

John 9

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 October 2023

Preacher: Jordan Leach

[0:00] I do have a manuscript. Nina has it. So, Nina's going to help me out this morning. I wasn't sure how long my voice will last.

So, there's quite a bit of text that we're going to go through. So, Nina's going to hop in and read the text for us. So, good morning. My name's Jordan Leach. I'm one of the elders here at Shoreline. I have the privilege to preach from John chapter 9. So, a little while back, quite a while back, I've used this text in my life, in my wife's life, as we were going through a confusing time.

And so, at that point, I was like, man, I want to preach this text. But as I came back to this text these last two weeks, it's been really good as well, because there are some unexpected and unwanted things that God's doing in our life right now.

And this text has provided really nice guardrails for my soul. And so, I hope it's that blessing to you guys. I know life isn't always what we hope, but I think in the midst of this text, we see a very kind and compassionate Savior who meets us in the middle of our unwanted circumstances and actually uses those for His glory for our good.

[1:09] So, I'm really excited to work through this with you guys. So, the text is pretty nicely laid out. So, it's one story, kind of broken up into five different scenes.

So, what we're going to move through today's sermon is, we're going to read each of those scenes, and then I'm just going to give some explanation and application on that scene, and then we'll move on to the next scene, and then at the end, we'll provide a few points of application over the whole text.

So, with that, I'll pray, and then Nina will get us started with the screen. I'm the only father that I thank you, just for your goodness, that I say that you would give us the eyes to see Christ in all of His majesty.

God, His majesty looked like being a lowly servant servant, who was content to be in the background for a lot of this ministry, who chose a lowly path of suffering so that we might be brought to His glory.

So, God, just free us from our pride, from our distraction, from our struggles, and help us just to be able to see Christ here.

[2:24] Amen. So, please listen as Nina reads John 9, 1-2-6. As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth, and his disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was blind?

Jesus answered, It is not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of Him who sent me, while it is day, night is coming, when no one can work.

As long as I am the world, I am the light of the world. Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which means scent.

So he went and washed and came back, seeing. So if you'd like me, the first thing that stood out to you when you read this section was the disciples' seemingly out of context question.

So we'll get to that in a second, but I want to highlight something more subtle at the beginning of this that I think is really beautiful. Verse 9 says, As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.

[3:38] So I just think this is really neat. This is Jesus, God incarnate, walking along and he notices this poor blind book. And he notices it in such a way that his disciples take notice of Jesus and that Jesus notice him.

And I think it's just really beautiful. A lot of times when we study God's Word and we look at the Gospels, we look for the big implications of what Jesus is doing. But I think it's also good for us to slow down occasionally and look at the small interpersonal things that he's doing.

So this blind man is one that people don't typically take notice of. And Jesus, the Savior in the world, sees him and notices. And it's the people around him who recognize Jesus noticing his person.

And it's just really beautiful. And so, I think this is a really good thing for us to recognize about our Savior. He is one that notices people that the world tends to pass by.

Right? And so I think that's a really good hope for our souls. Like maybe you're struggling with something, going through something, you feel like nobody sees you. Nobody understands your struggle. But we have Scripture.

[4:44] We have a picture of our Savior in the Gospels as one who notices the people that the others don't. Right? So take encouragement in that because Jesus is one who sees.

Alright, not... And just as a cycle, maybe we eat like Christ in this way.

Like maybe we get people that embodies this character and we're quick to see the people that society doesn't see and come in and step in and share love, unkindness, and Christ.

So then, as we move on, we see the disciples asked Jesus if it was this man's sin or his parents that caused him to be born blind. And Jesus answers, neither.

According to Jesus, this man was born blind so that God's works might be displayed to him. In other words, this man was born blind so that God might receive glory through him.

[5:45] This is both a wonderful and sobering truth. This man's blindness was a part of God's plan to exalt Christ. Exalt in Christ sounds great, right?

Spending the entirety of your youth being blind doesn't. There's beauty here that God can and does turn suffering into glory. But it also means that suffering is a thing that we may be asked to ignore as a means of honor in Christ.

