

Jesus makes the blind see

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[0 : 00] Well, this passage shows us a man who is literally sitting in the dark, in complete darkness. ! Imagine not being able to see anything at all.! Maybe you could close your eyes for just a second and think that's what this man could see.

He couldn't see anything. He couldn't see the sun, the blue sky, the grass, the trees, the flowers. He couldn't see his food. He couldn't see what his favourite food looks like.

Imagine not being able to see what a burger looks like or a pizza or a banana or just to balance things out. He couldn't see what his food looks like. He couldn't see what his family looks like.

He didn't have a clue what his mum and dad looked like or his brother or sister or uncle or auntie or friend. Couldn't see himself. Couldn't see himself in the mirror.

[1 : 08] This man literally is sitting in the darkness. But we looked last year, I don't know if you'll remember, but we looked last year at this verse in John chapter 8 verse 12.

Just the chapter before John chapter 9. That's what Jesus says.

So we're going to see what happens.

What Jesus does and what happens to this blind man. And we see, the first big thing that we see is Jesus makes the blind see.

Verse 1 says, The disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind?

[2 : 44] The disciples ask him this question. Who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind? It's important just for us to think about that for a moment.

The disciples and other people sometimes think that people who are born blind or with some other disability, they think that maybe they're being punished by God for something they have done that's particularly wrong.

Or their parents are being punished. But that's not what the Bible teaches. And that's not what Jesus says in this passage. But the Bible does show us that all of us sin.

All of us say no to God and go our own way. And that's a problem we all have. All of us deserve judgment. All of us are like the blind man and we're sitting in darkness when we're born.

And because sin is in the world, this world is broken. This world isn't as it should have been. It's not perfect. And we suffer the effects of living in a fallen world.

[4 : 02] We see that all the time. There's war. There's sickness. There's unrest and anger. And that's darkness.

And sadly, as part of living in a fallen world, there are people who will suffer from certain physical disabilities. And that is sad.

But it's not because they're being punished for a particular wrong that they have done. All of us deserve to be punished by God forever because of our sin.

That's not why people suffer like that. And Jesus amazingly says that this man's blindness, verse 3, has happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

So that we today can sit here and read John chapter 9 and see Jesus healing this blind man and see the amazing work of God.

[5 : 06] Even here today in 2023. And that's amazing. And Jesus says again in verse 5 that he is the light of the world.

That's who he is. And this man, he's sitting in the darkness. Like all of us do naturally when we're born, we're in the dark. But Jesus is over here.

He is in the light. So what happens to the man? Well, verse 6. After this, Jesus spat on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes.

That sounds rather gross, doesn't it? What on earth is Jesus doing? Spitting on the ground, on the dry, dusty ground, and making some mud.

It sounds rather gross. And then he puts it on the man's eyes. It's strange. Well, I've got, just to try and help us understand a bit of this, I've got a bit of Play-Doh.

[6:18] Play-Doh is great fun, isn't it? I love the smell of Play-Doh. It's fascinating. But Play-Doh, if I just leave it like this, it's just a lump of Play-Doh.

It's not really much at all, is it? But wonderfully, with Play-Doh, you can play around with it, and you can create things. You can create something like this.

A rabbit. That's what I've managed to do with Play-Doh. Children, do come and ask me afterwards if you want to have a play with Play-Doh. It can create.

It's just a lump of Play-Doh, but it can create something amazing. And as Jesus is spitting on the ground and making this mud, rolling it up, and putting it in the man's eyes, he is creating new life for this man.

And it's to remind us of who Jesus is. To remind us that he is God who is involved in creating the world, in creating human beings.

[7:24] So Genesis 2, verse 7, said this, Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

God made Adam from the dust of the ground. And as Jesus is doing things with the dust of the ground, he is creating new life for this blind man.

He is doing it to take away his blindness. It seems gross, the bit of mud, but he's doing a wonderful thing and reminding us he is God.

