

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind (2)

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[0 : 00] And before we sing again, just a wee word to the young folk. In the fields beside us there are sheep, and I'm sure quite soon we're waiting to see the lambs.

It's one of the things that we look forward to spring, March, and on into April. Because when we see the lambs, it always gives an idea of the newness of life. And it's one of the things, particularly in an evening, you often see the lambs springing about.

They love to play, and occasionally you'll find one of the sheep will join in with them. And it's always something that's nice to see.

It's very interesting when you go to the Bible how often the Bible speaks to us about sheep and about lambs. Somebody who was counting it says there's about 400 references in the Bible to sheep and to lambs.

The Bible speaks more about the sheep and the lamb than of any other animal at all. And we sometimes say, well, I wonder why is that?

[1 : 10] And I think one of the reasons is that in many ways the sheep are quite like us, or we're quite like the sheep. In one sense. Another way, no, because I'm sure those of you who have sheep know that there's probably a few animals that are more frustrating.

They're lovely animals, but they're so frustrating and so often they will drive you to just a distraction. But that's something else. But there's a lot of things we could say about the sheep.

One of the things about the sheep is they love to follow one another. They always go in a flock. And you find that supposing you climbed a fence.

There's a whole flock of sheep there. And one of the sheep notices you and just runs off. That all the others do exactly the same. They don't know why they're running. They'll run across the field. And I don't think they have any idea why they're running. But they just follow one another. And you know, in a sense, we're quite like that too because we often follow one another.

[2 : 19] And sadly, sometimes when we're young, we follow one another to do the wrong things. So we've always got to be careful and we've always got to work out why are we doing what we're doing.

Are we following in the right way? Again, sheep are quite slow to maybe to understand or to get hold of something.

For instance, you might see a wee hole in the fence. And this sheep decides who wants to get through this hole. And it goes at it and butts at it. And then it'll try again and it'll try again and it'll come back and it'll try again and again and again.

And maybe it's banging its head against a post, but it still keeps going, thinking that the next time the result will be a little different. But it's not. Sheep are a bit, I don't like to use the word stupid, but sometimes they certainly seem to be a bit stupid.

And you know, there's times we can be a bit like that as well. Particularly if we go down the road of doing what's wrong. We sometimes think, okay, that was wrong.

[3 : 24] Next time it'll be different. It'll be a different outcome, a different result. And it's still the same. So sometimes we're very, very slow to learn our lessons.

Loads of other things, but there's one other thing we'll say about the sheep. The sheep love to wander. They're always on the go. And they're not very good at making their way back home. Because if sheep go off, they just go.

It's amazing when people start gathering their sheep in the different areas of the island. You'll find that sheep, maybe the areas are better fenced now, but sheep will turn up in all different parts of the island.

Because they just love to wander. Away they go. They just go and they go and they go. And the Bible tells us that we're like sheep. There's a verse in Isaiah that says, All we like sheep have gone astray.

We've turned everyone to his own way. And so the sheep needs a shepherd to gather them and to bring them back.

[4 : 30] And that's why Jesus is called the good shepherd. That's why Jesus has come. To gather us back. Because we've wandered off. Our sin has caused us to wander away from God.

But Jesus has come to bring us back to God. The longest psalm in the Bible, Psalm 119, it finishes in verse 176.

The psalmist says, I like a lost sheep went astray. Your servant seek and find. He was aware that he'd gone away.

And that only the Lord could bring him back. And that's a great prayer that we should all pray. Lord, please bring me back. Back where?

Back to you. Because we've all run away from God. Jesus has come to bring us back. Ask Jesus to bring you back to himself.

[5 : 34] We're going to sing again from Psalm 118. No, sorry, Psalm 18. And that's from Sing Psalms. It's on page 21.

Psalm 18. And we're going to sing from verse 27 to 34. The tune is Duke Street.

Psalm number 18. And at verse 27. You save the humble and the meek, but bring the proud down from their height.

You, Lord, will keep my lamp aflame. God turns my darkness into light. With help from God I can advance against a troop and rug them all.

And with the aid my God will give, I can leap over any wall. For perfect is the way of God. No flaw is found within his word. To all who put their trust in him, a shield and refuge is the Lord.

