



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO **JOHN** **LESSON 9** John Chapter 9



Brief Recap

John has been building his case methodically from the opening declaration: **Jesus Christ is the eternal Word who became flesh, the Son of God, and the only source of eternal life** (John 1:1-4, 14; 20:30-31). Each chapter has added another piece of evidence—John the Baptist's testimony, the signs at Cana and Bethesda, Nicodemus and the new birth, the Samaritan woman, the Bread of Life, the Feast of Tabernacles, and finally the extraordinary confrontation of John 8. The signs are never merely miracles; they are **semeia—signposts revealing who Jesus actually is**. The handbook itself organizes John's Gospel around these signs and the great "I AM" declarations.



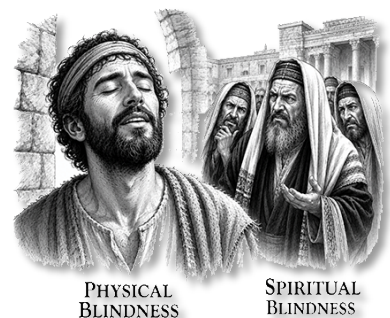
By Chapters 7–8, however, something has noticeably changed. The evidence is accumulating, but so is the opposition. Jesus has declared Himself the **Light of the World**, exposed the slavery of sin, identified the devil as the father of lies, and finally made the unmistakable declaration, **"Before Abraham was, I am."** The response was not worship but attempted murder—they took up stones to kill Him (John 8:12, 31-36, 44, 58-59). Our previous lesson therefore ended with the conflict having progressed from **questioning → contradiction → ridicule → accusation → attempted murder**.

There is also an important thread running underneath these chapters: **light and darkness**. John introduced it in the opening chapter—"the light shineth in darkness" (John 1:5). Jesus has now openly declared, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). Chapter 9 is going to take that theological claim and **put it on display in the life of one man**.

John Chapter 9 -The Man Born Blind: From Darkness to Sight

John 9 contains John's **sixth great sign**: Jesus heals a man who had been blind **from birth**. But notice this—the chapter is really about **two kinds of blindness**:

- A man who has never physically seen anything receives his sight (physical blindness)
- Religious leaders who can see perfectly well become increasingly blind to the identity of the One standing before them (spiritual blindness).

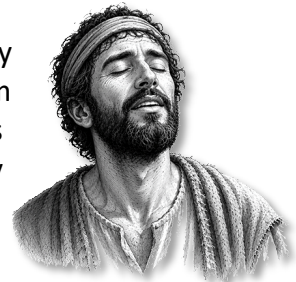




John 9:1-2] *"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"*

Notice John's opening word: **"And."** It links Chapters 8 and 9. Jesus has just passed out of the Temple after His enemies took up stones against Him, and **"as Jesus passed by,"** He notices this blind beggar.

John emphasizes that this man was **"blind from his birth."** This is the only recorded healing in Scripture specifically involving someone blind from birth. However, there is an unusual biblical emphasis on blindness compared with other afflictions recorded in the Gospels; it is repeatedly given special attention.



This man's condition therefore becomes a powerful picture of the natural man. He did not *become* blind through something he did; blindness was his condition from birth. Likewise, fallen man enters the world spiritually unable to perceive the things of God: **"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."** (Ps. 51:5; John 3:3-6; Rom. 8:7-8; 1 Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:1-3).

Then comes the disciples' question: **"Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"** Notice the assumption built into the question. They do not ask *whether* his blindness resulted from a particular sin; they ask **whose sin caused it**. Somebody must be responsible. Their thinking had biblical roots, but they were applying those truths too mechanically.

The disciples had confused the generational consequences of sin with personal guilt before God. The Old Testament certainly teaches that rebellion can have consequences that extend through families and generations. Still, it never teaches that a child is automatically guilty before God for the sins of his parents. Ezekiel makes the distinction explicit: **"The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father."** (Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:9; Jer. 31:29-30; Ezek. 18:2-4, 20).

But there is an even stranger element in their question: **How could this man himself have sinned in a way that caused him to be born blind?** The disciples' question carries what some would call an "echo of reincarnation." Ideas involving preexistent lives and punishment for previous existence were popular in Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and later Gnostic thought.

The disciples therefore present Jesus with a familiar human equation:

Suffering → somebody sinned → find the guilty party.

Why Do Christians Have Trials?



