December
4. On this particular occasion John tells us that Jesus saw a man who had been blind since his birth.

2a

B. "WHO SINNED, THIS MAN OR HIS PARENTS" (v. 2)

1. The question asked by the Jesus' disciples suggests they knew this man — "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" (v. 2).
2. The Jews connected suffering with sin.
3. The assumed that wherever there was suffering there was sin.

4. The Rabbis taught there was . . .

a. "no death without sin" based upon Ezekiel 18:20.

"The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself." (Ezekiel 18:20, NASB95)

b. "no suffering without guilt"

"Then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes." (Psalm 89:32, NASB95)

Slide 3

5. Thus, the reasoning was that either . . .

a. This man committed some prenatal sin, while in his mother's womb, prior to his birth, or

1) They based such reasoning upon passages like Genesis 4:7; 25:22-23.

2) In Genesis 4:7, God tells Cain, "Sin is crouching at the door."

a) Rabbi Judah the Patriarch argued that "sin awaited man at the door of the womb, as soon as he was born."

3) In Genesis 25:22, Rebekah's twin sons, Esau and Jacob, are said to have "struggled with each other" inside her womb (v. 22, HCSB).

a) This struggle between the two brothers, prior to their birth, was treated as sin within their mother's womb.

□ While we would not agree with either of these arguments, they do show that pre-natal sin was known.

3a

b. His mother or father sinned in some way while his mother was expecting:

1) The idea that children could inherit the consequences of their parents' sin was drawn from passages like Exodus 20:5; Psalm 109:14; Isaiah 65:6,7.

“You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,” (Exodus 20:5, cf. Exodus 34:7; Numbers 14:18)

“Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the Lord, And do not let the sin of his mother be blotted out.” (Psalm 109:14, NASB95)

“Behold, it is written before Me, I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will even repay into their bosom,” (Isaiah 65:6, NASB95)

“Both their own iniquities and the iniquities of their fathers together,” says the Lord. “Because they have burned incense on the mountains And scorned Me on the hills, Therefore I will measure their former work into their bosom.”” (Isaiah 65:7, NASB95)

6. In Scripture we do find specific illnesses or experiences of suffering which are the direct consequence of a specific sin:
 - a. Miriam’s revolt against Moses as God’s sole chosen leader resulted in her leprosy (Numbers 12).
 - b. King Uzziah’s prideful act of burning incense to the Lord resulted in God striking him with leprosy (2 Chronicles 26:16-21).
 - c. The death of Ananias & Sapphira for lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-10).
7. There are also examples of suffering in Scripture which are connected to a person’s sin:
 - a. Job
 - b. Paul’s bodily illness in Galatians 4:13 resulted in his preaching the gospel to the Galatians.
 - c. Paul’s thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7) was not because of his sin, but to “keep [him] from exalting himself.”

Slide 4

II. Working The Works of God

A. "IT WAS NEITHER THAT THIS MAN SINNED, NOR HIS PARENTS" (v. 3)

1. This man's blindness was not the result of sin on his part or that of his parents.
2. Instead, Jesus said, "it was so that the works of God might be displayed in Him" (v. 3b).
3. Affliction, sorrow, pain, disappointment and loss in our lives are opportunities for God to display His grace.
4. "When trouble and disaster fall upon a man who does not know God, that man may well collapse" (Barclay, *John*, p. 39).
5. However, "when they fall on a man who walks with God they bring out the strength and the beauty, and the endurance and the nobility, which are within a man's heart when God is there" (Barclay, *John*, pp. 39-40).
6. When we, as Christians, help those in trouble, in distress, in pain, in sorrow, in affliction, God is using us as the means by which He sends His help into the lives of His people.
7. To help a fellow man in need is to manifest the glory of God.
8. It is to show what God is like.

4b

B. "WE MUST WORK THE WORKS OF HIM WHO SENT ME AS LONG AS IT IS DAY" (vv. 4-5)

1. God gave men the day for work and the night for rest.
2. When the day comes to an end, then the time for work has ended.
3. When Jesus said, "night is coming when no one can work" (v. 4b), He was saying He had to press on with God's work in the day for the night of the Cross was close at hand.
4. Jesus went on to say, "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world" (v. 5).
 - a. While He continues to live out His human life, up to the moment of His

glorification (crucifixion), the light shines brightly.

b. During that period of time, as “the Light of the world,” He . . .

1) exposes the world for its sin (*John 3:20*)

“For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed” (*John 3:20*).

2) judges the world through the word He speaks and the life He lives (*John 3:18*)

“. . . he who does not believe [in Him] has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (*John 3:18*).

3) saves the world through the death He will die (*John 3:17*)

“For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him” (*John 3:17*).

5. Today, you and I are given only so much time.
6. We should never put things off until another time, for another time may never come.
7. Our duty as Christians is to fill the time we have — none of us know how much that will be — with service to God and our fellow man.

Slide 5

III. “Now I See!”

A. “GO, WASH IN THE POOL OF SILOAM” (V. 7A)

1. Having said these things, Jesus then “spat on the ground . . . made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes” (v. 6).
2. Jesus made a mud pake with His saliva and the clay which He then applied to the blind man’s eyes.
3. He then told him to “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (v. 7).

4. John translates the name of the pool and tells us that it means, “Sent.”
 - a. Water flowed from the Gihon spring through a hand dug channel into this pool.
 - b. Water for the water-pouring rites of the Feast of Tabernacles was drawn from the pool of Siloam.
 - c. Time and again throughout John’s gospel, Jesus refers to Himself as the One “sent” by His Father.
 - d. Earlier in John 6:29, He told the crowds, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”
 - e. In Isaiah 8:6, God speaks of the Jews as rejecting “the gently flowing waters of Shiloah.”
 - f. Here, they reject His Son.

5a**B. “HE WENT AWAY AND WASHED, AND CAME BACK SEEING” (V. 7B)**

1. We aren’t told how the blind man made his way to the pool of Siloam:
 - a. Did someone lead him there? Possibly one of Jesus’ disciples?
 - b. Did he grope along by himself?
2. What we are told is that he came back seeing!
 - a. Imagine what it must have been like for him when he washed the mud away from his eyes and suddenly saw for the first time in his life.
 - b. How bright the sun must have seemed. How the varied colors must have stood out!
 - c. Now, he could finally put objects with the various sounds he had heard all His life.
 - d. No longer must he grope through life. No longer did he need someone to lead him by the hand wherever he went.
3. He could see!
4. Never would His life be the same again.

Conclusion

Slide 6

1. In the middle of Psalm 36, David penned these words:

“How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God!
And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.
They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house;
And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights.
For with You is the fountain of life;
In Your light we see light.”

(Psalm 36:7–9, NASB95)

2. Jesus is the “true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man” (John 1:9).
3. Will you allow Him to bring His light into your life?
4. If so, you will be changed forevermore.

Slide 7

5. Almost 250 years ago, William Cowper penned these words which we so often sing:

**There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains:**

(William Cowper, 1772)

6. Is your life consumed by darkness? Are you stained with the guilt of your sins?
7. Jesus can wash all of that away so that you may walk in the light of His presence?
8. Will you come to Him today?