

# The Man Born Blind

Encounters with Jesus--part 4

March 2, 2014

## **DAY 1: Jesus, the center of man's purpose**

1. Today's story illustrates how some people come to faith and why others never do. Sometimes people come to faith almost instantaneously. Their eyes are opened; they see the light and commit their lives to Christ. Others come to faith like a dimmer switch slowly brightening. This week's story is how a blind man came to faith.

*John 9:1 As he went along, Jesus saw a man blind from birth.*

2. How do you think the disciples would react and relate to him? How would you?

*John 9:2 His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"*

3. What strikes you about the disciples' response in this encounter?

4. Two things are worth noting. There is no record of them even relating to the blind man! Instead, they begin a theological discussion regarding the man and his family. They think someone must have sinned.

5. Jesus sees things VERY differently.

*John 9:3 "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."*

6. This is a "game-changer" verse!!!! Human nature assumes that our greatest purpose has to do with our individual freedom and self-fulfillment. If that's the case, the blind man is "toast!"

a. Does it sound to Jesus like the man born blind is getting a "raw deal?"

b. Does it sound like the blind man's purpose is "short-changed?"

c. For a man who probably felt worthless all his life, how do you think Jesus' words affected *the blind man*?!?

7. These are the first words the blind beggar man heard from Jesus. How would you characterize *how* Jesus related to him?

8. How can you relate to the people in your life like Jesus did, here?

## DAY 2: Jesus, the light we need

1. Yesterday, we, and the blind beggar man, heard the first words of Jesus said about him. Next, the blind man will hear *who Jesus is!*

*John 9:4 "As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work."<sup>5</sup> While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."*

2. Jesus makes some BIG-TIME claims about Himself. What are they?

3. Imagine you were the blind man. What would you "hear" in verses 4-5?

4. Let's review what we know and surmise so far in this story:

- a. The man had been born blind.
- b. Prevailing "wisdom" was that the man was born blind because someone sinned.
- c. The man had spent his adult life begging, likely hopeless and resigned to his "fate."
- d. Jesus directly says that *this* man's purpose is tied in to his blindness!
- e. The man everyone had been talking about, the possible Messiah was standing right in front of him.

5. This is the "lay of the land" as Jesus encounters the blind man. In what ways do you relate to the blind man? Have you felt the sting of hopelessness? Failure? "Fate?" Hope? Longing?

6. What do you see Jesus doing for the blind man in how He relates to him?

7. Jesus has a vision for the blind man. Jesus is far more than a "good man;" He is God incarnate! Personalize these two ideas. Jot down a few words, below...

a. God has a purpose with even my worst problem: \_\_\_\_\_

b. God Himself is involved with me! \_\_\_\_\_

### **DAY 3: Jesus, active in your life**

1. Jesus has said two amazing things to the blind man. Now He adds action!

*John 9:6 Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes.*

2. Why do you think Jesus chose this method to heal him?

*John 9:7 "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.*

3. Why do you think Jesus gave the blind man these instructions?

4. The folks in town are astounded at this miracle. Some believe it is him; some are skeptical. They ask him how he was healed. Here is his initial answer.

*John 9:11 He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."*

5. How would you sum up his answer?

6. The Pharisees were livid.

*John 9:16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." ...*

7. What do you think motivated these men? Why would they discredit Jesus?

8. The Pharisees ask the former blind man who he thought Jesus was...

*John 9:17 Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened."*

*The man replied, "He is a prophet."*

9. How has the man's awareness of Jesus changed since the beginning of this story?

10. Not happy with his answer they ask him again.

*John 9:25 He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"*

11. What strikes you about his response, this time?

#### **DAY 4: Jesus RE-encounters the former blind man**

*John 9:28 Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! [29] We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from."*

1. Ironically, the Pharisees helped the former blind man clarify his newfound and budding beliefs!

*John 9:31 "We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will... Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. [33] If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."*

2. How has the man's understanding of Jesus grown since the beginning of this story?

*John 9:34 To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.*

3. Sadly, the Pharisees were completely closed to the message and person of Jesus. They threw out the blind man. What two reasons did they point to in their rejection of him and Jesus?

4. Jesus shows up for a second encounter with the former blind man.

*John 9:35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"*

5. How does Jesus relate to him?

6. Is He pushy? Rude? Does He treat him like a project?

7. What do you think the former blind man senses coming from Jesus, relationally?

## **DAY 5: Jesus found the man!**

*John 9:35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"*

1. "Son of Man" was an Old Testament term for Messiah. The interchange that follows is a fascinating and wondrous picture of how Jesus Himself turned up the dimmer switch to be completely "on."

*John 9:36 "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."*

*John 9:37 Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."*

2. What words would you use to describe how Jesus related to him?

3. How is Jesus turning on "the dimmer switch" of understanding?

*John 9:38 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.*

4. The man comes full circle. He understands Jesus is not just a good man, or a "miracle-worker." He is God in the flesh, the Messiah. If Jesus had not been God in the flesh, he would never have received worship.

5. The dimmer switch is completely on. The man formerly blind, both physically and spiritually can see physically and spiritually. His eyes and heart were opened by the Lord.

6. But what happened to the religious leaders? This story closes with Jesus making one more appeal to them. Jesus tried truth and logic to appeal to the leaders. At the end of our story he uses irony and paradox.

*John 9:39 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."*

7. What things strike you about Jesus' appeal to the Pharisees?

8. The Pharisees: mind made up. It's ironic that people who consider Christians close-minded, and themselves open-minded are like the Pharisees.

9. What did you learn about Jesus, and His encounter with the blind man?