The disciples assumed the man's suffering required someone to blame, but Scripture presents a much broader picture. A trial may involve correction, but it may also accomplish something God intends to develop, reveal, or demonstrate through the believer. Missler gives ten biblical purposes for trials:

1. **To glorify God** — Dan. 3:16-18, 24-25.
2. **Discipline for known sin** — Heb. 12:5-11; Jas. 4:17; Rom. 14:23; 1 John 1:9.
3. **To prevent us from falling into sin** — 1 Pet. 4:1-2.
4. **To keep us from pride** — Paul's *"thorn in the flesh"* 2 Cor. 12:7-10.
5. **To build faith** — 1 Pet. 1:6-7.

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6. **To cause spiritual growth** — Rom. 5:3-5.
7. **To teach obedience and discipline** — Acts 9:15-16; Phil. 4:11-13.
8. **To equip us to comfort others** — 2 Cor. 1:3-4.
9. **To demonstrate the reality of Christ in us** — 2 Cor. 4:7-11.
10. **For testimony before the angels** — Job 1:8; Eph. 3:8-11; 1 Pet. 1:12.

A useful observation concerning Paul's thorn: Paul repeatedly sought its removal, yet God's answer was, ***"My grace is sufficient for thee."*** The problem was not deficient faith; God had a purpose for the affliction—specifically, to keep Paul from pride (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

Sometimes God permits us to pass through an ordeal because He is **equipping us to minister to someone who will later face the same ordeal**. Perhaps the most intriguing item is the last one: **our trials can have an unseen audience**. Job's ordeal was part of a supernatural confrontation of which Job himself was initially unaware, and Paul and Peter indicate that heavenly beings are observing God's purposes unfolding through His people (Job 1:6-12; Eph. 3:8-11; 1 Pet. 1:12).

The disciples asked, ***"Who sinned?"*** and Jesus' answer redirects them toward an entirely different reason.



John 9:3] *"Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."*

Jesus answers the disciples directly: ***"Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents..."*** This man's congenital blindness was not punishment for some particular sin committed by either him or his parents. The disciples' simple equation—*suffering equals specific personal sin*—was wrong.

Jesus uses a remarkable reversal: ***"...but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."*** The disciples saw a lifelong disability; Jesus saw the place where an invisible work of God was about to become unmistakably visible. We can connect this with other occasions where suffering ultimately becomes the setting for God's glory:

- **Lazarus:** his sickness would be "for the glory of God." John 11:4.
- **Peter:** his eventual death would "glorify God." John 21:19.
- **Paul:** God's power was displayed through his weakness. 2 Cor. 12:9.



Was this man born blind so that God could be glorified on this particular day? We are later told that the man was "of age," and we could roughly say he was thirty years old, simply as an illustration. Either way, the man may have lived decades without understanding why he had been born blind—yet all those years were preparing the stage for this encounter with Christ. That is one of the profound lessons of the passage. We frequently judge God's purposes by what we can presently see, while God may be working toward something years beyond our horizon. Joseph understood this only after years of betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment: ***"ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good."*** (Gen. 50:20; Rom. 8:28).



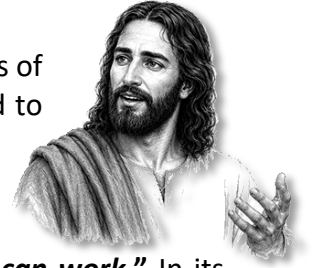
LESSON

The disciples wanted an explanation; Jesus gave them a purpose. Scripture sometimes tells us **why** suffering occurs, but often it redirects us toward what God intends to accomplish **through it**. Job never received the behind-the-scenes explanation available to the reader, yet his ordeal became testimony before both the earthly and heavenly realms (Job 1:6-12; 42:1-6). That changes the believer's question from merely **"Why is this happening?"** to **"What does God intend to manifest through this?"**



John 9:4] *"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."*

Notice the opening expression: **"I must work..."** Jesus repeatedly speaks of having been **sent by the Father** and of completing the work entrusted to Him. His ministry is neither accidental nor self-directed; He is carrying out a divine commission that will ultimately culminate at the Cross with **"It is finished."** (John 4:34; 5:36; 17:4; 19:30).



