

John 9

The Man Born Blind

Everyone had a good reason for the man born blind not to be healed.

The disciples' eyes were focused on the sin.
In their eyes either the blind man or his parents
 had done something that had caused his blindness.
In their eyes the punishment must have fit the crime.
Somebody must have got what they deserved.

The Pharisees' focus was to keep a tight control on things.
Miracles were not allowed on the Sabbath.
You could only walk so many steps on the Sabbath.

They were the self-appointed step counters.
Their job was to define what you could and couldn't do
 on the Sabbath.
Goodness, what if *everyone* went around healing on the Sabbath?

The parents of the blind man played it safe.
They were glad their son gained his sight
 but if they gave glory to Jesus they might
 lose their special seats in the synagogue,
 get some icy stares from long time friends and neighbors,
 lose a few business contacts.

Everyone had a good reason for the man born blind not to be healed.
Even Jesus.

If he heals the blind man he knows the people who maintain the
 religious and political institutions will feel threatened.
People will continue to follow him and not them.

When institutions feel threatened they resort to institutional means
 to eliminate the threat.
In Jesus' day, that meant holding a mock trial
 while the guys out back got another cross ready.

Everybody had a good reason to look the other way
and go about their business.

What's one blind man in the big scheme of things, anyway?
Couldn't Jesus have compromised and waited 'til the Sabbath was over?
Did he heal the man to antagonize the Pharisees? Draw attention to himself?

God is patient but God never looks the other way.
Jesus is the light and his light was not meant to be hid.
God could not, *not* reveal His glory any more than you or I could live
without breathing.

God cannot be domesticated as much as we try.
We acknowledge Him on Sunday and then get back
to the real business of the world Monday through Saturday
and try to put him back in a box.

We rationalize our behaviors that do not glorify him in all we do.
We play it safe.
We get busy.
We turn a blind or a deaf ear to something or someone.

Jesus says to us 'Pick up your cross daily and follow me'
and we answer
"I've come far enough, I think I'll put my cross down and settle
in here for awhile where it's safe and comfortable and predictable."
We may even get annoyed by someone who reveals the glory of God to us
the way people got annoyed at Jesus.

Pastor Max Lucado tells a story about such a person:

"On the flight home she sat in 14E and I sat in 14D.
She was rural and I was urban.
She was backward and I was sophisticated.
She was homey and I was professional.
But, she could see and I was blind.

'They sure do put these seats close up against each other, don't they?'
Her face was ten inches from mine.
She smiled so widely you could see the cavity in the back of her mouth.

She wore a blue velour pants suit.

I groaned to myself. I already had a bad attitude.
My week had been hectic. The plane was late and overbooked.
I had a toothache and had left the tooth medicine at the hotel.
I wanted to sleep but I had work to do and pulled out my computer.

And now I was sitting next to Gomer Pyle's mother.
She pointed at the plane ahead of us on the runway and said,
 'Oooh, boy, look at the size of that one.'
When they brought her a sandwich, she opened the box and proclaimed
 loud enough for the pilot to hear,
 'They even put mayonnaise in here!'
That went on the whole flight. She didn't miss a thing.
When we went through turbulence she grinned as if she were riding
 the Ferris wheel at the county fair.
It occurred to me about mid-way through the journey
 that she was the only person enjoying the trip.
The rest of us, 'the sophisticated', were too mature to have fun.

I was staring at my computer screen – eyes tired, mouth hurting,
 stressed out, trying to find a message for stress-filled people
 and never noticing that the message was sitting beside me.

'Wasn't that a fu-un trip?' she asked as we were leaving the plane.
I just nodded and smiled.
I watched her bounce down the concourse curious as a six-year old
 then turned to go to my next flight with a lesson learned.

I resolved to keep my eyes open.
It does little good, to make the trip and miss the journey."

The amazing thing about Jesus is that he made the trip
 through the same world that we live in
 walking, eating, and living among
 disciples who didn't understand,
 hostile, mean-spirited religious people,
 and indifferent fence sitters and
he didn't miss a thing on the journey.

The One who paints the dots on the back of the ladybug
and fills the heavens every day like an artist fills a canvass
never misses a thing on the journey.

He is the glory of God that was revealed in the flesh.
By glorifying God through his sacrifice on the cross
we are privileged to share in his glory.

Through his life our eyes are opened to see the glory of God
all around us.

Through our lives, he in us and we in him, God can acutally use us
to reveal his glory.

It was Irenaeus in the 4th century who said that
“the glory of God is a human being who is fully alive.”

We become fully alive when we realize that, like the man born blind,
we have been touched by Christ and we give him the glory.

Let your life glorify God.
Give God the glory.