

The Gospel of John

Lesson #81
The Journey
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The Gospel of John

• John 9:1 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him".

• If you recall from last week, Jesus' answer was not necessarily palatable with everyone – this man was blind from birth to glorify God.

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The Gospel of John

• At this point your mind might begin to wonder if some of the hard things in your life were placed there by God for his purposes.

• God is not responsible for every trial, but we have no trials he does not permit.



• So, maybe you were _____ for a specific purpose of God wherein he could use you to illustrate his goodness and greatness.

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The Gospel of John

So here is where our view of God gets tested – it is evident from Jesus’ answer that this man was not blind because of an inherited gene or some other predisposition to a malformation of his eyes. He was blind from birth because God caused him to be blind so in his blindness he could be used by God to glorify himself. He had never seen his mother, his father, or any of his family members. He had never seen a sunrise or a sunset and he had never seen any of the beautiful things found in nature. If you fail to understand the greatness of God this blind man’s life may seem like a waste to be in misery for a lifetime, doomed to beg for money, all so God could be magnified.

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- It is important that we see the healing of this blind man for what it is – another validation of Jesus’ credentials as Messiah.
- This is perhaps an even easier argument to make – the man was born blind so that we might believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
- I must admit it pains me some to know people care more about themselves than they do about the glory of God. (It pains me because that is where I often find myself!) 5

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The Gospel of John

- We are trapped in a corrupt world where nothing, or at least very little, is as it ought to be to the point that even the redeemed are mired in its corruption.
- In a perfect world we would care more about the glory of God than we would our own comfort.
- This will be part of the joy of Heaven – we will be in a place where we will never be uncomfortable and will be thus freed from things that distract us from God. 6

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• John 9:4 “We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” 6 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 7 and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

• Jesus demonstrated his power over everyone and everything by using that which we would never think of using as an instrument to glorify God. (mud and spit?) 7

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• Next, what about this day/night comparison Jesus brings up – “We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.”

• You may recall from chapter 5 that Jesus said he only does the things the Father wanted him to and that he and his Father worked together – now he changes the pronouns from (I me) to (we).

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• God sent me, that we might work – to state we are the body of Christ is to say God is serious about what John wrote here in chapter 9.

• 1st Corinthians 12:12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body— Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

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- 1st Corinthians 12:27 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.
- God has placed each of us in the body of Christ, the church, with the exact gifts, talents, and abilities he wanted you to have.
- So that the body of Christ would not be a collection of identical people, but that we would be a well functioning body with everything we need locally. ¹⁰

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We are all unique in the truest sense of the word – we are all “one of a kinds”. No one else in the body is exactly like you, yet we can function in such a way that we can be called one body. We have the same God, the same Savior, and the same Comforter, and we have the same calling. Yet, in the body of Christ we have different roles that when filled serves to unify the Church. We ought to appreciate the differences in each other because of the One who made us as we are. Oneness is not Sameness.

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- We become functioning members of the body through sanctification; positional and practical.
- Positional sanctification is where God declares the sinner to be holy, and we are. Practical sanctification – we must engage everyday in a battle with our old sin nature.
- Positional sanctification is a work of God on our behalf and is “once and done”, whereas practical sanctification is the work God does in us day-to-day as we cooperate with Him. (grow in grace) ¹²

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The Gospel of John

- Before we were saved, our behaviors bore witness of our separation from God – after we are saved, our behaviors ought to bare witness to our separation from the world.
- Sanctification is instantaneous (positional) and it is also progressive (practical) as we learn little by little to obey God.
- From this word sanctification, we derive the word “saint” which can be used to describe all Christians. ¹³

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The Gospel of John

- There is but one measure for gauging the effect of sanctification in us – are we becoming more and more like Jesus?
- Romans 8:29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined ***to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.***
- God pronounced us “holy”, equipped us with gifts, and took up residence in us to make us useful to him as members of his body. ¹⁴

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The Gospel of John

We are “one” (unified) in Christ, but may God spare us from being exactly like each other! None of us should say to another “you are not needed” for God arranges his church as it pleases him. It seems he is pleased when we need each other and are in a sense incomplete as a local church without each other. This is why Paul wrote, “The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’” The members of Christ in the local body are different because that is the design of God. If two of you are exactly alike in this body, then one of you is unnecessary. In my experience that just never seems to happen.

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Questions?

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