

## NONE SO BLIND AS THOSE WHO WILL NOT SEE

- I. The disciples are the first ones to speak. They want Jesus to explain something. And they, like us sometimes, are good at blame, scapegoating, and any other means by which to explain our world: “Who sinned that this man was born blind?” (Jesus responds. As usual, not an answer: That God may be glorified.)
  - A. The healing is over in the first seven verses: spit, mud, wash.
  - B. Five scenes follow the healing. THESE ARE THE QUESTIONS/INTERROGATIONS THAT ARE JUST AS FRESH NOW AS THEY WERE THEN.
- II. The First Scene. Verse 8: “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” WHO ARE YOU?
  - A. The neighbors were divided. Some yes, some no. The man owns his IDENTITY: “I am the man.”
  - B. We need to own up to who we are---who we are before and after great watersheds in our lives...
- III. The Second Scene. The Pharisees interview the healed man for the first time. Verse 15 contains the question: HOW did he receive his sight? MUD (elab.) As with the neighbors---the Pharisees were divided.
  - A. Wiley Stephens story about the beach, the lifeguard, and the drowning man...
  - A. Jesus did heal on the Sabbath. His opponents, however, were preoccupied. Divided, same as the neighbors: some saying he was not from God and others “how can a sinner do this.”
  - B. So they ask the man himself---he’s a prophet. (Same response as the woman at the well.) THE MAN MARCHES TO HIS OWN DRUMBEAT.
  - C. Reminded of the seven last words of the church : “We’ve never done it this way before.” We can miss what God is doing right now.

- IV. The Third Scene. The Pharisees interview the parents of the healed man. Verse 19: “Is it true that he was born this way?”
- A. Jesus’ opponents believe it’s a trick, looking for the smoke and mirrors. Oral Roberts or Benny Hinn. All the parents will do confirm that he was born blind. They are afraid to editorialize beyond that.
  - B. Parents are close-lipped; they are afraid that they might be kicked out of the synagogue by the Pharisees. They only confirm what they know---that he was born this way
  - C. They are, in a word, FEARFUL.
    - 1. Have you ever been in a position where you have too much to lose, and therefore not bothered to get involved? (racquetball?) Have you ever been ever so subtly threatened that you might lose your job because of a position you have taken?
    - 2. If the parents had a position with regard to the healing, they did not make it clear. (My fear of being associated with the Christians who parade their political ideas as if they were theological ideas?)
- V. The Fourth Scene. The healed man is called in for a second interview. It is almost like a cross-examination: “Speak the truth before God. We know that this fellow is a sinner.” FEAR OR NOT, THIS IS WHERE YOU THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD: IS JESUS A SINNER OR NOT?
- A. “All I know,” responded the man, “is that I was blind and now I see.” And this is the real miracle---the man says “Jesus is from God.” A STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT.
  - B. John Newton: “I am not what I ought to be; I am not what I want to be’ I am not what I hope to be in another world, but still, I am not what I used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am.”
  - C. How many opportunities do we have to say that we once were blind and now see? Are we different people now than we were 3 years ago.
- VI. The Fifth Scene. The healed man is cast out of the synagogue, his community. out and finds him---now without a religious community. “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” THIS IS THE QUESTION OF PRESENCE. WHO WILL BE PRESENT FOR US, particularly in a time of trial?
- A. As opposed to his opponents, seeks the man out when he is most lost. It’s Jesus’ initiative here.

- B. Grace is not a concept, a thought, an article of belief. It is an experience that only comes to us when we truly experience the fact that we cannot save ourselves.

Just look at the cast of characters in John's gospel: the hapless bridegroom who fails to provide enough wine; the disabled man who lays by the pool, day after day, year after year, hoping against hope that someone will put him the pool when the waters are troubled. Used to his predicament for so long, Jesus literally has to order him to take up his pallet and walk; the Samaritan woman who was a pariah in so many ways; the blind man who, by convention, was both separate and unequal: A SPECTRUM OF OUTCASTS...

- C. They all knew what they were---and they got what they needed by the grace of God in Jesus. (repeat). They had a Savior whose concern was for them rather than the rules, the politics, and the conventions.

WHAT THEY HAD IN COMMON WAS GRACE. UNEXPECTED AND, FOR SOME OF THEM, UNREALIZED.

A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE, YEARS AGO, PUT IT PRETTY CLEARLY: I MAY NOT KNOW MUCH---I DO KNOW I'M A GREAT SINNER BUT I ALSO KNOW I HAVE A GREAT SAVIOR,