Jesus then tells his disciples that he must do the work of God, the work that the Father has given him to do. He then mixes mud, places on the man's eyes, and then he heals him. So at this point, we're like, okay, the purpose of this story, the purpose of this man's blindness is over, right?

He was blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him and Jesus healed him because it's a miracle. Right? But this actually isn't, the story isn't over. The story continues until we'll be reading from the starting of verse 8.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, Is this not the man who used to sit and beg? Some said, It is he.

[6:53] Others said, No, but he is like him. He kept saying, I am the man. So they said to him, Then how were your eyes opened? He answered, The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, Go to Siloam and wash.

So I went and washed and received my sight. They said to him, Where is he? He said, I do not know. So let's again start this scene off by noting Jesus and their personal reactions.

Right? This is kind of a surprise, right? This man goes off, he washes, he gets healed and he comes back and Jesus is gone. That's not what I expected. Right? He comes back to the guy who just healed him and Jesus is nowhere to be found.

But what he does find is his neighbors and his neighbors are like, Is this the man who was born blind? Is he healed? Right? And I love this part of the story because there's like this commotion, there's this conversation where like, He only looks like him, he is him.

And this man, it's like lively enough conversation as the man keeps trying to interject. I am the man, I am the man. It's just really, it's kind of humorous, but it also draws this great contrast for us between Christ and the neighbors.

[7:59] These neighbors were people who had passed by this man every day for years and they couldn't even confidently identify. And Jesus comes in and passing, simply passing by, takes notice of him, understands this plight, has compassion on him and feels in it, right?

And so we just see this beautiful contrast. Jesus, yet despite of all of Jesus' compassion, majesty, and power, Jesus was also content to take a backseat in the holy story and he gives this man space in order to lay out his power and purpose.

Eventually, Crowell decides to listen to man and he tells him that he was healed and how he was healed. He says the man called Jesus healed him, but that he didn't know what he was, right?

And so he would expect Jesus to be there and instead of Jesus being there, he's got this debate with the crowd about how he was healed. Right? And so we just see this really interesting thing where Jesus does this miraculous work in this Christology and he steps out of the scene and allows the man to kind of wrestle with what just happened with him in front of his peers, right?

And then we'll continue on the scene 3. They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

[9:27] So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight and he said to them, He put mud on my eyes and I washed and I see. Some of the Pharisees said, This man is not from God for he does not keep the Sabbath.

But others said, How can a man who is a sinner do such signs? And there was a division among them. So they said again to the blind man, What do you say about him since he has opened your eyes?

And he said, He is a prophet. The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and received his sight until they called the parents of the man who received his sight and asked them, Is this your son who you say was born blind?

Then how, how then does he now see? His parents answered, We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes.

Ask him. He is of age. He will speak for himself. His parents said these things because they feared the Jews. For the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.

[10:36] Therefore, his parents said, He is of age. Ask him. Have a good day to cut your bike for the old school. Take care of me.

Thanks, Ben. Let's get back. All right, so these neighbors bring Jesus to the Jewish leaders. This makes sense, right? There's some spiritual power thing that happened, right? You would expect them to reach out to the religious leaders to see what they think, right? The Pharisees quickly assess the details and determine two things.

First, they think that Jesus could not eat from God because he has broken the Sabbath day. And secondly, they think that it's unlikely that this man was actually healed. According to Jewish law, the people of Israel were instructed to set apart one day, the seventh day of her week, to rest and worship.

The biblical command for the Jewish people was to cease work on the Sabbath, was to honor God who rested on the seventh day of creation. However, what constituted rest and work was a bit subjective.

[11:41] So the Jewish leaders had come up with these social traditions that they had people walk in that would define what rest and work was like. One of these traditions said that you weren't to need bread or clay on the Sabbath.

That was considered work. Right? So Jesus is taking spit and he's grabbing dust and he's making it like clay into mud to put on his human eyes.