[6 : 34] For who is God except the Lord? Besides our God, who is a rock. He is a God who gives me strength. And he perfects the path I walk. He makes my feet like feet of deer.

Upon the heights he makes me stand. My arms can bend above bronze. And skills of war he trains my hand. These verses, Psalm 18, 27 to 34.

The tune is Duke Street. You save the humble and the meek. You save the humble and the meek. But bring the proud down from their height. You, Lord, will keep my lamp aflame.

God turns my darkness into light. With help from God I cannot pass.

[7 : 47] I can't start to run around them all. As with the aid my God will give, I can't leap over any wall.

For perfect is the way of God. No ploy is bound within his word.

To all who put their trust in him, A shield and refuge is the Lord.

For who is God except the Lord? Besides the God who is the Lord, He is the God who gives me strength.

And he perfects the path I walk. He makes my feet like feet of deer.

[9 : 14] Upon the heights he makes me stand. My hands can bend above thorns.

In skills of war retrains my hands. Let's turn to read God's word now in John chapter 9.

Last week we looked at the first 12 verses, or at least maybe the first few verses of this chapter. I want us to read down to the beginning of verse 35 today.

So we'll maybe just read through the chapter from the beginning. And as he passed by, John chapter 9, 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 born blind?

Jesus answered, It was not that this man sinned or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

[10 : 29] 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 in the world, I am the light of the world.

Having said these things, he spat 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. 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. 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. They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

[11 : 38] Now it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 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 opened your eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

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

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.

[12 : 45] Nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him, 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. Therefore his parents said, He is of age.

Ask him. 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?

[13 : 44] And they reviled him saying, You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.

The man, that's a man who had been blind, 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 worshipper 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 a 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.

And Jesus heard that they had cast him out. And having found him, he said, Do you believe in the Son of Man? Amen. And may God bless to us this reading of his holy word.

[14 : 46] I'm going to sing again from Sing Psalm, Psalm number 26. It's on page 31. Psalm number 26 on page 31. The tune is Bethesda.

We sing verses 4 to the end. I do not sit with worthless folk. I shun the hypocrite. I hate the wicked's gatherings.

With them I will not sit. I wash my hands in innocence, and blameless is my heart. I go about your altar, Lord, the place you set apart.

I'll tell of all your awesome deeds, proclaiming loud your praise. Your glory fills your dwelling place. I love your house always. Sweep not away my soul, O Lord, with those who hate your way.

Nor take away my life with those who love to wound and slay. For their right hands are full of bribes. They plot iniquity.

[15 : 48] But I will lead a blameless life, and mercy set me free. My feet will stand with confidence upon a level place. And in the people's gathering I'll praise the Lord of grace.

These verses, Psalm 26, 4 to 12, on the tune is Bethesda. I do not sit with worthless folk. I do not sit with worthless folk.

I shun the hypocrite. I hate the wicked's gatherings.

With them I will not sit. I wash my hands in innocence.

And blameless is my heart. I go about your altar, Lord.

[17 : 14] The place you set apart. I'll tell of all your awesome deeds.

Proclaiming loud your praise. Your glory fills your dwelling place.

I love your house always. Sweep not away my soul, O Lord.
With those who hate your way. Lord, take away my life.
With those who love to wound and slay. For their right hands are full of pride.
[18 : 41] I am not iniquity. But I will lead a blameless life.

In mercy set me free. My feet will stand with confidence.
Upon a level of place. And in the people's gathering.
I will praise the Lord of grace. Turn back to John's Gospel.
John chapter 9. And we're looking at this section, really. From verse 8. Really down to where we read there at the beginning of verse 35.

[20 : 05] 25. And maybe if we focus on one part, verse 24, it says, 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.

And then verse 25, he answered, Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.

Last week we saw the miraculous healing of this man who had been born blind. And remember how Jesus had told him to go after putting a mud pack on his eyes, had told him to go down to the pool of Siloam, which means scent, and to wash there.

And of course, when he did that, when he washed, he had received his sight. Of course, it caused great amazement in the community when this man was healed, was healed, because this wasn't a man who had lost his sight through an accident, or through some illness, or through old age.

He was somebody who was born blind. And the community knew him as a man who was born blind. And in fact, we're told that, that in verse 8, he had to make his survival was through begging.