He is the creator. So, verse 7, Jesus says to the man, Go, he told him. Wash in the pool of Siloam. This word means sent. So the man washed and came home seeing. It's amazing. The man goes, he's obedient to Jesus' words, and he washes the mud off his eyes and he comes home and he sees.

[8:44] He couldn't see. He hadn't seen anything all of his life. And now, suddenly, he can see. He can see people around him. He can see buildings.

He can see the sky. He can see his food that he will eat. He can see. Jesus did something that nobody else could do for this man and healed his blindness.

It's amazing and everything changes for this man. Everything changes for this blind man. This blind man is a picture of all of us who become Christians.

We once sit in the darkness, but Jesus takes our blindness away and takes us into his light. Because he is the light of the world.

Whoever follows him will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. Everything changes for this blind man and everything changes for the person who becomes a Christian.

[10:00] No longer in darkness, now in the light. And it's amazing. And for this man, when everything changes, different things happen.

Firstly, we see the neighbours notice. The neighbours notice. So verse 8, his neighbours and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg? Some claim that he was. Others said, no, he only looks like him. But he himself insisted, I am the man.

How then were your eyes open, they ask? The man they called Jesus made some mud, put it on my eyes, told me to go to Siloam and wash.

So I went and washed and then I could see. The neighbours notice. It causes debate. Is this the man who was sitting over there blind and begging?

[11:01] Is this really him? He can see. He can see us. Others said, no, it only looks like him. Surely it can't have happened.

Blind people don't get healed like this. The neighbours notice something going on with him. And for Christian people, people will see different things in our lives.

They will notice there's a difference in us because we're no longer in darkness, we're in the light. I remember a few months into making friends with someone.

He turned round and said to me out of the blue, why is it that you don't swear and why is it you don't say God and Jesus in swearing kind of ways?

He couldn't work it out. And I got to say, well, it's because I love God and he's changed my life and I want to honour him. There should be something noticeably different about Christians.

[12 : 11] Neighbours should notice, friends should notice. because Jesus has taken us from being sitting in darkness to being in the light.

Everything changes when we become a Christian. Another thing that this man does is speaks about Jesus.

He speaks all about Jesus. He gets questioned. The neighbours are like, where is this man? They asked and the man says, well, I don't know where he is.

And so they bring him to the Pharisees. They bring him to the religious people. What's going on? And so the Pharisees, they start questioning this man about what has happened.

And we'll see more about the Pharisees in a bit, but they're not people who see Jesus as saviour. They're people who are still actually in the darkness, who are like the blind man.

[13 : 17] They're blind. And actually they want to prove that Jesus didn't do this because they don't like Jesus. but this man can't help but speak of Jesus and can't help but say Jesus has done this and Jesus is amazing.

And we kind of see his understanding of Jesus grow as we go through this little passage. So in verse 17, as he's questioned, what have you to say about him?

It was your eyes he opened. Well, the man replies he's a prophet. He's saying this is a work of God. This is someone sent from God.

It must be to be able to do such a thing for me, to be able to open my eyes. In verse 27, they keep questioning and questioning him and in verse 27, the man says, I have told you already and you did not listen.

Why do you want to hear me say it again? Do you want to become his disciples too? He loves speaking about Jesus and people keep questioning him.

[14 : 36] Do you want to become his disciples too? He says. He can't help but speak of Jesus. And that's not a bad question to ask people.

if they keep asking us about Jesus, if they keep saying about Jesus, do you want to become his disciples too? Because Jesus really has changed this man's life.

And he really changes our lives. It brings us from darkness into light. And it's amazing. And it's only Jesus who can do that.

It's only Jesus who can open blind eyes. And the man keeps talking about Jesus and in the end, he gets thrown out of the synagogue.

Verse 34, to this they replied, you were steeped in sin at birth. How dare you lecture us? And they threw him out. The people questioning him, they don't want to become Jesus' disciples.

[15 : 44] They don't see how amazing this miraculous thing in this man's life is. And so they throw him out of the synagogue.