And so what we see here is Jesus is almost intentionally kind of stirring up this controversy. And this doesn't surprise us. We've been reading through John. This isn't new for Jesus. He's found himself in this conflict that the religious leaders already have been looking for John multiple times. Right? We're not going to talk about this, but what I wanted to just kind of bring up is Jesus was intentionally doing this. Right? And it shocks us a little bit because Jesus heals this man. He does this amazing work in this guy's life.

He comes back. Jesus isn't there. He comes back to controversy. And Jesus has stepped out of the way. Right? And so we just see that Jesus knew what he was doing.

[12:46] He worked to make money and heal this man on the Sabbath. He had been there before and he knew how the religious leaders react. He knew

that he was stirring up controversy and giving the religious authorities the angry mission they did to cancel Jesus' work.

They said he can't be from God because Jesus is acting in sin. The man who was born blind, however, did not budge. When asked plainly who he thought Jesus was, he said he is a prophet. This response is a powerful claim for it was through prophets, in particular through Moses, that the people of Israel had been given their law. And this was the law that the religious leaders were trying to uphold.

Right? So when he said Jesus is a prophet, he's actually saying, well, he must be a prophet. So therefore, he has authority in ways that you guys don't, right? And so, you know, he's standing strong in these questions.

The religious leaders, they see that they're not going to make any headway in getting this vigor to comply. So the Jewish leaders turn to their, investigate their next quick assessment.

[13:54] That this man was not actually born blind. So they get his parents, they summon his parents who testify that this was indeed their son and that he had, in fact, been born blind. The parents, however, choose not to join in a skew about how he was here.

They fear being banned from the synagogue. The text says that. If anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he would be put out in the synagogue. So this is the prevailing kind of fear that these people have.

And so for us, we think banned from the synagogue, we think about like kind of local churches like, okay, so you leave and go to another church and find the church.

But it wasn't really that way in Jewish society, right? So these synagogues were all connected, for one. And then also, it was much more, like, the synagogue was more than just where they went once a week.

It was kind of their religious, cultural center, right? And so being kicked out of the synagogue meant you're being pulled away from a lot of what pertains to Jewish life, right?

[14:58] So you're kind of being kicked out of your community. So this was kind of a heavy thing. And so, the parents navigated this situation by directing the religious leader's attention back to their son, saying, we don't know how he was healed.

Go and ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself. And so as we move to scene four, let us see how this man responds. Will he cave to pressure or will he stand firmly in what he believes?

So, for the second time, they called the man who had been blind and said to him, give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner. He answered, whether he is a sinner, I do not know.

One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see. They said to him, what did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?

He answered them, I have told you already and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples? And they reviled him, saying, you are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

[16:02] We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from. The man answered, why? This is an amazing thing. You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes?

We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of the man born blind.

If this man were not from God, he could do nothing. They answered him, you were born in utter sin, and would you teach us? And they cast him out. So here in scene four, we see the religious leaders getting more aggressive.

They call the man back, and they say, give glory to God, not Jesus, because we know that Jesus is a sinner. To this, the man replies, whether he's a sinner, I do not know, but one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.

To this, the religious leaders, ask him again to tell them what had happened. They were probably trying to get him to focus on the making love part of the game. This man, however, he's not interested in their fatigue, nor does he understand their unwillingness to believe.

[17:14] He says, why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples? For this, the religious leaders ridicule him. They see that this man has chosen to align himself with Jesus, and they ridicule him from this, and then they set themselves and Moses against this man and Jesus.

They question Jesus' origins and basically say, at least we side with Moses. He was a prophet who wrote the law and we know, we know that God spoke through Moses.

Rather than being deterred by the rape or with him, formally a blind man is emboldened. And he states the obvious, nobody in the history of the world has ever done something like this.

If he was not from God, he would not be able to do this type of miracle, for God would not listen to him if he was a sinner. In this, he unravels the argument of the religious leaders and points out what his love is.

Jesus has to be from God because he is doing things that only God can do. The religious leaders respond with an attack. You were born entirely of sin, and are you trying to teach us?

[18:20] And then they kick them out of the sea and go pick up sin to God. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him, he said, Do you believe in the Son of Man?

He answered, And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him? Jesus said to him, You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you. He said, Lord, I believe.

And he worshipped him. And Jesus said, For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind. Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things and said to him, Are we also blind?

Jesus said to them, If you were blind, you would have no guilt. But now that you say and you see, your guilt remains. In this final scene, we once again see Jesus' personal compassionate touch. Jesus hears that this man has been thrown out of the synagogue, and so he finds him and teaches him plainly about who he is. Again, I love this point. I love seeing Jesus at work.

[19:28] Jesus saw the man, he had compassion on him, and he healed him. But he also heals in a way that stirs up controversy. And when the controversy comes, Jesus disappears, stepping aside, allowing the man to stand and contend on his glory.

This is not what we expect. Remember that what Jesus said when the disciples asked if this man was blind due to his seeing those parents? Jesus said, No, this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

What work is this? On one hand, it was the exaltation of Christ through this man's healing. On the other hand, it was this man's growth in faith as he testified to Jesus before the religious leaders.

Let's look back at the scene. In scene two, this is one with the neighbors and their confusion. the former man blind refers to Jesus as the man from Jesus. In scene three, this is the first interaction with the religious leaders, he says that Jesus is a prophet.

In scene four, this is the final interaction, he testifies that Jesus is from God. And he shows that he is willing to align himself with Jesus even if it means becoming a social outcast.

[20:39] And in scene five, it's Jesus who meets him in the midst of his social excommunication. And shows him clearly that he is the Messiah, the Savior, the one sent by God in the worships.

So that's kind of the summary of the story. I have three application points for it. Does everybody follow? Okay. Application one, Jesus gives us space to grow.

First, I want you to notice how Jesus steps out of the scene, giving this man space to grow.

Because Jesus is the Son of God, we expect him to step in here, take center stage in his trauma.

We also expect him to stand alongside the man in confrontation with the religious leaders. But Jesus doesn't. Instead, Jesus steps out of the way and gives space for this man to grow in his faith, which each, with each new confrontation, the man discovers and testifies something to the that Jesus.

Yes, he was a man. Yes, Jesus was a prophet. Yes, Jesus was from God. And he was worthy to be followed. And yes, Jesus was worth being executed very soon because Jesus is the Messiah.

[21:51] Right? So we see the path of faith that this man is on. And we see Jesus' claimness, actually, to kind of let us get out of the zone and

discover.

I bring this up because we live in a culture that assumes easy and clear is good and hard and confusing is bad. But here we see that Jesus allows difficulty and confusion because he is after something must do.

He wants the works of God to be displayed in this room. And so Jesus lets him stand in controversy so that the work of faith might be displayed in him. And you know what?

I think the Christian night consists of a lot of moments like this. Moments where Jesus is content to step out of the scene and allow confusion and difficulty come so that his works might be displayed in us.

Yes, we want Jesus to step in and solve our problems but this isn't how Jesus often works. He often allows problems to play count so that he might use them as a means for our growth.

[22:55] Jesus is far more interested in our growth than our physical comfort. However, as we grow we will find that the spiritual and relational comfort that he provides far outweighs the displeasure and difficulties that he has.

So friends, if you are experiencing difficulty, confusion, or controversy today, do not be discouraged or set off course. Rather, recognize that this is often how God works to grow us.

And just as Jesus returns to his scene at the appropriate moment to confirm his love and care of his man, so he will always be with you. Sometimes he'll be with you on the front lines.

Sometimes he will fade in the back line. But he promises to never leave you or forsake you. He is always waiting. Always watching.

Always ready to comfort you when the moment is right. But before we move to the next point, I want to make a quick distinction. Our contemporary culture has embraced this idea that growth often comes through difficulty.

[24:03] And I believe this could be true. However, this is often said to exalt the idea of perseverance and self-strength. If you keep working, keep trying, keep showing up, you will eventually succeed.

But I just want to show this is not what we see in this passage. This man does not stand in a controversy in a self-strong way. No, he simply plunged the one work that Jesus had done in his life.

And in the midst of the questions, the tests, the attacks, he simply held fast to the one who had opened his eyes. Yes, this man contended with the cultural roots of his day, but he did so by simply testifying to what Jesus had done in his life.