[21 : 20] The neighbors and those who had seen him before, as a beggar, was saying, Is this not the man who used to sit and beg? And of course, it caused amazement throughout the community, because somebody who had for all their life been blind, somebody who everybody saw because he was always sitting down by the side of the road, to see that person walking about, somebody who in the past would have to be led there or feel his way around, is now just walking and seeing everything.

And so, of course, there's absolute amazement within the community. And you know, at a spiritual level, it's often still the same, that there's always a level of curiosity when somebody's eyes are opened spiritually, particularly if the person is somebody who was living full out or full on in the world, somebody whose life wasn't really thinking about church, or was really involved in everything that was going, but church wasn't something that was on his or her agenda.

And then all of a sudden, they come to faith in Jesus Christ. They're converted. People are curious. They want to know. People ask. And even within the circles of the church and communities, small communities like their own, where people know, most people know one another, at least to a certain level, people are always asking.

I'm sure many of you, when you became a Christian, people would ask you, what happened? How did this happen? People sometimes who didn't go to church, or appeared not to have any interest in the gospel, would ask you.

I remember when I was converted, a lot of people would ask, what happened? And it's a wonderful opportunity, really, where you're able to tell people. Sometimes, like this blind man, sometimes you can't tell very much.

[23 : 22] All you can see is, well, I was blind spiritually, but now I see. This, we'll see it in a moment, this blind man who had been healed, he couldn't go into the ins and outs.

There wasn't very much he could tell them. But the all-important thing he could tell them, that there's a difference. I was blind, but now I see. So it's always a great opportunity for somebody who comes to faith in Jesus Christ to be able to share and to tell others.

Because people, as I say, in a smallish community, are interested. They're curious. So, this man, at a physical level, he was being interrogated, almost, by the community, and such like.

And, as I say, he didn't know much about Jesus. Actually, he had never seen Jesus. This is the amazing thing. This man, he knew the name, was Jesus.

He knew the voice, and people who lose their sight, or don't have their sight, probably, their hearing is acuter. They're able to, because they have to use the other senses, maybe to a greater level.

[24 : 31] And he would know the voice of Jesus. He'd be able to distinguish that voice. Jesus had even touched him, when he put the mud pack on his eyes. But he had never seen him, because he was still blind, when he made his way to the pool of Siloam.

And, of course, when he came back, when his eyes were opened, Jesus was no longer there. So he had never seen Jesus. So this man couldn't really tell that much. And all he knew was, that he was the man, Jesus.

That's what he says in verse 11. He answered, The man called Jesus made mud. Now, it's very interesting, how often John refers to Jesus, as the man. Particularly, when John spends so much, of this gospel, emphasizing, the divinity, of Jesus.

John, above all, is highlighting, that Jesus, is God, and has been sent from God. That he is the son of God. And that he has been sent, by the father, into the world.

And John puts huge emphasis, upon the divine, nature of Jesus. Jesus. But he also, refers to Jesus, or, other people referring to him, but he highlights it, in so many of the gospels, as the man, Jesus.

[25 : 56] And that is showing, it's, that Jesus was not, an illusion. That Jesus was not, some kind of, taking that, like it was, an apparition, or just, what in the Old Testament, would have termed, a theophany, and the appearance of, that he was an actual man.

He was flesh and blood. He was there. He was part of, the human race. As much a man, much a human being, as you and me. In every conceiver, there was nothing, the only thing, that distinguished Jesus, was that he was sinless.

But he was, absolutely human, in every shape, and form. And when he would, knock himself, bang into something, he would feel the pain. He knew what it was, to be hungry, and thirsty, and tired, and all the different things, that you and I feel.

He understood emotion, he cried, all these things, that you and I do. So, he was the man. Yes, God, but also, the man.

Now, of course, this man, who was healed, he's then taken, to the Pharisees. And now, the real interrogation, begins. And the Pharisees, really give him, a very, very hard time.

[27 : 14] They bombard him, with questions. And of course, as far as the Pharisees, were concerned, this healing, was awful. Because it had taken place, on the Sabbath day.

And as far as the Pharisees, were concerned, that straight away, labeled Jesus, to be a sinner. A terrible sinner. That he had actually, healed, this man, on the Sabbath day.

