

The Unshakable Faith of a Blind Man



"As Jesus passed by He saw a man who was blind from birth and His disciples asked Him saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned this man or his parents that he was born blind?'

Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him Who sent Me while it is day. The night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.'

When He had said these things He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, 'Go. Wash in the pool of Siloam,' (which is translated 'Sent').

So, he went and washed and came back seeing.

Therefore, the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, 'Is this not he who sat and begged?'

Some said, 'This is he.'

Others said, 'He is like him.'

He said, 'I am he.'

Therefore, they said to him, 'How were your eyes opened?'

He answered and said, 'A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So, I went and washed and I received sight!'

Then they said to him, 'Where is He?'

He said, 'I do not know.'

They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then, the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight.

He said to them, 'He put clay on my eyes and I washed and I see.'

Therefore, some of the Pharisees said, 'This Man is not from God because He does not keep the Sabbath.'

Others said, 'How can a Man Who is a sinner do such signs?', and there was a division among them.

They said to the blind man again, 'What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?'

He said, 'He is a prophet,'

But, the Jews did not believe concerning him that he had been blind and

received his sight until they called the parents of him who had received his sight and they asked them saying, 'Is this your son who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?'

His parents answered them and said, 'We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but by what means he now sees we do not know or Who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age. Ask him. He will speak for himself.' His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was the Christ he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore, his parents said, 'He is of age. Ask him.'

So they again called the man who was blind and said to him, 'Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner!'

He answered and said, 'Whether He is a sinner or not, I do not know. One thing I know, that though I was blind now I see!'

Then they said to him again, 'What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?'

He answered them, 'I told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?'

Then they reviled him and said, 'You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples! We know that God spoke to Moses. As for this Fellow, we do not know where He is from.'

The man answered and said, 'Why, this is a marvelous thing! That you do not know where He is from, yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners, but if anyone is a worshipper of God and does His will He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God He could do nothing!'

They answered and said to him, 'You were completely born in sins and you are teaching us?' and they cast him out.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out and when He had found him He said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of God?'

He answered and said, 'Who is He Lord, that I may believe in Him?'

And Jesus said to him, 'You have both seen Him and it is He Who is talking with you.'

Then he said, 'Lord, I believe!' and he worshipped Him.

And, Jesus said, 'For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see and those who see may be made blind.' (Matthew 25:29)

Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard His words and said to Him, 'Are we blind also?'

Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind you would have no sin, but now you say, 'We see'; therefore, your sin remains. Most assuredly I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the Door but climbs up some other way the same is a thief and a robber, but if He enters by the Door is the Shepherd of the sheep. To Him the Doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear His voice, and He calls His Own sheep by name, and leads them out, and when He

brings out His Own sheep He goes before them and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. Yet, they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him for they do not know the voice of strangers.' Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

Then Jesus spoke to them again, 'Most assuredly I say to you, I am the Door of the sheep. All who came before Me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the Door. If anyone enters by Me he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

'The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come so that they might have life/Live, and have it more abundantly. I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep but a hireling, he who is not the Shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he does not care about the sheep.

'I am the Good Shepherd and I know My sheep, and am known by My sheep. As the Father knows Me, even so I know My Father and I lay down My life for the sheep and other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice and there will be one flock and one Shepherd.

'Therefore, My Father loves Me because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.'

Therefore, there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings and many of them said, 'He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?'

Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem and it was winter, and Jesus walked in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, 'How long do you keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ tell us plainly!'

Jesus answered them, 'I told you and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name they bear witness of Me. But, you do not believe because you are not of My sheep as I said to you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me, and I give them eternal Life and they shall never perish. Neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father Who has given them to Me is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are One.'

Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

Jesus answered them, 'Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?'

The Jews answered Him saying, 'For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God!'

Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, 'You are gods.'? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came and the Scriptures cannot be broken, do you say of Him Whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming, because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

If I do not do the works of My Father do not believe Me, but if I do, though you do not believe Me believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.'

Therefore, the Jews sought again to seize Him but He escaped out of their hand." (John 9:1--10:39)

The Gospels witness that Jesus healed people in several different ways. It is likely that the specific instances found in the Bible demonstrated the way He dealt with sick people in multitudes as well. No matter how Jesus performed the result always was the same; the person became cured of whatever was tormenting them, even death. It is important to observe that Jesus was not ever fearful of personal contact. Among the many people He touched were individuals suffering from leprosy, an extremely contagious and always fatal disease.

There were four principle ways in which Jesus cured affliction and suffering:

(1) There are citations wherein He touched individuals to heal them.