Also, according to the ideals of this world, this man did not win. He had been silenced by the religious leaders and excommunicated from the Jewish community. However, to this man, these losses were overshadowed, shattered, as Christ revealed himself as the Son of the community, and seeing Jesus' power directed towards him, experiencing Jesus' compassion, and understanding Jesus' identity, he had found a treasure that far exceeded anything that was lost, and so he worships.

The Christian life does not always produce the results that we desire, but it will result in receiving the pearl of Christ. In this way, the Christian life is foreign to the experiences of this world.

[25:32] The world is stuck, looking for value here and now. But Christians, we have him who is most valuable now and forever. So as we move on to application number two, Jesus is the only way, I'm going to draw your attention to how this passage contrasts the concept of sight.

It was Jesus who saw this man and healed him. We see that Jesus' sight initiates this man's sight.

The blind man's sight is then set in contrast to religious leaders' lack of sight or lack of true spirit.

The passage ends with a psalm of warning. In verse 39, Jesus says, for judgment I came into the world that those who do not see may see and those who see may become blind.

When Jesus says here, he came into the world that those who do not see will see and those who see will become blind, he is testifying the truth that he is the one and only way to God.

He is the one who stands before all who come to God. He came to give sight to the blind, but not all want his sight. Some are like the religious leaders in this story.

[26:48] They claim to know better than Jesus. In pride, they say, no, we are the ones who see. We see what's true. And so they reject Jesus and

his message of life. If you are here today and you are wondering about Christianity, please know that Jesus is the only way to die.

Those who recognize this are granted true sight, and those who reject this are choosing blindness and are therefore without excuse. Maybe you're here today and you see Jordan, but Jordan, it's not that easy to trust Christ.

You don't know all that I've been through, and you are right, I don't know all that you've been through. But I would encourage you to consider the man in today's story and contrast it with the religious leaders who chose not to trust.

This man spent the entire of his youth blind. This is going to suck him. But that does not keep him from rejoicing in the truth of Jesus.

Instead, it seems to build his amazement and his confidence. In contrast, the religious leaders were the cultural elites in the Jewish society. They were intelligent, educated, respected, and influential.

[28:04] They had much of what man desired. And yet their hearts were closed off to God. The blind man suffered for the majority of his earthly life, and yet he goes down in history as one who exalted Christ.

It is beautiful to me how this story ends. In verse 38, the man says, Lord, I believe and worship him. And in this statement, this is the last thing we have to do with him. And so he goes out of the biblical narrative in worship.

And so we assume this man is still worshiping Christ, and he is with Christ for all eternity. In contrast, the religious leaders were offered the same evidence about the person and work of Christ, but they chose to reject him.

And if that choice persisted until their death, they would experience eternity in judgment, eternally separated from the love of God. In the end, who would you rather be? The man who suffered for the short duration of his life but gained Christ?

Or the cultural elites who enjoy their self-strong life but this Jesus? Friends, choose Jesus. He is the only way, and he is also the best way.

[29:14] The best God. It is not our decision how much or how little we suffer in this life. But the good news is that the gift of Christ is available to all, and his gift is far greater than the pleasure or pain that we experience in this short, good life.

And while our suffering often isn't our choice, you can trust excluding us because the one who did have a choice chose a lowly path of his offering so that he might secure your eternal rescue.

Yes, Jesus heals this man and he throws him in the middle of this controversy, but if we go forward into the story, we say it's Jesus who pays the ultimate price for this controversy he stirs up.

It is this controversy about the Sabbath and about authority and all these things that Jesus ultimately goes to the cross for. The religious leaders, they crucify him. They assume that he is going to keep the strength from God and so they crucify him.

So Jesus stirs up this controversy, but it's not like he's not immune to it. He goes to the cross. Jesus paid the ultimate price so that those who turn to him and trust in him might someday experience a complete end of all their suffering.

[30:31] Did anybody track me? We did? Okay. Alright, thanks for the side. Alright, last point. Pride is plenty. Yeah, so I guess before we get to the last point, what I love about this text is we see Jesus not working in the conventional ways that we would expect.

And we see that Jesus is comfortable with us struggling a little bit because in that struggle we learn to clean and clean. And he allows suffering and he chose suffering.

And I think as Christians we should expect to suffer and have unwanted things come into our life because they force us to kind of wrestle with where our hope truly is.

And if our hope is in this life then we would be like the religious leaders who said no, I have to stand my crown. So if I lose this I lose everything. Right?

And we see this humble poor beggar who had nothing to lose when we debated. God and so we see that his suffering was actually such a gift in his battle against pride and fridness.

[31:42] And so sometimes God brings hard things into our lives to protect us from the pride that could destroy us. And we see people who had time to everything from the world's eyes were blinded to see what was true to

God.

And so I don't know if that makes sense. I was just thinking like every Sunday morning in my house is a bit of a zoo. Right?

And I wish that I was like perfect and calm every time we had trouble in church. But I'm not, right?

But my voice was like starting to go into yesterday and into this morning.

Right? And that was a huge gift to me this morning. Because I couldn't raise my voice in the case if I wanted to. I think God does that kind of stuff in our lives all the time.

He gives us these little unwanted things that they help us to live a life that's important. And what is often a problem when my kids are having trouble?

[32:44] It's my pride. It's like, don't you understand what important kids were going to worship the Lord? You know? And it's my pride. Your disobedience is not as good as my worship. And so you stand in conflict.

But losing my voice, it's like, all right, well, I've got to solve this in a calm good way, right? And so, I don't know. I just think life is full of Christ's compassion and kindness in those small spaces of our life, in those unwanted things.

He is doing something that we don't see or understand as really beautiful, right? And we learn to trust Him and to receive His compassionate help, even when it's not to help He wanted, right?

And we live in so much greater comfort and joy because we trust the one who is working and orchestrating these little moments in our life to make us more like Him and to set out a hope for Him.

And so, I think we see this in His name, right? He's suffered a lot, right? It doesn't matter to Him, right? He just keep up Christ's life. What is that?

[33:49] That's just like, you know, just overshadowed everything. all right, pride is blinding. That's our gospel. So, if we look at the positive, right, we see the negative.

Jesus makes this point clear in verse 31. He says, if you were blind, you would have no guilt. But now that you say, we see your guilt remains. The Jewish religious leaders' problem wasn't ignorance due to their confusion, rather it was willful ignorance due to their pride.

We talked earlier about how Jesus intentionally stirs up this controversy. The main reason Jesus did this was so that the works of God would be displayed in this man. Right? But I think Jesus also wanted to draw the heart issue underneath the disc relief of religious leaders.

When Jesus needed saliva, into mud, so that was considered work, saliva was bodily, fluid, that was considered clean, and then he healed this man on the Sabbath.

He was putting these religious leaders in an uncomfortable spot. If they accepted that he was able to heal this man because he was from God, then they would also have to accept that they had been wrong in their teaching concerning the law.

[35:01] And by admitting their misunderstanding, they would simultaneously affirming that Jesus' authority exceeds that of their own. So Jesus forces them into a no-win situation.

They either had to admit that they were wrong and concede their influence, or they had to reject what was clear. They chose to reject what was clear.

Proverbs 11.2 says, when pride comes and then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.

This simple short proverbs provides us valuable insight into this passage.

Jesus intentionally heals in a way that calls into question the authority and confidence of the religious leaders. The people knew what they taught and enforced and Jesus contradicted their teaching with a godlike human.

And in this moment of confrontation, religious leaders were left with the choice. Choose humility and strength in Jesus or choose pride in their own influence.

[36:05] The proverbs also helpfully sets pride against wisdom. It said, pride is disgrace, but humility is wisdom. Why is this? Because as long as pride is ready to show, as long as it's dragging the agenda, as long as it's calling the shots, as long as it's making a decision for people, for us, wisdom is placed in subservience.

The religious leaders appear to say wise things and logical things. This man cannot be from God for he does not keep the Sabbath. On the surface, this argument seems logical, but it presupposes that

they themselves were right about the Sabbath.

Jesus is showing them otherwise, but their pride blocks them from wisdom because they are not willing to budge on what they do. This is why we see Jesus say, if you were blind, you would have no guilt.

But now that you say we see your guilt, we lose. The proverb also teaches when pride comes, then comes disgrace. Look at the disgraceful things that these religious leaders do in order to protect their position.

They bullied, threatened, ridiculed, and excommunicated their way back into position of power over this uneducated beggar who was out of the game. Why?

[37:27] Because their pride required them to win. And when they could not win in a civil way, they turned to underhanded tactics. When pride comes, then comes disgrace.

They were supposed to be the ones who upheld righteousness and custody. But here they are using manipulative tactics to maintain their influence. This passage leaves us with this negative example as a bold warning against the blindness that pride creates.

As long as we are walking in pride, we are in danger of missing Christ and walking in disgrace. We cannot submit to wisdom and live in our pride at the same time.

this is a sobering thought. We can feel so confident about something and still be wrong. It is wild to look at the interactions of religious leaders in Christ.

The religious leaders were the good guys in the Jewish society. They lived outwardly pious lives. They studied God's laws. They memorized it. And they worked to practice it. They fought against idolatry and went to Israel pure before the Lord.

[38:40] And yet, in spite of all of this passage of knowledge, their pride, pride blinded them from recognizing Christ when he came and walked among them. Pride led the religious leaders in today's story to oppose Christ in this passage.

And the scary thing is that they were so convinced of their rightness that they eventually crucified the one who had come to bring them back to God. Yet, in spite of their disgraceful acts and pride motivated rejection, Christ chose to endure God's judgment on their behalf on the cross.

On the cross, Jesus endured the full weight of God's anger and righteous judgment against all human sin, including the pride of these religious leaders, so that they and any and all who turn to him might be forgiven.

His forgiveness is for all, even the religious leaders who acted so shamefully towards him.

According to the biblical narrative, some of these religious leaders have actually turned from their pride and then received complete and utter forgiveness and some do not.

Instead, they choose to ride their pride to the grave and on to eternal judgment before the God of universe who will not let the rest of the world on the street. Friend, any and all pride in your life will lead to spiritual blindness in one way or another.

[40:01] I hope at the end of this passage causes you to pause and ask, is pride blinding me? Maybe it, like the religious leaders in this story, keeps you from seeing Christ altogether.

Or maybe it's like making you blind to aspects of who God is and how he works. This passage beautifully highlights the compassion and care of Christ, but some miss this and they miss out. Friend, your pride likewise can keep you from recognizing his compassionate touch. He often works in subtle and humble ways. Can you see this?

Or is your desire for self-exaltation too strong to accept the paths of weakness that he has been to you? Or does your prideful opinion about how your life should go cause you to be unwilling to trust him in the path that he has chosen for you?

Or maybe pride is preventing you from seeing a particular person or situation clearly. You are too consumed with being right to see that your heart has become hard and really bitter.

[41:14] Friend, pride is no joke. It is not a sin that you should play around with. It is dangerous, sneaky, and it could lead you to a terrible kind of issue. Amen. So, I highlight this, right, because we see this really beautiful thing in this, right?

We see his compassion and his kindness to lead this man, right, and to bring glory to his suffering and to allow him to stand and grow and hold him to the Christian, right?

But, other people can see it, right? And the limiting factor and our ability to see the compassion hand of our Savior is our pride, according to this passage, right?

And so, there's a group of people who saw the exact same things, and they had the complete opposite response, right? And so, if we're going to kind of encourage you towards seeing the compassionate hand of our Savior, I also have to like, warn you that pride can block you from it, right?

Pride can destroy so many things. Jesus says it's an anti-God state of mind, right? It says it's spiritual cancer, right? And so, when our pride is driving the agenda of our lives, we should expect to be spiritually blind, right?