The laws, and the funny thing was, there was nobody, who kept, the Sabbath, better than Jesus. He kept it impeccably. But he didn't keep, the man made laws, and traditions, that people had built.

Because the Pharisees, and the Jews, they had built, so many, many laws. They were, the reason they were doing that, was that they were trying, to make sure, that they kept the Sabbath.

And in order to make sure, they kept the Sabbath, they made loads, and loads, and loads of laws. And they kept adding, and adding, and adding, and adding to the laws, until it became, an absolute burden.

[28 : 18] Sabbath must have been, a fearful burden, in those days. For instance, you weren't allowed, to make a passion, better on the Sabbath. But you were allowed, to try and prevent, the passion from dying.

Now how do you distinguish, how do you draw that line? That was, these were the rules, regarding, for a doctor, or somebody, on the Sabbath day, if a person, looked like they were dying, you were allowed, to try and prevent, them dying.

But you weren't, to try and make them better. You would have to wait, the next day, in order to try, to make them, on the road to recovery. So you see, how utterly absurd, the laws had become.

So, but this man, this blind man, wasn't facing death. So to heal him, on the Sabbath, it wasn't an emergency. It wasn't like, a work of necessity, as far as they were concerned.

But Jesus, see, Jesus knew that, all these laws, that they had made, they were, they were ridiculous. And so, Jesus heals this man.

[29 : 28] Again, they saw him, as breaking the Sabbath, when he made the mud pack. Because he weren't allowed, to do any form, like of cooking, or baking, or kneading. You know, when you're, working with, say, flour, and, when Jesus made, that mud pack, he was again, breaking the Sabbath.

So in their eyes, he was a sinner. Straight away, I was, no questions. Oh yes, a man was healed. A man who was born blind, he can see.

Now, that's irrelevant. What is, as important is, that this man, Jesus, he broke the Sabbath. So that's the starting point, from where the Pharisees are at. And you can see, how difficult it was, in these particular days.

But of course, it did cause a division, amongst some of the Pharisees, because, and as we go through, in John's Gospel, we notice that there was, a growing division amongst them, because some of them, were beginning to become, convinced, about Jesus.

Jesus came to lighten the burden. Jesus came to bring liberty. Jesus came to bring the law alive, not a dead letter. The dead letter of the law, is a burden.

[30 : 37] If people just live by the law, it becomes a burden. Jesus came to fulfill the law, and to give us liberty, and light. And so some of the Pharisees, were beginning to, they were beginning to see, a little of this.

But the majority of them, were still, they were just bound by this. And so, they then call the man's parents, and they say, right, is this your son? They said, yes.

And so they asked him, how? How was he? And they said, look, he's of age. Ask himself. And you say to yourself, well, these are hard-hearted parents, and I think we would tend to agree.

But, we've got to remember, the incredible stranglehold, that the Pharisees, these Jewish leaders, had on the people. And they were scared of them. And we read there, that anybody, who confessed, that Jesus was the Christ, was to be excommunicated, from the synagogue.

And in those days, that was one of the worst things, that could happen. You became really, a leper, in the community. You were, you were a social outcast. You were, like with a tax collector, and just, you were, like a Samaritan.

[31 : 53] You were, if you were excommunicated, from the synagogue, that was, one of the most severe things, that could happen to you. And there was a huge, social stigma, attached to you.

So they didn't want that to happen. They were scared. So that's why they said, yes it's our son, he was born blind, he now sees, but he's of age, you ask himself. And so we find, the Pharisees, interrogating this man.

And they're refusing, to accept his testimony. And it's here, we'll, we'll finish this next week, but you know, the wonderful thing here is, that in this chapter, we see belief, and unbelief, working side by side.

This blind man, is on our journey. Jesus hasn't healed his soul, just healed his eyes, but Jesus is going to heal his soul. When Jesus begins our work, he doesn't, stop halfway through.

Jesus will complete it. But side by side, with this great story, about the healing of this man, we see the incredible unbelief, of the Pharisees, and the Jewish leaders.

[33 : 03] And unbelief is our, here, we see it in, really in all its ugliness. Because, they're, they're so blind, they're so blinkered, they're so prejudiced, against Jesus.