(Matthew 8:1-4, Mark 1:40-45, and Luke 5:12-15; Mark 7:32-35; Mark 8:22-26; Matthew 20:29-35; Matthew 26:51, Mark 14:47, Luke 22:49-51, and John 18:10).

(2) There are also accounts that show that they touched Him (or merely His clothes) in order to get well.

(Matthew 9:20-22, Mark 5:25-34, and Luke 8:43-48, Mark 5:35-43.

(3) Additionally, there are stories about when Jesus spoke directly to a person, the disease itself, or the demon(s) causing the affliction.

(Mark 1:23-27 and Luke 4:33-35; Matthew 8:28-33, Mark 5:1-17, and Luke 8:26-36; John 11:1-45; Luke 17:11-19; Mark 10:46-52 and Luke 18:35-43).

(4) Finally, there exist testimonies when He merely stated that a person, who might not have been present, was or would become healed.

(John 4:46-53; Matthew 9:2-8, Mark 2:3-12, and Luke 5:17-26; Matthew 8:5-13 and Luke 7:1-10; Matthew 15:22-28 and Mark 7:25-30)

When Jesus was questioned by His disciples concerning the reason that the man in the above story was born blind, He did not agree that it was necessarily due to his own or his parents' sin. All disease was a result of and one of the general curses of human beings breaking away from God the Law and the disciples already should have known this. God introduced the Ten Commandments--the framework and basis for His Law--way before any of the people in this story were even born. God's rules of behavior to please Him had been passed from every generation to the next, taught in their temples, and everyone should have been aware of what constituted obedience versus rebellion to God's desires. Therefore, they not only knew how to live in accordance with God's will, but the consequences of ever neglecting to follow it to the letter.

"It shall come to pass that if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God to observe carefully all His commandments,,, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

Cursed shall you be in the city and cursed shall you be in the country....

Cursed shall you be when you come in and when you go out.

The Lord will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.

The Lord will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land....

The Lord will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish....

The Lord will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch from which you cannot be healed.

The Lord will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart; and, you shall grope at noonday as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways, you shall only be oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save you....

The Lord will strike you in the knees and in the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed and from the sole of your feet to the top of your head....

Moreover, all these curses shall come upon you, and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which He Himself commanded you. And, they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder and on your descendants forever because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness of heart for the abundance of everything.... If you do not carefully observe all the words of this Law that are written in this Book, that you fear this glorious and awesome Name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, then the Lord will bring on you and your descendants extraordinary plagues--great and prolonged plagues--and serious and prolonged sicknesses.... And every sickness and every plague which is not written in this Book of the Law will the Lord bring on you until you are destroyed...."

(Deuteronomy 28:15-66)

This list is not exhaustive but merely highlights those things that resulted from mankind breaking God's commands continually. Even though an individual person may have been innocent of wrongdoing, like the man above when he was an infant, no one could escape the consequences of what the rest of humanity over time had done either purposefully or naively, to himself, herself, or the world. Humanity continually had witnessed the "fruits" of the conduct that God warned people about centuries ago, "in the beginning."

"Cursed is the one who does not conform to all the words of this Law, to do them." *(Deuteronomy 27:26 & Galatians 3:10c)*

"Whoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all." *(James 2:10)*

"A little leaven (eventually) leavens the whole lump." *(Galatians 5:9)*

Way back in *Genesis 3:17-19* God told the first man that as a result of his disobedience he himself brought curses instead of constant blessings into the earth and onto humanity. It never, ever had been God's will for disease, decay, or destruction to be able to invade His creation. However, all of His intentions became voided when mankind invited disobedience and sin into the earth. God did not ever curse mankind or anything else about the earth. The choice to hear, listen to, and finally obey Satan instead of God was its inception, originating with the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden. Therefore, when God said as much to Adam He was not condemning him, his wife, or the world. God merely was revealing their new state of being outside of His domain.

Jesus used His authority and power over disease to demonstrate God's original intentions and plan for mankind. How? Jesus neutralized sickness and replaced it with health. This is what He meant when He said that this particular man's blindness was not due to his own, or even his parent's sin. It stemmed from the build up of flaws that were unleashed and plagued the earth as the consequences of breaking the Law. Instead of acquiescing to the authority of sin as most human beings did, Jesus used this case as an example to demonstrate His Father's true aspirations. Jesus connected with the *man's* faith in God in order to release him from the deformity that sin had caused in his body. He then exchanged his misery for the health that God initially had intended everyone to possess. However, he had to believe and claim this power for it to be able to work within him.