Jesus then says, "...while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." In its immediate context, Jesus is moving toward the end of His earthly ministry. The Cross is approaching, and He knows that the opportunity to accomplish the Father's work in this present form is rapidly closing (John 7:33; 12:35-36; 13:1).

In a broader sense, the believer has not been given unlimited time to accomplish an unlimited number of things; we have been given an appointed lifetime in which to accomplish the work God has prepared for us (Eph. 2:10; Col. 4:5). Paul develops precisely this principle: **"See then that ye walk circumspectly... Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."** Eph. 5:15-16.

The night makes all of mankind blind. The physically blind man standing before Jesus serves as a living illustration of humanity's broader spiritual condition apart from God.



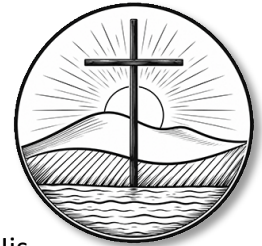
PATTERN

There is a larger biblical architecture behind Jesus' words. Scripture repeatedly presents history as moving according to **divinely appointed times and seasons**, not as an endless cycle. Christ came at *"the fulness of the time,"* His crucifixion occurred at the appointed hour, and now, history itself moves toward a divinely established conclusion in the not-too-distant future (Dan. 9:24-27; Gal. 4:4; John 7:30; 12:23; Acts 17:26, 31).



John 9:5] *"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."*

Jesus is speaking in the context of the approaching "night" of verse 4. His earthly ministry is moving toward the Cross, but while He remains among them, He openly manifests the Father's light (John 9:4-5; 12:35-36).



The Coming Night: There is a prophetic dimension hidden in Christ's words, *"the night cometh"* (v.4). While Christ walked physically upon the earth, He was the **Light of the world**; after His



DEEPER

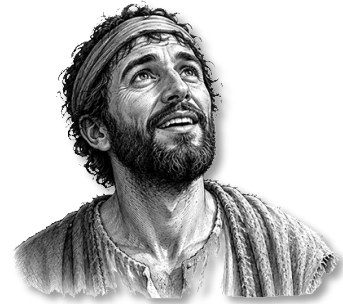
ascension, that light continued through the Spirit-indwelt Church, which Jesus likewise called *"the light of the world."* Paul reveals that a restraining power presently holds back the full manifestation of lawlessness, which is the Holy Spirit working through the Church. At the Rapture, that restraint is removed with the Church; the Man of Sin is revealed, and the world moves into the extraordinary spiritual darkness of the Tribulation—we see that approaching "night" before Christ returns in glory (Matt. 5:14-16; John 9:4-5; 14:16-17; 2 Thess. 2:6-8; 1 Thess. 4:16-17).



John 9:6-7] *"When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing."*

Jesus now turns His declaration—***“I am the light of the world”***—into action. He makes clay, places it upon the blind man's eyes, and sends him to Siloam; the man obeys while he is **still blind** and returns seeing.

John gives us an unusual detail: ***“...he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle...”*** Jesus could have healed this man with a word, yet He deliberately uses **earth and moisture**. The clay has attracted considerable attention because God originally formed man from **“the dust of the ground”** (Gen. 2:7). **Dust + living water.**



Then Jesus gives the blind man a specific command: ***“Go, wash in the pool of Siloam...”*** John pauses to translate the name: ***“...which is by interpretation, Sent.”*** That parenthetical explanation gives us a clue. The pool of **Bethesda** was **much closer**, yet Jesus specifically sent the man to Siloam. This was not simply to *find some water*; Christ specified the destination. During the Feast of Tabernacles, water was drawn from the **Pool of Siloam** and carried in procession to the Temple, commemorating God's provision of water in the wilderness. Against that backdrop, Jesus had cried, ***“If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink”*** (John 7:37-38). Now the blind man is sent to that very pool. The feast's water ceremony, the Light of the World, and the healing of blindness all converge at Siloam.



A deeper Remez about Siloam, Shiloh, and the Sent One: The name *Siloam* means “Sent,” a detail John himself deliberately interprets for his readers. Its sound and Greek textual associations also recall *Shiloh* and the great Messianic prophecy, “until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be,” while Isaiah speaks of Israel rejecting “the waters of Shiloah that go softly.” The blind man therefore receives his sight at the waters called **Sent**, having been sent there by Jesus—the One whom John repeatedly identifies as **sent by the Father**. Gen. 49:10; Isa. 8:6; John 3:17; 4:34; 5:36-38; 6:38-39; 8:42; 9:7.