There are many things, that are highlighted here, but two of the main things, I would say, with regard to unbelief, is that, real unbelief, which brings a form of, prejudice, and we're, we're highlighting here, about the Christian faith, and about Jesus, about Christ, is that the starting point, is all wrong.

You see, the problem, for these Pharisees, was they had made up, their mind already, that Jesus was a sinner. He couldn't be the Christ, because he had healed, a man on the Sabbath day.

That's, their starting point. Their minds, were fixed, filled with prejudice, against Jesus. And so, they're not, prepared, to listen to the truth.

Didn't matter, what that man said. Their minds, that's it, he's a sinner, he's a sinner. Hearing your words, they don't mean anything to me. It's passing by. And you know, it's still the same today, and we've always got to remember that.

[34 : 22] Because so many people today, are still prejudiced, against the Christian faith, and against, because people form, their own ideas. I'm sure many of you, were like that one day.

You had your own opinion, as to what it was, to be a Christian. You had your own opinion, of who Christ really was. You didn't go into it, in any depth, or whatever.

But you thought you knew, and that's what's your starting point. And you know, one of the things, when you become a Christian, for a lot of people is, there's an awful lot of climbing down, needed.

From the opinions, that you had, the prejudices, that you had, you find, whoa, a lot of what you, a lot of the stuff, that you had in your mind, you think, I was so, wrong.

So there always, or very often, there has to be a climb down. And in a sense, it's, it's often only grace, that can, can do this, within a person.

[35 : 23] So we've always got to remember, that when we, talk to people, or debate with people, about the Christian faith, that they already, have their mind, made up, and their mind, is often prejudiced, because if, they've begun, their starting point, is wrong, with regard to the Christian faith.

So that's one thing, about unbelief. A second thing, that this shows us, about unbelief, is this. Unbelief, because, we're at the wrong, starting point, it doesn't matter, how, often, you say something, or even, how convincing, your arguments, will be, they'll always say, ah, you need to give me more.

I need more than that. You'll have to tell me, something else. And supposing, you give, A, B, C, D, E, F, of really convincing arguments, you'd say, I need more than that.

That's the way, belief, unbelief, I should say, works. And that's how it was, with these people.

Because, the blind man, was telling them, over, and over, and over again, the same thing.

And they would say to him, in the end, right, okay, look, tell us, tell us what really happened. And he said, I've told you. I can't tell you anymore.

[36 : 44] I was blind, I now see. And they're really saying to him, we don't believe you. Tell us, how, what really happened. That's unbelief.

It's incredible. And that was the same with them, regarding Jesus. Jesus. He kept telling them, over, and over, and over again, who he was. And then they would say to him, tell us who you really are. You say, there's nothing else I can tell you. I've told you. But they wouldn't believe. And so, that's the nature of unbelief. It's deep rooted.

And really, only grace can shift it. And if you're here today, and you have your own inbuilt thoughts, and there are still prejudices deep down, maybe prejudice against Christians, your thoughts, things are not, you need to ask for God's grace.

Lord, you need to break my heart. You need to open. That's what you need. Just like this blind man, you need, I need, my eyes, to be opened. That's what, that's what, that's what we need.

[37 : 57] And then they, they come to the blind man, and they, after he's going on, and then they say to, so for the second time, they called the man, who had been blind, and they said to, right, give glory to God.

We know that this man was a sinner. You know, that, that really is horrible talk. This is, this pious, pious nonsense. They're pretending to be so gracious, and so pious.

Oh, give glory to God. It's saying, give glory to God. Oh, don't look at this knife that I have in my hand, that's ready to plunge into you. It's, this is the ultimate hypocrisy. This pious language, when their hearts are riddled with anger, and hatred, and menace, and murder.

That's why Jesus spent so long, exposing the hypocrisy, of the Pharisees. Anyway, they're saying to the man, look, come on, tell us, tell us, tell us, tell us.

And he says, verse 25, whether he is a sinner, I do not know, but one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.

[39 : 06] This man is a picture, spiritually, of so many people. This man, he had no education, he had no theological training, in a debate with these doctors of the law, and these learned rabbis, and such, he couldn't hold a candle.

They were men of great knowledge, and great understanding. But this one thing he knew, the all-important thing, was he had been blind, and he now sees.