"He went out from there and came to His Own country, and His disciples followed Him. And, when the Sabbath had come He began to teach in their synagogue and many hearing Him were astonished, saying, 'Where did this Man get these things and what wisdom is this which was given to Him that such mighty works are performed by His hands? Is this not the carpenter's Son? Is this not the Son of Mary and the brother of James, Josea, Judas, and Simon, and are not all His sisters here with us?' So they became offended at Him.

But Jesus said to them, 'A Prophet is not without honor except in His Own country, among His Own relatives, and in His Own house.' Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them." (Matthew 13:54-58 & Mark 6:1-6)

The man received his sight because he did exactly what Jesus commanded him to do. Although he was totally blind and now had mud on his eyes he never even paused to consider questioning or doubting Jesus. Even if His methods may have seemed odd, the blind man still chose to accept and follow them. So, he went, probably with considerable difficulty unless someone helped him navigate. He washed his eyes in the pool where Jesus had directed him to do it. He did not go to another place, like his home for example. After the blind man did as Jesus directed him he came back to where he had been, but seeing everything.

Since this event took place publicly, it is unimaginable that other people did not witness what transpired at some point in his journey. A blind man with mud all over his

face would be pretty hard not to miss. People probably were trying to help him. It is likely that someone also suggested that they clean off the mud for the man, try to stop him weaving through the street, or lead him to other water. However, this man persevered in following precisely what Jesus told him to do. Consequently he received healing. It would be interesting to know if he would have been cured if he had accepted any other and easier alternative. Or, if so how long it would have lasted.

"It happened as He went to Jerusalem He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Then He entered a certain village. There met Him ten men who were lepers who stood afar off and they lifted up their voices and said, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!'

So when He saw them He said to them, 'Go. Show yourselves to the priests,' and so it was that as they went they were cleansed and one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down at His feet giving thanks, and he was a Samaritan.

So Jesus answered and said, 'Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?' and He said to him, Arise. Go your way. Your faith has made you well.'" (Luke 17:11-19)

The formerly blind man's peers were astounded when they saw him after he regained his sight. Curiously, they did not accept the miracle. Nor did they believe that he was the same person whom they had witnessed on a daily basis, probably begging on the streets. They asked by what means he had been cured, as well as where the person was who had performed the healing. They completely missed the point: an individual who had been blind since he was born miraculously could see. Confused and not trusting that they were able to a certain correctly what had transpired, the people took him to the religious leaders of the town for confirmation.

How did the Pharisees respond? First, they asked the formerly blind man to repeat what He had told the people. The religious leaders did not rejoice either, but were suspicious. They tried to rationalize that whatever had happened could not have been God's will because it happened on the Sabbath. This was an excuse they tried a lot to condemn Jesus as a fraud. However there was division among them because some did not accept that a mere sinner could have performed the deed which undeniably had taken place to the blind man. The religious leaders all had to concede that something wondrous had transpired because even his own parents confirmed it. Unable to negate the healing itself, they tried other means to attempt to prove that God had no hand in curing the man.

People were greatly divided about how to treat Jesus. Many believed that He was the Son of God and accepted His teachings and actions. Others, including most of the religious leaders, vehemently did not. They refused to acknowledge Him as being anything more than a fraud. These people denied the possibility that a Man who did not uphold their specific doctrines ever could have come from or be aligned with God. They used themselves as the criterion for how the Christ would behave, not the many prophecies about this Savior in their own Scriptures.

Whenever Jesus did something that did not conform to their image of God they

envious of His popularity, became offended, refused to accept Him, and finally had Him put to death. Jesus regularly did things that annoyed the religious leaders. Instead of consorting only with the elite, He socialized with people they thought to be beneath themselves. Likewise, He did not perform outward rituals nor make His disciples do them. Furthermore, He had the audacity to speak and heal as if He were God's Ambassador. What Jesus taught and did had to have made these men look rather powerless and ineffectual by comparison within their own congregations.

Even with indisputable proof that a blind man received sight after he followed Jesus commands, the Pharisees kept on drilling him. They were more intent on tripping him up or finding inconsistencies in his story than discovering the truth behind the healing. However, the man remained unshakable and immovable. He knew what had taken place within himself and he would not budge even a little in testifying about it. The Pharisees finally accused the formerly blind man of not following the Law given to them by God through Moses, yet he still remained firm in his profession. He even challenged their unbelief with wisdom that only could have come from God Himself. This finally made the religious leaders so furious that they even kicked that individual out of their synagogue. They did not speak or act in a loving manner towards this man at all. Rather, they only demonstrated self-righteousness and superiority, never humbleness and unity.

"Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles, but when they deliver you up do not worry about how or what you should speak, for it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak, for it is not you who speak but the Spirit of My Father Who speaks in you." (Matthew 10:17-20)

When Jesus heard what had transpired He returned to speak with the man, for He was never ignorant of the consequences that inevitably would arise for accepting and following Him. Jesus did not just leave town and abandon the man to the pressures that arose against him. Jesus revealed Who He was to the man as well so that he could continue to sustain the faith that had brought him healing. Jesus treated him the opposite of what the supposedly most pious and Godly men in his town had done. No matter who told him that Jesus was not from God, the man believed in spite of everyone contradictory around him, including his own parents. When the formerly blind man realized Who Jesus was he worshipped Him

Although Jesus returned to comfort and reassure the man, He also took the time to address the Pharisees who had insulted and rejected the miracle. He told them that there were two kinds of blindness: one physical and the other mental and spiritual. He explained what the latter was, and that it was worse than the former. People who did not ever admit that they were sinners against God's will had to come to Him by one means only--the Door, or Him.

God the Son was more than *Lamb of God*. He was the Good Shepherd to the sheep for whom He was sacrificed, both before He was sacrificed and after His resurrection from death/Death. Jesus led His flock, as well as guarded and taught them how to please His Father. Afterward, He became the offering to satisfy the

requirements of the Law to repel all of their and our disobedience, or sin. Jesus willingly offered His life not only for the people present at this scene, but also for everyone else who ever chose to hear His voice. This promise not only also encompassed anyone alive at the time, but the people who believed in His prophesied existence, along with those living after He died. Jesus never acted like a substitute Leader, a stranger or someone only hired to perform a duty. Nor did He ever comport Himself like a thief, robber, or wolf who only approached people merely to try to steal, kill, or destroy whatever they could.

As well, Jesus had the ultimate authority over whatever became of Him in any situation or predicament. He could choose to maintain His relationship with God the Father or nullify it by ever disobeying His commands. Jesus only allowed His enemies apprehend Him for the first time in His life in the Garden of Gethsemane because then it was His Father's will that He do so. However, before that time, whether they approached Him in fear and anger, or even loved what He taught so much that they tried to make Him their king, He always escaped from their clutches and left their presence.

Jesus also claimed to be One with His Father. Did He mean that They were the same Person and occupied the same Body? No, it was evident from His baptism--the very inception of His public ministry--that God was a Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They purposely manifested Themselves all together openly there to show that They did not occupy the same space. Jesus was present as a human being while God the Father spoke from Heaven to show His pleasure with His Son. God the Holy Spirit appeared in the shape of a dove, descending from Heaven and alighting on Jesus shoulder. So, how could Jesus say that He and His Father were One? If They were not so in substance or extent, how could He make this claim? They were One by alliance and intimacy. What One of them thought the Other agreed with. What One of them stated the Other said likewise. And, whatever One of Them did the Other approved of. This is how Jesus and His Father were One: Each was a perfect example of the Other.

Jesus' invariably obeyed His Father instead of any other inducement to act in contradiction to Him, no matter how persuasive or forceful. This was how God the Father was able to communicate with and direct His Son's feelings, thoughts, speech, and actions constantly. Their union was so perfect that through His Father's guidance and power, Jesus was able to perform all kinds of miracles. When we believe in Him, endure whatever tries to confuse or harasses us, and persevere towards pleasing God in Jesus' Name we will begin to live as He did--free from all negative outside influences.

"Jesus answered and said to them, 'Most assuredly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself but what He sees the Father do, for whatever He does the Son does, in like manner. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself does, and He will show Him greater works than these that you may marvel. For, as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives Life to whom He will, for the Father judges all things but has committed all judgment to the Son that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father Who sent Him. Most assuredly I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him Who sent Me has everlasting Life and shall not

come into judgment, but passes from death into Life. Most assuredly I say to you, the hour is coming and now is, when the Dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live." (John 5:19-26)

"And whatever you ask in My Name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." (John 14:13)

*(*Bt the way, as I sit editing this, it is April 21, 2005--16 years since my first brain surgery, and I still am in a wheelchair. Maintaining my faith in healing and restoration is just as vital as it was when I learned about the first tumor, for God does not change. (Malachi 3:6) Neither does His Word. (I Peter 1:25) And, neither does Jesus .(Hebrews 13:8)*

****See also Psalm 37:7, Isaiah 40:39-41, Galatians 6:9, Hebrews 6:11, and II Peter 3:9)*