John 9:8-10] *“The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?”*

The man's neighbors are confronted with something they cannot easily explain: the beggar they had known for years is suddenly walking around with perfect sight. The change was so extraordinary that the people struggled to reconcile the man standing before them with the helpless beggar they remembered; they ask, **“How Were Thine Eyes Opened?”**

You might expect everyone to celebrate. A man who had never seen suddenly possesses sight! Instead, his healing quickly becomes the subject of suspicion, interrogation, theological debate, and, eventually, hostility.

Like some new believers in Christ, the former blind man has just entered an entirely new world, but he quickly discovers that **not everyone is delighted by what Christ has done for him**. As we shall see, as the chapter progresses, his neighbors question him, the Pharisees interrogate him, his parents distance themselves from the controversy, and the religious authorities eventually cast him out. **But watch how his understanding of Christ changes through those confrontations.**



John 9:11-12] *“He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.”*

The neighbors have asked, **“How were thine eyes opened?”** The man simply tells them what happened. There is no theological argument and no attempt to embellish the miracle: Jesus made clay, put it on his eyes, told him to wash at Siloam, **“and I went and washed, and I received sight.”** He cannot even tell his neighbors where Jesus is.

This simplicity will become characteristic of his testimony. The man does not embroider or embellish his account—he simply reports what happened. But notice how he presently describes Jesus: **“A man that is called Jesus...”**



John 9:13-15] *“They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.”*



John 9:16] *“Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.”*

The healed man's testimony now moves from his **neighbors to the Pharisees**, and the atmosphere immediately changes. Why involve the Pharisees? What lies behind all this questioning is the **fear of the people of religious authority**. Nobody can explain what happened, so the neighbors take the man to those regarded as the religious experts.

Then John drops the detail that explains why this healing is about to become explosive: **“And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.”** Here we go again.



We know from earlier in John that Jesus already collided with the religious authorities over a Sabbath healing at Bethesda, and the result was persecution because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath (John 5:5-18). Now Jesus has done it again.

Jesus is not accidentally stumbling upon rabbinic Sabbath restrictions; He is **challenging the religious leadership's entire framework of authority** by placing God's work directly against their man-made interpretation of Sabbath observance. But why was the clay a Sabbath problem?

The issue was not simply that Jesus healed someone. By making clay from saliva and dust, His opponents could classify what Jesus had done as **work** under their Sabbath traditions. Their reasoning becomes circular:

Our interpretation is correct → Jesus violates our interpretation → therefore Jesus is wrong.

The possibility that **their interpretation might be wrong** never enters the equation.

But not everyone accepts the first conclusion. Not all the Pharisees are completely brainwashed; some ask: **“How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?”** The sign demands an explanation. Because of this, John says, **“And There Was a Division Among Them.”**

It is important to note that **not every division is necessarily evil**. Sometimes truth itself creates division because evidence forces people to take opposing positions. Jesus repeatedly produces precisely this response in John's Gospel. People encounter the same words, the same works, and the same evidence—and divide over His identity.



The **“one-issue thinker”** is even more relevant today than just a few years ago. Churches can do exactly the same thing when people construct their entire theology around one verse, one doctrine, one tradition, or one denominational distinctive rather than testing everything against **“the whole counsel of God.”** Many of our modern religious and cultural movements routinely select one issue, ideology, tradition, or approved narrative and use it as the filter through which every fact must pass. John 9 gives us the antidote: examine the evidence, search the whole counsel of God, and never allow allegiance to a system to blind us to the truth standing directly in front of us. Acts 17:11; 20:27.



John 9:17] *“They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.”*

The Pharisees have already divided over Jesus. Some have concluded, **“This man is not of God,”** while others are asking the far more troublesome question, **“How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?”**

Now they ask the former blind man for his judgment. They are already having difficulty escaping the evidence. Whatever their theological conclusions about Jesus, they are standing before a man who can see, and the discussion has moved from **whether something happened to who Jesus must be** if He did.

His answer is immediate: **“He is a prophet.”** If anything, that is an understatement, but it is nevertheless an important advance. The man is intelligent enough to recognize that something supernatural has happened and that the One responsible cannot simply be dismissed as an ordinary man.



John 9:18-19] *“But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?”*



John 9:20-21] *“His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.”*



John 9:22-23] *“These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.”*

The Pharisees are **“trying to turn over every rock to discredit this if they can.”** They have questioned the man, but his testimony refuses to collapse, so now they summon his parents. Notice what they are trying to establish. Perhaps this is not really the same man. Perhaps he was not actually born blind. If either fact can be overturned, the miracle disappears.

The parents' answer destroys that avenue of escape: **“We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind.”** Independent witnesses now establish those two facts.

This is important because the miracle is becoming increasingly difficult to dismiss.

- ✓ The man is real.
- ✓ The blindness was real.
- ✓ The healing is real.

The leaders possess growing evidence that something extraordinary has happened, yet their investigation keeps circling the mechanism rather than confronting the identity of the One who performed it.

Plus, the parents are noticeably evasive. They are willing to testify about facts they cannot avoid, but once the questioning approaches **Jesus**, they retreat. Why? **They're not afraid of the truth**, but they are afraid of what the authorities may do with the truth. If they acknowledged Jesus, **“... Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.”** The synagogue stood near the center of Jewish religious and community life. Exclusion carried religious consequences and could bring serious social isolation as well. The authorities knew it and used it as a coercion tactic.



John 9:24-25] *“Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.”*

Unable to disprove the man's identity, his congenital blindness, or his healing, the authorities effectively put him under oath and announced the verdict before hearing his testimony: **“...we know that this man is a sinner.”**

“Give God the praise...” is a formal Jewish expression associated with **putting someone under oath**—essentially, *tell the truth before God*. The Pharisees have just prejudiced the case before hearing the witness. They are not investigating whether Jesus is a sinner; they have already determined that He is one and now want the evidence forced into that conclusion. But the man answers brilliantly: **“Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not...”**



“They can argue all their theology or legalism they want; they can't escape the reality.” This was no temporary blindness and no staged deception—the man had been blind from birth, and now he could see.



John 9:26-27] *“Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?”*

The authorities have run out of new questions, so they ask the **same question again**. They are looking for some inconsistency, contradiction, or altered detail they can use.

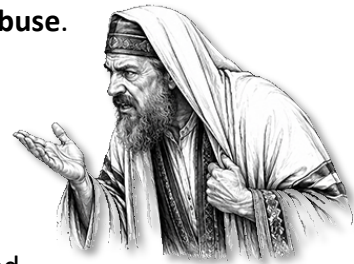
But the healed former beggar sees through it and turns the interrogation around. ***“Will Ye Also Be His Disciples?”*** That little word **“also”** is fascinating. The man appears to place himself among Jesus' disciples. His understanding of Jesus is still developing, but his allegiance is becoming increasingly clear. He began with **“a man that is called Jesus,”** progressed to **“He is a prophet,”** and now speaks as though discipleship is already the direction in which he himself is moving.

That is classic reversal: the man they consider ignorant increasingly sees the truth, while the men regarded as Israel's spiritual guides demonstrate that **they are the blind ones**.

 **John 9:28-29]** *“Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.”*

The interrogation finally abandons reason and turns to **personal abuse**.

The Greek word translated “reviled” (*eloidorēsan*) describes reproaching or scolding someone in a loud, abusive manner; the discussion is no longer civil. Unable to answer the healed man's evidence, the authorities revile him and retreat behind an honored name: **“we are Moses' disciples.”**



They hide behind Moses, unaware that something greater has arrived.

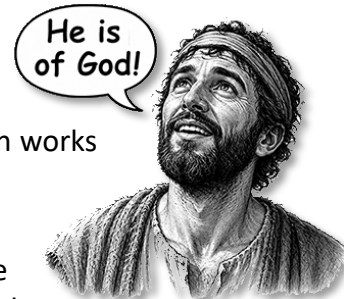
Their religious system has become so attached to the servant, who himself (Moses) pointed forward to Christ, that they cannot recognize the **Son**. Their argument amounts to: **We do not know who He is—but we know He is wrong**. The contradiction is glaring.

 **John 9:30-31]** *“The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.”*

 **John 9:32-34]** *“Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.”*

The former beggar now turns the interrogation completely around, and the irony is now almost humorous. The religious authorities claim they do not know where Jesus comes from, yet the man points to the obvious evidence: **a man born blind has received sight—something unheard of “since the world began.”** His reasoning is pretty straightforward stuff.

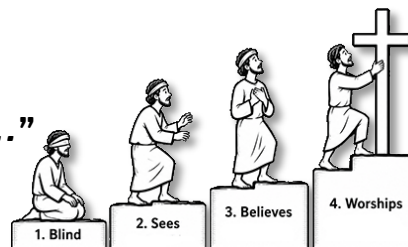
- His logic is essentially:
1. I was unquestionably born blind.
 2. Jesus unquestionably opened my eyes.
 3. Such a thing is unprecedented.
 4. God does not authenticate rebellion with works like this.
 5. Therefore Jesus must be “of God.”



His straightforward reasoning leads him to the unavoidable conclusion, **“If this man were not of God, he could do nothing,”** and when the Pharisees cannot answer his logic, they answer with contempt.

His progression:

1. First, in verse 11: ***“A man that is called Jesus...”***
2. Then verse 17: ***“He is a prophet.”***
3. Now verse 33: ***“This man [is]...of God.”***



The contemptuous Pharisees respond to the former blind man: ***“Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?”*** Their reasoning is viciously simple: *You were born blind; therefore you were born under extraordinary sin; therefore someone like you has no standing to instruct people like us.*

The result is that “...they cast him out.” To the Jew in Jesus’ time, **that’s a big deal**. This is the very consequence his parents feared—the man is expelled, effectively excommunicated from the synagogue community. His parents avoided identifying with Christ because they feared being cast out. Their son refuses to deny the truth—and suffers exactly what they feared.

The arrogant are not teachable. That is one of the sharpest lessons in the entire confrontation. Their education has not produced teachability; it has produced a confidence that makes correction from an “inferior” person almost unthinkable. I am always impressed when I encounter a highly educated person who comes to Christ. Paul develops this theme precisely:



“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” 1 Cor. 3:19. And...

“God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.” 1 Cor. 1:27.

LESSON

Scripture presents the opposite posture as wisdom: ***“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser”*** (Prov. 9:9). The Bereans were considered noble precisely because they were willing to examine even apostolic preaching against Scripture (Acts 17:11). Spiritual maturity is therefore not demonstrated by reaching the point where **nobody can teach us**. It is demonstrated by becoming increasingly teachable before the Word of God.

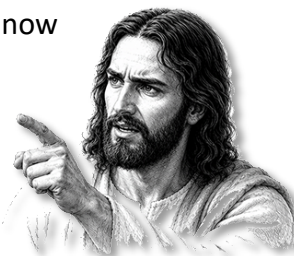


John 9:35] ***“Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?”***

Verse 35 marks a beautiful turning point: the **witness** of the blind man now becomes the **worship** of the blind man. The religious leaders have cast him out, but when Jesus hears what happened, **He goes looking for him**. Don't pass over that word **“found.”** **Jesus found him. It was His initiative. The Good Shepherd takes the initiative.**

That brings us right back to the beginning of the chapter. The blind man never approached Jesus asking to be healed; **Jesus saw him**. Now the man does not seek Jesus after being expelled; **Jesus finds him again**.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, **taking the initiative**. The false shepherds have just driven one of the sheep away; the true Shepherd immediately goes after him. The chapter division between John 9 and John 10 is unfortunate, as it causes us to separate the scenes. John 10's discourse about shepherds and sheep grows directly out of what has just happened to this man, so we will need to remember that detail.



Lesson materials can be found at:
www.TrustingInGrace.com



Ezekiel 34 sits beautifully behind this scene. God condemned Israel's unfaithful shepherds because **“neither have ye sought that which was lost,”** and then promised, **“I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.”** Ezek. 34:4, 11-12.



John 9:36-38] *“He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.”*

Here we reach the climax toward which the entire chapter has been moving: **physical sight becomes spiritual sight, witness becomes faith, and faith becomes worship.** The man has progressively understood Jesus as “a man,” then “a prophet,” then One “of God”; now Jesus personally reveals Himself as the **Son of God**. The response is immediate and beautifully simple: **“Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.”**



John 9:39] *“And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.”*



John 9:40-41] *“And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.”*

Jesus declares: **“For judgment I am come into this world...”** Christ's coming inevitably produces a separation: when the Light appears, every person is revealed by his response to that Light (John 3:17-21; 8:12). The word translated **“judgment”** (*krima*) carries the ideas of **sifting and separating**—Christ's presence exposes what is already within the heart.

Please Notice This



Notice this—the same Jesus, the same Light, and the same sign produce completely opposite results. **“...that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.”** That is John 9 in one sentence.

Two Kinds of Blindness

1

The man began the chapter knowing perfectly well that he was blind. He had no illusions about his condition and no ability to cure himself (John 9:1, 8).

2

The Pharisees possess functioning eyes, religious education, Scripture, social standing, and theological confidence. Yet they cannot recognize the Son of God when His Messianic works occur directly before them (Isa. 29:18; 35:5; 42:6-7; Matt. 11:4-5; John 9:30-33).

So we have the great reversal:

- **The blind man knows he cannot see—and receives sight.**
- **The Pharisees insist they see—and reveal their blindness.**



Some Pharisees overhear Jesus and ask, **“Are we blind also?”** To understand this, we need to look at an important grammatical detail in the Greek sentence construction. This question expects a rhetorical **negative answer**—something closer to: **“We aren't blind too, are we?”** They are not humbly asking Jesus to diagnose their spiritual condition. They are incredulous, actually asking, **“Surely You aren't suggesting that WE are the blind ones?”**

That reaction itself demonstrates the problem. The former blind beggar knew his need; the learned religious authorities cannot conceive that **they might be the ones who cannot see.**

Jesus says, *“If ye were blind, ye should have no sin...”* That does not mean that ignorance makes someone sinless. He is addressing culpability in relation to revealed light. Greater light brings greater accountability. Instead, they respond: *“...but now ye say, We see...”* Their problem is not merely blindness. Their problem is **blindness combined with the absolute conviction that they can see**. Because of this, Jesus concludes, *“...therefore your sin remaineth.”* That is an **extraordinarily severe ending. Their blindness has become willful blindness.**

(John will develop this fearful principle dramatically in Chapter 12.)

**Insight — Rejected Light Produces
Greater Darkness!**

There is a progression in persistent unbelief:



- ✓ They would not believe.
- ✓ They could not believe.
- ✓ They should not believe.

Seeing → questioning → rejecting → reviling → expelling = blindness.

Persistent rejection of revealed truth eventually produces judicial hardening. Isaiah had foretold both their unbelief and their blindness (Isa. 6:9-10; 53:1; John 12:37-40).

Pharaoh is perhaps the foundational example. Early in Exodus, Pharaoh repeatedly hardens his own heart or his heart *“was hardened.”* Eventually the language changes and **God hardens Pharaoh's heart** (Ex. 7:13-14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 12; 10:1, 20, 27).

The progression here matters, like the Pharisees. God does not begin with an innocent Pharaoh desperately seeking truth and then prevent him from finding it. Pharaoh repeatedly rejects God's revelation through Moses, and eventually **God confirms Pharaoh in the course Pharaoh has chosen (you ask for it, you got it!).**

Paul, in **Romans 1**, gives us the clearest explanation of the mechanism that is very relevant to our society today.



- ✓ *“God also gave them up...”* — Rom. 1:24
- ✓ *“God gave them up...”* — Rom. 1:26
- ✓ *“God gave them over...”* — Rom. 1:28

Revelation → rejection → exchange → judicial abandonment.

Romans 1 says men *“changed the truth of God into a lie.”* Second Thessalonians culminates with a society that has followed this pattern, believing in *“the lie”* right near the start of the Tribulation. *“And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth...”* Because they rejected truth: *“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.”* — 2 Thess. 2:10 - 11

During the Tribulation, humanity experiences unmistakable supernatural judgments and yet repeatedly **refuses to repent** (Rev. 9:20-21; 16:9, 11). *“...and they blasphemed the name of God... and they repented not to give him glory”* (Rev. 16:9). Then again: *“...and blasphemed the God of heaven... and repented not of their deeds”* (Rev. 16:11).

Exodus provides the prototype in Pharaoh; throughout Scripture the pattern appears in both individuals and societies, and Revelation gives its ultimate worldwide expression.

The moral of the story is that repeated rejection is not spiritually static. **The heart can become increasingly hardened through unbelief.** Hebrews 3:7–15 gives the warning: *“To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts...”*

Next Lesson: Read John Chapter 10, review Psalm 22: The Good Shepherd; Psalm 23: The Great Shepherd, and Psalm 24: The Chief Shepherd. We will discuss Eternal Security.