And you know, that is true, so true spiritually as well. Might be true for you here today. And you say to yourself, you know, I hear people talk, and I can't follow half of what they're saying.

Some people will say to me, have you got a text? When you came to faith in Jesus Christ, do you have a, did you get a text?

You have to say, no, I didn't get a text. When you came to faith in Jesus Christ, what day was it?

Tell us the date. You have to say, sorry, I can't tell you the date.

[40 : 23] I have no particular date. And then other people will say to you, oh, see, before you came to Jesus Christ, did you have fearful conviction of sin?

Did you see yourself going to hell like you were lost? Did you see, was the force of the law coming down upon you? And you'll have to say, no, I'm afraid that's not my experience either.

And so the person is saying to you, okay, you have no text, you had no experience before coming to Christ of the horrors of the breaking of the law.

You can't give a date as to when you became a Christian. And you know what Satan's doing? Satan's whispering. And he's saying to you, you're not a real Christian. My friend, remember, Satan is a liar and has been a liar from the start.

what is important is that you see, that you see that Jesus Christ is your Savior, that he has died for you, that you are resting in what he did by faith.

[41 : 37] That's what matters. And the amazing thing is, with regard to conviction, for many of God's people, it is as they've gone on in their Christian life that the greatest conviction comes.

I don't know if David ever had greater conviction than when he was a mature Christian and he had sinned so awfully and the penetrating power of God's Spirit.

You are the man. David became a broken man. And that's where he penned Psalm 51. So it's not necessarily before.

That's often the case. And many people cannot give a day, an hour, a day, a week, a month, even a year as to when they can.

You know, I believe there are people who'd stop or hold back from coming forward to the Lord's table because they're afraid that they cannot give a proper account of these things.

[42 : 45] The Lord sometimes works with people when they're young and leads them gently and graciously. But this is the all-important thing is that you see. You see, as long as you see enough of Jesus Christ as the one who makes you right before God and you have experienced and know God's love to you in saving you through Jesus Christ.

That's what matters. And so, this man, to a certain extent, is an example of that. That he says, one thing I do know, I was blind and now I see.

And so, I love this character because he's not in any way intimidated by the Pharisees. But they still won't accept what he says.

And they said to him, what did he do to you? In verse 26, how did he open your eyes? And again, this is what we've been saying earlier, he said, I've told you already and you would not listen.

You know, I feel so sorry for this man. I don't know how old he was. You think about it, all your life you've been blind, right? Now you've been propelled into this world of vision.

[44 : 10] Wonderful. And now you're meeting the face of the church. What's he seeing? All he is seeing are angry, angry faces.

Grilling him, grilling him, bruising him, battering him. What an introduction. What an introduction to life in church.

And that shows the responsibility that God's people and God's leadership have. What is the face? What are our hearts? What are our, how are we with people?

It's so important because the picture we have here really is quite horrific. but the reason is because these were men who were riddled and just bound by the law.

And in the end they become so incensed with him, we're told what they do, they actually, they throw him out. They said to him, because the man said to him, look, I don't know anything about this man, Jesus, but I'll tell you one thing.

[45 : 15] He is a prophet. He is from God. He couldn't have done this unless he was from God.

And this man is really beginning to preach to them and they can't cope with it. And that's what they said to him, you were born in utter sin and would you teach us?

And they throw him out. Poor man. What an introduction to life and particularly to church life. But that's not the end of the story because we find that Jesus, Jesus heard that they had cast him out and having found him, he said.

See what Jesus does? Jesus goes looking for the man. That's what it means when it says, Jesus heard that they had cast him out and having found him, which means he was looking for him.

Jesus heard what they had done and so he goes looking for this man. Why? Because Jesus, Jesus has a heart for people and particularly for those who are marginalized, those who are hurting, those who are going through difficult times.

That's one of the, remember, with regard even to this blind man, remember we saw this last week. They had been going to stone Jesus, they were so angry with him, and Jesus dodged out of their

way, out of the temple and he goes off.

[46 : 41] And as he and his disciples are passing this blind man, the disciples are ready for a theological discussion on who sinned, this man or his parents. And Jesus stops, he doesn't even, he just says, neither.