They don't like Jesus. And for us, as we speak about Jesus who has changed our lives, not everyone will like it.

and some people would rather we don't speak about Jesus, some people would rather not know us at all and throw us out.

Maybe there'll be times when at school we're talking to friends and they know we love Jesus, but they just don't want to hear it. They say, I don't want to know anymore.

Maybe there'll be times at work when that happens and it affects our work in some way because we love Jesus and we can't help but speak about him because he's changed our lives.

[16 : 49] And it's amazing. But after this guy's been thrown out of the temple, we see what happens. We see what happens when Jesus comes back to him.

Verse 35, Jesus heard they had thrown him out and when he found him, he said, do you believe in the Son of Man? Who is he, sir? The man asked.

Tell me so that I may believe in him. Jesus says, you have now seen him. In fact, he is the one speaking with you. Then the man said, Lord, I believe, and he worshipped him.

This man sees that this is no ordinary person, Jesus. Jesus is God. And he says, Lord, I believe. And he bows down and worshipped him because he's had his eyes opened to see who Jesus is. And so he can't help but talking about him. We're going to see some more from this passage in a moment. But firstly, we're going to sing again.

[18 : 04] So the first thing we saw was that Jesus heals the blind man. The second thing we see is that the seeing are blind.

That sounds a bit strange, doesn't it? The people who can see are blind. What on earth am I talking about?

You see, the blind man was literally blind. He literally couldn't see. And Jesus opened his eyes. And he could see, and he could see even more that Jesus is God.

But there are others in this passage who think they can see just fine, think they understand and know the right way to live, know how God wants them to live.

But actually they say no to God. They say no to Jesus being God. They said Jesus can't have done this. Jesus can't be God.

[19 : 07] He's a sinner. And we don't like him and we want him out. And anyone who follows him, we want to throw them out. That's who the seeing are who are blind in this passage.

I think this might generally be a man thing, although there's a woman in the picture, so I don't want to say it's just a man thing, but I think it might be. Do you know those times when you're looking in the fridge, say you're looking for some cheese, and you look in the fridge and you're staring, you just can't see any cheese, and then someone comes along and says, it's right in front of you.

It happens to me quite a lot, and I've seen it happen to other people quite a lot. It feels like we're blind and yet it's right in front of us, and that's what it's like in this passage.

The Pharisees, they refuse to believe that Jesus could possibly be God, that Jesus could open blind eyes, but here in front of them is a man who has had his eyes opened and can see and is saying to them he has, and yet they're refusing to believe, even though the evidence is right there in front of them.

So after they hear from the man about what happened, this happens in verse 16, some of the Pharisees said, this man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.

[20 : 46] But others asked, how can a sinner perform such signs, so they were divided. They hear about what's happened and they say, can't be from God because it's a Sabbath day, it's a special day, a special day where we rest and you can't do anything.

And yet Jesus has opened a man's eyes, this is a great thing. Jesus is God, it's his day. But no, they say he's a sinner.

Can't possibly be from God at all. But others said, how can a sinner perform such signs? So they were divided. Others say, maybe he is from God.

But they weren't sure, they were divided. And so, we carry on. Verse 17, then they turned again to the blind man, what have you to say about him?

It was your eyes they opened. The blind man says he's a prophet. But verse 18, they still did not believe that he had been blind.

[21 : 54] So the next thing they decide to do is to call in the parents. Mom and dad will know whether their son was blind or not. This will finally settle the matter they think.

And so, verse 20, the parents start talking, we know he is our son, and we know he was born blind. They say that he was blind.

But how he can see now or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age. He will speak for himself. But we get a clue as to why they say this.

His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders who already decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue.

We don't know what the parents knew exactly, but it seems like they might have known something about Jesus healing their son, but they're too afraid of these Pharisees because the Pharisees don't like Jesus.

[22 : 59] And they don't want to be thrown out. They don't want to lose their position. It's not nice to be thrown out of somewhere. So they call in the man again. They keep going.

They're determined to prove that Jesus can't have healed this man. And so a second time, verse 24, they summon the man in and they say, give glory to God by telling the truth.

They said, we know this man is a sinner. Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know, the man says. One thing I do know, I was blind, but now I see.

They tell him to give glory to God, but they're not interested in glory going to Jesus. They're blind. They just don't see that Jesus is God.

They're sitting in the darkness like the blind man was at the start of the passage. But nobody can really argue against this man's testimony.

[24 : 02] The parent said that he was born blind. The man says, I was blind but now I see. But the Pharisees just won't hear it.

They're blind. And so they hurl insults at him and they throw him out. But the blind man says this, verse 30, now that is remarkable.

You don't know where he comes from yet. He's opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will.

Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of the man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing. The blind man sees that Jesus is God, that he did do this, and he finds it remarkable that these people don't.

They're looking in the fridge, and they just don't see it. They're blind. And Jesus shows us what is really going on in their lives.

[25 : 15] Verse 39, Jesus says, for judgment I have come into this world so that the blind will see, and those who see will become blind.

They're people who think they can see just fine without Jesus. People who think they're just fine keeping their own laws going their own way.

But Jesus says they're actually blind. Verse 40, some of the Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, what?

Are we blind too? Jesus says if you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin, but now you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

They claim they're just fine, but actually they're sitting in the darkness. They sin and they won't turn to Jesus to be saved.

[26 : 18] And they're like many people in our world today. Many people who want to prove that Jesus is not God, many people who say, no God, I don't want to follow you, I'm okay, living my own way.

And the chances are that there are some people even in this room who are blind, who have not yet seen that Jesus really is God, that Jesus really is the one who can save, who can bring you from darkness into light, who can open blind eyes.

and all you need to do is confess before him that you sin, that you can't go your own way, you can't open your own blind eyes, you need Jesus.

Because Jesus has died on the cross, he's taken your darkness upon him, the darkness of your sin, the punishment you deserve, so you can go free, so you can be in the light, like this blind man.

Jesus said, verse 41, if you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin, but now you claim you can see, your guilt remains. If you think you're okay without Jesus, Jesus says you're actually guilty.

[27 : 45] The only way to have your guilt taken away is by turning to him. And you can do that today. I want to finish by telling us about this man, this man who is called John.

John was seven years old when his mom sadly died. When he was then 11 years old, his dad sent him away from home to be on a boat, to go and do work on a boat.

And John did some very naughty things. he invented swear words with his friends. He made fun at the people who were in charge of the ship.

But this didn't last. He ended up, when he was a few years older, being a slave in Africa, just briefly. And then after he was freed, he ended up working as captain of his own slave ship, having slaves of his own.

He had a reputation for bad language and a bad temper. But one day, he ended up being punished for his cruel behavior.

[29 : 09] Nobody wanted him as a captain of a ship again. And he ended up being found on a boat in a storm. and it was scary.

The waves crashed. The boat was filling with water. He really thought he was going to die. And as he thought he was going to die, he remembered things from when he was younger.

He remembered how his mom would pray. He remembered words read from the Bible. He remembered hymns that were sung. but he realized he had ignored God.

He thought he was okay. He thought he could see just fine. The next day, the ship found safety.

He knew that God must have been in charge. That God must have heard his cries. And he knew he had sinned. He knew he had done lots of wrong.

[30 : 16] And so he said sorry to God for his sin. And 250 years ago, last Sunday, he wrote a song for his church to sing.

And it goes like this. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch, someone who sins, like me. I once was lost, but now I am found.

I was blind, like the blind man in this passage, but now I see. And that story of John becoming a Christian, having his eyes open to see Jesus, that can be your story too, because of Jesus.

Jesus. We're going to sing this song together as we end our service. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

Let's sing of the great work of Jesus. of sing of Jesus. sing of Jesus. sing of Jesus. sing of Jesus. sing of Jesus. sing of Jesus. sing of Jesus. sing of sing of Jesus.