[42:33] And I don't want us to be spiritually blind. I want us to see the compassion hand of our Savior as He works through the details of our life, because that is a beautiful story, right? And it shows us so much God's love, and we see Him in really specific ways, pluck and hope and pride, to help us grow, and help us to find truth, and lasting good, and truth, and lasting comfort, and the midst of the chaos of our living life, right?

But if we're too prideful, and we're like, God, no, don't do that. God, no, that's not right. No, this isn't how my life should go, right? That's setting our opinion against what the Savior is doing in our life, right?

It's going to blind us from sin, right? And it's going to destroy the community of faith, and it's going to destroy our ability to walk into the joy that Jesus bought for us. And so the best thing for you to do right now is to take your pride directly to the cross of Christ.

While we can be blinded by pride, or other people's sin, Jesus sees all of us, including our blinding sin, including the sin that blinds us, and he chose to love and rescue us and evil us.

And when we go to him, and we take our pride, and we take our blindness to him, we know that he actually has the power to change us. We don't have power of our flesh, right? We talk about sin, that's scary, right?

[43:58] Like, have you guys ever been in, like, a conversation where both parties are so convinced of the right, or maybe you've been one of those parties, right? And it's like, how could we both look at the same data and come to the opposite conclusion, right?

I feel like we've all been in those situations before, and I think our job as Christians is in those situations to do our best to pursue the path of humility, right?

And to recognize, like, God, I can't untangle this broken heart, right? I understand that, like, my heart longs for self-exaltation. We take that to the cross and ask him to change us and humble us. Proverbs 11, 2 says, when pride comes, then comes disgrace with a humble energy system. This verse has been particularly helpful to me. It says, when pride comes, pride will come, pride does come, but when it does, friend, choose humility, for with the humble there is wisdom.

So next time you feel pride coming, tell Jesus about it. Say, Jesus, I feel pride coming. Help me exchange it for your humility. Through your death and your resurrection, you make it possible for me to turn from my pride.

[45:13] I no longer need to be right. I no longer need to be recognized. I do not deserve prosperity, ease, comfort, or kids that make me look good. I deserve judgment.

You have given me life. In you, I have all that I need. You are sufficient. Please make me humble like you. Please teach me to depend on you, like you, like you saw Jesus, depend on the Father throughout this whole book of John.

Help me to trust you with my reputation. you are big enough to handle that, Lord. Please help me trust in your ways. Trust that they are good, even when they are hard. Help me to admit that you know better, Lord.

Help me to submit to you in all things. Help me to consider as others a failure of myself, even those who are hurt. Thank you.

You did all of this from me, and I trust in you. It's just like we can combat that cry by taking up the cross and remembering what is true, and asking for his humble heart to be infused in us.

[46:22] And through his spirit, he promises to do that. What a beautiful thing. So this passage is scary. We could completely misjudge us, we could completely misjudge very important things about life.

But we have a source that we can go to when we recognize the power of our God, we can take to the cross and ask him to forgive us for the changes. And so I guess that's what I'm just encouraging you guys to do.

Because I want us to see Jesus' small, personal touches in our life, and his compassion, and I'm proud of people. So we need to fight that ability, need to try to see those words.

All right, that's all I got. All right, dearly God, thank you for today. I thank you for your word. I thank you that you have considered our common estate, and you have set your strength into this world to walk as we walk, to suffer as we suffer.

And as we go through the look of John, we see how he did that, and we just see so many beautiful things about him, and how he loved people, and how he cared for people, and cared for people, and saw people, and God I bring you and make us a people who do the same.

[47:35] God, we see those who are overwhelmed, that we run to them, with compassion, and love, and to the message of Christ. God, help us to see the things that you do in our life, not as unwanted, but as gifts of your grace to change us, and to make us more like Christ, and to help us hold more firmly to the things that are just God.

God, we thank you that we have the treasure in Christ that you never be taken away. We thank you that you have promised to never leave us or forsake us. God, we have so much food in you. You are the treasure of Christ.

And if we have you, Lord, we have all that need. So, God, help us as a church to go repeatedly over and over to this source of life, to bring our pride, our community, our hardship to Christ, to give us the power to hear, to see, and to do something that is far bigger than what we do in this life.