Jesus stops because this blind man pulls all the compassion out of Jesus. And he's going to stop and he's going to deal with him. Even although there's a pack of menacing Jewish leaders who had stones in their hands ready to stone him.

That's the heart of Jesus. And it hasn't changed. And that's what we find here, that Jesus goes looking for this poor man.

Jesus, and we'll finish with this, next week, Jesus heard that they had cast him out and having found him, he said, do you believe in the Son of Man? What a contrast between Jesus and the Pharisees.

It couldn't be more extreme. On the one hand you have Jesus with a heart full of love, full of compassion, full of care. And on the other we have the Pharisees who are so hard-hearted.

[47 : 58] You see, all they know is the law. The law, the law, the law. And the law without Christ is a dead letter. And you know, the harder you try to keep the law, the deader you become.

And you know, there's nothing that builds self-righteousness. like living on the law. Because what you try to do is make yourself right with God. And the more you try and make yourself right with God by keeping to the law, the more laws you will add.

And you'll become stricter and harder all the time. That's the way the law works. it's by grace we live. And you know, actually, it's hard living by grace.

Because there's within us that which wants to go back to the law. And that is why God's people, you know, the Lord will often allow his people a little stumble.

Because it's so easy for us to begin to go back to the law and try to try to do to keep earning. And we say to the Lord, oh well, I've done this and I've done that and I've done the next thing.

[49 : 10] Now Lord, you give me something. We're always thinking we can earn points from God. We can't. It is all of grace. all in and through Jesus Christ.

And that is one of the hardest lessons for us to learn. Now that's not saying in any way that we're... Of course, when we are full of grace, we seek to obey...

We... That's what happens. We want to obey the Lord. But we want to obey him out of love. It's love that's propelling us on. We do not want to grieve him. And that's the way love operates.

But when love isn't there, the law is a dead letter and we're trying to fulfill it and sort of we're making ourselves right with God. And we can't.

And that's why God sometimes allows his people a little stumble. And when you have a stumble then you realize, oh, what a poor person I am.

[50 : 10] And you have to go back to the Lord and ask for forgiveness and ask the Lord to restore you and you maybe learn a little more about grace. I hope today that everybody in here as we conclude will be able to say this one thing I know that whereas I was blind, now I see.

If you can't, ask the Lord today, Lord, open my eyes so that I will see you, so I'll see the way of salvation. I'll see that I'm a sinner.

I will see that I'm in need of a Savior. Savior, and I will see the Savior who's there for me. Let us pray. Oh, Lord, our God, we pray to bless us.

We pray that we may indeed realize that it's a wonderful opportunity to come under God's word. We pray that the word of God will be a delight to our soul and that we will come to an ever greater awareness of the truth that is in Jesus Christ.

Christ, we pray to bless us all and give us health and strength and body, mind, and soul. Bless our homes, our families, and all whom we love. Part us with your blessing, we pray, taking us to our homes safely.

[51 : 26] In Jesus' name we ask all. Amen. Our concluding psalm is Psalm number 43 from the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 43 from the Scottish Psalter.

And we're going to sing from verse 3 to the end. Psalm 43 from verse 3 to the end.

O send thy light forth and thy truth, let them be guides to me, and bring me to thine holy hill, even where thy dwellings be. Then will I to God's altar go, to God my chiefest joy, yea God, my God, thy name to praise, my harp, I will employ.

Why art thou then cast down my soul? What should discourage thee? Why with vexing thoughts art thou disquieted in me? Still trust in God, for him to praise.

Good cause I yet shall have. He of my countenance is the health, my God, that doth me save.

Psalm 43 verses 3 to the end. O send thy light forth and thy truth.

[52 : 36] tune us in vocation. O send thy life forth and thy truth, let them be guide to me, and bring me to thine holy hell.

Even when thy dwellings be, then will I to God's altar go, to God my chiefest joy.

Yea, God, my God, thy name to praise my harp, my harp, my harp I will employ, I will employ.

Why art thou then cast down my soul, for should discourage thee, and why with vexing thoughts art thou disquieted in in me.

Still trust in God for him to praise, good cause I yet shall have, he of my governance since the health, my God, my God, my God, that doth me save, that doth me save.

[54 : 55] Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen.