

## **Gospel of John Study** **Session 20**

In our last session Jesus spoke to a group of people who came to believe in Him at some level after His debate with the Jewish religious authorities during the Feast of Tabernacles. Much of that session dealt with Jesus communicating with those listening to Him who He truly was, His true identity. As throughout the Gospel of John, John is showing the readers the divide between genuine faith and faulty faith. In order for faith to be genuine, this faith needs to be rooted in the proper object of one's faith, which John always shows us is Jesus Christ. As we read, the group of people who outwardly initially believed Jesus, showed that their faith was not real faith that led to salvation but rather superficial faith that is useless in spiritual transformation.

However, as we move into this session dealing with chapter 9, we are going to see John relate an incident that shows us what genuine faith looks like. John will walk us through this man's progression of faith so that we can see it and follow it and then point it out to others who also can follow it to salvation. The person who demonstrates true faith is a man who was born blind and that Jesus healed. He becomes a living illustration of the power of Jesus being the Light of the world as well as the origin and development of faith that matters. This chapter will show us what happens with the light of Jesus shines. This event took place after the Feast of the Tabernacles and before the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) (about three months after the former feast).

### **[John 8:12]**

This entire chapter explains what this self-disclosure of Jesus means in practical terms.

### **[John 9:1-7]**

Q: What was the question the disciples asked Jesus about the blind man? (*v.2 - who sinned to make this man this way?*)

The disciples asked this question because of a stretching of Scripture that led to a mistaken belief commonly held by the Jews.

### **[Exodus 34:6-7]**

This was the passage (and others that state the same idea such as Exodus 20:5) that the Jews stretched the meaning until they ventured into a place of wrong belief. Here's the Bible's stance on the source of evil, suffering and the maladies of the world. Sin was certainly the cause of all the ills of the world. This is taught Biblically. However, when we go from making generalizing statements about the origin of human sufferings to a direct connection between a specific sin and sufferings of an individual, we just left the Biblical teaching. To ascribe suffering or any malady directly to a certain sin is just not found in Scripture as a broad-based doctrine. While some consequences are mentioned in Scripture after sins, this is not the pattern. There are many Biblical explanations given for the suffering of an individual beyond sin. Just

look to Job for one such example.

What is interesting is that the Jews believed that prenatal sins were possible. While there were many possible, one example would be if a pregnant woman participated in a pagan worship service, the unborn child was also guilty of worshipping the pagan god, too. This belief explains the disciples portion of the question about who sinned to directly cause this blindness from birth.

What comes to light is that Jesus' disciples, at this point in their spiritual journey, are no father along than Job's sorry friends when it comes to understanding human suffering. They are viewing this man as the object of an academic exercise rather than Jesus sees this man, as a man who has suffered in blindness his whole life and needs relief. When we see another person suffer, do we resemble Jesus or His disciples? Do we move to offer relief in some manner or do we judge them as suffering the right consequences of their sin, whether the sin is evident or not?

Q: How does Jesus answer His disciples' question? *(v. 3 - No one's sin directly caused this man's blindness. This man's situation was not divine retribution for some offense but rather an opportunity to see God at work. Notice in His answer Jesus does not disavow the general connection between sin and suffering but He does completely disavow codifying direct and specific connections between the two.)*

Q: What is the implication of that answer for us today as we encounter those who are suffering in some manner? *(It becomes a time for us to show God's glory by moving to give some sort of relief to the one suffering. Since we are not God, we don't know the person's heart and certainly not the reason for the suffering, our task is to show the love of Jesus to the person in need.)*

Q: Who are to do the works of the One who sent Jesus? *(v.4 - "We" are. This is plural. All Jesus disciples are to do the works of God while Jesus as long as they have the Light of the world. As believers, we are to be active in these works as our lives bear witness to the Light impacting our lives.)*

Q: When does Jesus say we are to do the works of the One who sent Him? *(v.4 - during the day. Day is when the light is shining.)*

This answer is pregnant with meaning beyond what was being asked by the disciples. In His response, Jesus tells us that He knows that it is the twilight of His earthly ministry. The seriousness of the disputes with the religious leaders is coming to a head and He knows this will lead to His crucifixion. This also shows us that Jesus knew and taught the disciples that as long as He was here, He was going to shine brightly as the Light of the world. He has come to expose the world to God's light and bring salvation to those who will believe in Him as this light. The darkness Jesus refers to is the time when He will be taken from them after His crucifixion. There will be a time when Jesus will die and then rise from the dead and then ascend to heaven but then there will be a 40 day gap before the Holy Spirit is poured out upon His disciples. This will be a time of great darkness. Neither Jesus nor the Holy Spirit will be evident in the world.

One more point that needs to be made about v.4 is that this is not just a miracle. It is a sign attesting to the Father working through Jesus, who is the One who was sent. Jesus was sent to shed light on those who were living in darkness.

## **[Isaiah 9:1-7]**

This statement by John is just one more piece of evidence that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah. He is the bright light prophesied about in Isaiah.

Q: Who is Jesus speaking directly to in vv. 4-5? (*His disciples*)

Q: Who else would have been able to hear the words Jesus was speaking at that time? (*the man born blind. He was not the one Jesus was speaking to at that moment, but He knew the man was obviously listening as He was right there in front of him and they were talking about him.*)

Notice it is after Jesus announces again that He is the Light of the world that He makes clay from spit and dust and applies it to the blind man's eyes. There are two prevailing thoughts on why Jesus chose to use clay made from spit and dirt in this act of healing.

1) **[Genesis 2:7]** - God formed man from dust and gave it life. This man's eyes had never worked. Some see this not so much a healing as a creation in that this man's eyes were re-created so that now they see.

2) **[Leviticus 15:7-8]** - If an unclean man spits upon another person who is clean, then the formerly clean person has to undergo ceremonial cleansing in order to be clean again. Take this along with the fact that the act of kneading, such as the kneading of dough, was considered an act of work and thus taboo on the Sabbath. And as we'll see, this sign was performed on the Sabbath. Thus, Jesus may have been displaying His Lordship again over the Sabbath by doubly defying the Sabbath Laws in healing this man. (When we look at v.14, it mentions making the clay, and not just healing the man, which leads us know that the Jews were upset about the kneading of the dirt and spit into mud/clay, too.)

While we don't know for sure if either of these is the case, it is possible that both of them are reasons as to why Jesus used this method to affect the healing of this man.

Q: After Jesus applied the clay to the blind man's eyes, what did He tell Him to do? (v.7 - *Go wash in the pool of Siloam. Siloam means "sent". Just as Jesus is the One who the Father sent, Jesus is sending this man to Siloam or the pool of Sent. In other words, it's a figurative way of saying that the man needs to go to Jesus for healing. Now the pool of Siloam is on the south side of Jerusalem which was all the way around the Temple from where they were by the Temple's main court (where the blind man begged). This was no easy trek to make. He was still blind.*)

Q: What did Jesus tell the man would happen to him after he washed in the pool of Siloam? (*Jesus didn't tell him anything. He told the man to go wash in the pool but did not say this would heal him. There was no promise made by Jesus of doing anything for him.*)

Q: Considering these things, what was this for the blind man? (*This was a venture of faith. Obeying this man who just covered his eyes with clay took faith in the words of a stranger and also a lot of effort on his own part. Jesus never promised the man that this would heal him. He must have assumed that there was a point to this command by Jesus or he wouldn't have undertaken such a trip. It is important to see this as it was: an act of faith.*)

Q: What happened to the blind man upon obeying Jesus? (*His gained sight. For the first time in this man's life, he could see.*)

There are always blessings from following Jesus' commands to us. These blessings may come in one of a million forms but there are always rewards for those who, by faith in Jesus, listen to Him and obey Him.

**[Hebrews 11:6]**

**[John 9:8-12]**

Q: What were the formerly blind man's neighbors debating after his healing? (*Whether or not this was indeed the man born blind. Some thought it was him while others thought it was just someone who looked a lot like him.*)

This short section established the man's true identity among those who knew him. As a beggar, the blind man could not have supported himself. He would have had to rely upon begging to make money and he would have to rely heavily upon his parents and neighbors and friends to assist him with the practical matters of life. They are flabbergasted to see this man able to see. The formerly blind man sets the record straight about his identity. It is him.

Q: What did the neighbors want to know after his identity was established? (*v.10 - How did this happen? How did you gain your vision?*)

Q: How did the blind man refer to the person who healed him? (*v.11 - 'the man who is called Jesus'. He gave the neighbors the bare-bones facts of the matter.*)

Q: What did the neighbors ask after his explanation? (*v.12 - Where is Jesus?*)

Q: How did the formerly blind man answer their question? (*v.12 - He didn't know where Jesus was.*)

The neighbors had a desire to meet this man who had healed the man. But this short section gives us some necessary insight into this man's journey of faith in Jesus. Notice that he doesn't know Jesus as this point. He referred to Jesus and the "man who is called Jesus". To him, Jesus is a mere man. These aren't the words of a man who knows someone else. It's the words you'd call a stranger that you'd never met. He couldn't even verify that this was Jesus but only that it was the man others called Jesus. He has no idea where Jesus was. He returned from the healing and Jesus isn't there any longer. Again, this shows a lack of knowledge about Jesus here at the beginning of the narrative. Yet, it is the first step in this man's faith journey.

**[John 9:13-23]**

Now we get to the first interrogation of the formerly blind man and his parents. Notice that Jesus is not present at this time. This man is facing the Jewish religious authorities on his

own. The reason the Pharisees (in this chapter the term “Jews” refers to the Pharisees) were summoned was that in this day and time nearly all events had some religious overtone associated with them. This was a notable major miracle. While many blind people had been healed throughout history, no one born blind had ever been healed ... until now. The people who witnessed this miracle needed some spiritual guidance to make sense of this mighty miracle. What could it mean? To this end, the Pharisees were the leaders of the local synagogues at this point. The people did not run to the Sanhedrin, which was the court, because they weren't looking for a legal ruling but rather it would be like going to your pastor to get a take on an event in your life or in a news event in the world. Now, the Pharisees were on the case and they needed to get to the bottom of this event and see if God really did something notable or whether this was just a hoax being played on the innocent, ignorant populace.

Keep in mind that this miraculous healing and this entire chapter is to show us what real faith in Jesus looks like. To this end, we can compare this with the miraculous healing of the man in chapter 5. There are some very interesting similarities and differences. First the similarities: both healings took place at a public pool, both of the afflicted men had incurable conditions and both the healings took place on the Sabbath. The differences are: the man in chapter 5 reported Jesus to the authorities voluntarily while the man in chapter 9 didn't even know who Jesus was or where He was. Jesus told the man in chapter 5 that his condition was at least partially due to his sin whereas the man in chapter 9 Jesus specifically said his condition had nothing to do with sin. There is one more difference but we'll look at it at the end.

Q: How did the healed man answer the Pharisees' question concerning how he was healed? (*He gave them the very basics. Notice that though Jesus' name is not mentioned in the text, we know that the once blind man told them it was Jesus due to the conversation that follows.*)

Q: What is the division that erupted among the Pharisees after the healed man's explanation of his healing? (*v. 16 - Some thought Jesus was a sinner while others thought Jesus could not be a sinner as He performed a mighty sign.*)

Q: For those who considered Jesus to be a sinner, what was the basis for their accusation? (*v.16 - He healed the man on the Sabbath*)

**[Deuteronomy 13:1-5]** - This would have been used by the first group of Pharisees to point out that just because some miracle has occurred, doesn't mean God is behind it. It could be a false and misleading prophet at work.

This miracle, like so many other miracles of healing, Jesus performed on a Sabbath. Now healing on the Sabbath was forbidden except when the life of the person being healed was in danger. That obviously wasn't the case here as the man had been living blind since birth. As mentioned earlier, kneading, of anything, was forbidden on the Sabbath. The Pharisees take the mood of the event from astonishment to what God has done to suspicion as whether this was from God or not.

Q: For those Pharisees who didn't believe Jesus should be labeled a sinner, what did they use for

their justification? (*v.16 - that Jesus has performed a sign. How could a sinner perform a sign from God?*)

So we see a sharp division among the Pharisees at this point in the narrative. The first group reasoned that Jesus had violated the law of God (at least their oral interpretation of the law based upon their traditions) by breaking the Sabbath. Also they would know that a healing by itself is not adequate attestation of God as work or Jesus' claims of authority (Deuteronomy 13:1-5). Thus they conclude that Jesus has not been sent from God. (This will eventually lead to the Jews realizing the rest of the Deuteronomy passage could be applied to Jesus to justify His death at their hands. In this light, they were doing God's will by putting a false prophet to death.) The second group is astounded by the miracle and realize that only God could perform a unique sign of this magnitude (a man being born blind now sees). Since Jesus did the sign, the power of God is clearly with Him and thus Jesus is God's agent working in this situation. This could lead those in the second group to realize that whatever Jesus has done in the past on the Sabbath should lead them to re-evaluate their stance on the Sabbath and Jesus's identity.

There is strong irony revealed in this one verse. The argument of the second group is that since a notable miracle has happened, it must be from God and thus Jesus is God's agent. This argument is flawed and worthless in light of both the Old and New Testaments. Miracles are never infallible guides to spiritual truth or spiritual authority. We've already read the passage in Deuteronomy 13 to that end. Also in the Old Testament, Pharaoh's magicians performed several of the same miraculous acts that Moses did at the beginning of his confrontation.

### **[Matthew 7:21-23]**

### **[II Thessalonians 2:7-12]**

Here's the issue, not all miracles have attesting force. Some do but not all of them. Jesus always preferred the faith of an individual be built upon no miracles and solely on His words but He realized the truth of human nature and understood that at times, they were what was necessary to spark genuine faith.

The irony of this is that their reasoning is not sound or even Biblical but they come to the correct conclusion about Jesus. He has been sent from God. The other irony is that while the first group had the stronger arguments in terms of being theologically sound for their position that Jesus is a sinner, they end up being wrong. By being wrong on the point about Jesus, they also will prove themselves to be wrong concerning the Sabbath.

Q: After their interrogation, what do the Pharisees ask the healed man? (*v.17 - What do you say about Him?*)

Q: How does the healed man answer their question? (*v.17 - He is a prophet*)

This question forces the healed man to chose a side. Unlike the man in chapter 5, this man instantly sides with Jesus. This is the second critical verse in this passage. This man has gone from calling Jesus a mere man to calling him prophet. It shows that this man is still in his

spiritual infancy but it is a definite step in the right direction. The formerly blind man knows that an incredible miracle, unlike any other, has just been done and he is the recipient of that kindness. Thus this agent of God must be an exceptional man. From the formerly blind man's limited knowledge, he reasons that if this man who healed him is God's emissary, then He is above any court when it comes to potentially violating the Sabbath. The man's eyes are opening wider and beginning to see things more clearly. On the other hand, the eyes of his judges are becoming more clouded.

Q: What did the Pharisees think of the man's testimony? (v.18 - *they considered it worthless. They just wrote it off after he identified Jesus as a prophet.*)

Not getting the answers they wanted to hear, the Pharisees move on to interrogating the parents of the man born blind. The reason for the intensity of their interrogation is that they understood they could not prosecute Jesus until they are united as body. They need to review and continue to investigate the matter hoping to find a basis for their much needed unity. While the neighbors might be fooled or tricked, the man's parents certainly won't be. It is the parents who can testify as to this man being their son and that the healed man was born blind. Possibly the man himself could see when he was very young and lost the ability to see early on. If that were the case, the miracle just got downgraded to "miracle second class".

Q: What were the questions the Pharisees asked the healed man's parents in v.19? (*If this your son, was he born blind, and if so how does he now see?*)

Q: How do the parents answer the Pharisees questions? (v.20 - *they acknowledge that the man is their son and that he was born blind*)

Q: Which question did the not answer? (*How does he now see?*)

Notice that they side step answering that question by telling the Pharisees that he's of the legal age to speak for himself. In the Jewish world, that is 13 years old.

Q: Why did the healed man's parents avoid answering this question? (v.22 - *out of fear. They were afraid if they answered anything positively about Jesus, then they would be put out of the synagogue*)

To be put out of the synagogue was a big deal in that day and time, though rarely done. However it was always a threat. No one could be put out of the Temple as it was too big to enforce. However, one could be cast out of a local synagogue for a variety of reasons mentioned in the Law. The result of being put out was that one was excluded from the fraternal benefits that the Jewish community provided. Since salvation was based upon membership in the covenant community, to be put out of the synagogue (the covenant community) also means one lost their salvation or any claim to it, too. In daily life, it would keep you from being employed by another Jew or making a living among the Jews. This is why the parents are acting out of fear at this point. The problem was that the parent's answers did not alleviate the mystery the Pharisees were unable to explain.

This brings us to the second interrogation of the man who was just healed. This one is quite different from the previous interrogation in a number of ways. It gives us more insight into this man's journey to faith in Jesus - even though Jesus is nowhere to be seen at this point.

**[John 9:24-34]**

Apparently the Pharisees have reached enough of an internal consensus to consider Jesus a sinner. From here out they show a united front against Jesus and it may deal with the healed man's response to their interrogation. Despite the recent united stance, it doesn't really make sense. A huge miracle was performed and if they assumed that God was behind the miracle, then why would anyone believe that God's agent is sinful? At this point the Pharisees still believe there is something being hidden from them - something this guy knows and isn't sharing.

In v.24 the statement "Give glory to God" is another way of saying, "*Admit you are wrong*" or "*Before God, own up to the truth*" They are hoping this man will confess that Jesus is a sinner. (He did blatantly violate the traditions of the Sabbath to heal this man.) If this guy would just "man up" and give them what they really want, it would be the piece of the puzzle that would allow them to convict Jesus openly of His sinfulness. More irony here in that the man refuses to respond as the Pharisees demand yet at the same time he does end up glorifying God by re-telling the truth. What gets me is that this man is fully prepared to leave the judgment of Jesus to the experts. What he won't relinquish is that he was blind but now he sees.

Q: How does the healed man answer the Pharisees in v.27? *(He ends his answer with sarcasm. He has figured out that these men are not neutral religious observers whose only concern is to explain this event. He reasons what could possibly prompt these authorities to want to hear his answers all over again, if they were neutral on the issues. They are slanted against Jesus, the man who healed him from a lifetime of blindness, and now is going to go on the offensive. His comment of them wanting to be a disciple of Jesus, too sets the Pharisees off.)*

This passage shows us a truth we need to keep in the front of our minds. Genuine faith is characterized by a bold personal witness. Like this healed man, we are all to give witness to our own personal transformation. From our spiritual blindness to spiritual sight. (A good outline for a personal testimony is found in Acts 26 when Paul gives his defense before King Agrippa. First speak of your life before Christ. Then tell how you came to know Christ. Then conclude with how your life has changed since coming to Christ.)

At this point the Pharisees accuse this man of being a disciple of Jesus but they proudly state that they are disciples of Moses. Their claim that this man is a disciple of Jesus is not only an insult, it is meant to get him to show them a little respect as those with the authority to expel him from the synagogue. Their consciences have been pricked and the healed man realizes that they are just trying to trip him up for their own purposes against Jesus.

Q: Why do the Pharisees say they are disciples of Moses? *(v.29 - they know God spoke to him. They don't know where Jesus is from.)*

The bottom line of this argument, at this point is authority. They know God spoke to

Moses face-to-face and gave him the Law. The Pharisees see the conflict between Moses and Jesus as irreconcilable. Thus, if the healed man is siding with Jesus, it's must because he is a disciple of Jesus. That's the missing piece of this mystery. The man isn't a bystander but an advocate of Jesus. If the healed man is a disciple of Jesus, he'll say and do anything to protect Him, thus his testimony and mini-sermon can be dismissed.

The truth is this part of the exchange encapsulate the heart of the dispute between Judaism and Christianity. Judaism embraces the Law of Moses but also all of the oral traditions handed down from generation to generation. By these standards, Jesus certainly was a transgressor. On the other hand, as John points out in this narrative, if the Jews truly understood what Moses wrote, they would rightly grasp Jesus' true identity as the Messiah.. Their problem really stemmed from not understanding how the Old Testament is to be understood with reference to the new revelation in the person and teaching of Jesus. How can law and grace be reconciled? The answer lies outside the law and thus they couldn't grasp it. Until a person comes to grip with Jesus' identity and realizes that the Law is only designed to show a person his need for Jesus and His forgiveness, then the answer to reconciliation remains hidden.

### **[John 1:17-18]**

The deal is that this is a much deeper conversation that we see at face value. John is bringing it to light to share with all his readers the importance of seeing Jesus as who He truly is and how He, as the Light of the world, shines on those who put their faith in Him - not the Law or anything else.

At this point the healed man begins to show some real boldness and begins to use some common sense and arguments of his own. He goes on the offensive against them.

Q: What is the basic outline of the healed man's arguments to the Pharisees? (*vv.30-33 - They don't know where Jesus is from yet He opened his eyes. God doesn't hear sinners but if anyone is God-fearing, God listens to him. No one has ever opened the eyes of man born blind so if Jesus wasn't from God, He could do nothing.*)

The formerly blind man is amazed. He's not amazed at his own belief in Jesus welling up in his heart, but rather the disbelief being demonstrated by the Jews. So now the man is believing fully that Jesus is from God. He has reasoned that He has to be or else he'd still be blind. The Jews are outraged at the man's sermon to them.

Q: How do the Pharisees respond to the healed man's arguments for Jesus? (*v.34 - They cannot refute his arguments so they attack him personally. They tell him he was born in sin and they expelled him from the synagogue. So this man was just isolated from friends and family and kept from gaining employment. His stand cost him.*)

Lastly, Jesus reappears and He will explain the sight of the blind and the blindness of the sighted. In the conclusion to this account, we are going to see the differences between the children of the light and the children of the darkness.

## [John 9: 35-41]

One of the key points John makes that we must keep in mind as believers in this world is that opposition to Jesus is to be expected. That was certainly true when John wrote this book but it is still true today. Like this man, courage and clarity are both required to meet the challenges and opposition of the world. Yet it was the expulsion and opposition to Jesus that show the authorities true state - blind to the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Notice that Jesus takes the initiative to find this man. Remember, this man has heard the voice of Jesus but has never seen Him. Despite being put out of the synagogue, Jesus tracks him down and is going to bring him to a decisive moment in his faith. Here's an incredibly important point about this story: mature and knowledgeable faith are often the consequence of decisive breaks from the past. These breaks, such as being cast out of the synagogue, are not to be taken as dreaded conditions but rather open doors to a greater faith and spiritual revelation from God.

Q: What does Jesus ask the healed man? (*v.35 - Do you believe in the Son of Man? This question is better read in English as "Do you place your faith in the Son of God?" In the Greek this is a doubly emphatic question - one that demands an answer.*)

What is important to understand is that Jesus is calling this man to make a decision about faith in Him. This is the call of Jesus to all mankind. This man is at a crossroads and can either accept or reject Jesus as the Son of Man.

There is a question about why Jesus used the title "Son of Man" rather than Son of God or Messiah. We know Jesus didn't use the title Messiah around the Jews because of its political implications. The term "Son of Man" was a Messianic title but it also was assigned a judging role assigned to the end times. Here Jesus is about to reveal to this man something about the nature of His judgment. It's going to deal with whether or not one accepts God's revelation of Jesus as coming from Him or not.

Q: How did the man answer Jesus? (*He requested to know the Son of Man's identity. This shows that the man is eager to believe Jesus and that he has come to the end of putting his confidence in the traditional religious authorities.*)

Q: How did Jesus answer the man when asking for the Son of Man's identity? (*v. 37 - He self-disclosed to the man that He was the Son of Man. This sounds a lot like Jesus' self-disclosure to the woman at the well in John 4:26.*)

Jesus let the man know He was the Son of Man whom he has now seen with his own eyes. The contrast is clear. The first time the man sees Jesus, he sees Him as the Son of Man while the Jews have seen Jesus many times and still see Him as nothing. They will only recognize Jesus as the Son of Man at the judgment on the last day (Mark 14:62). This is the third progression in the healed man's walk of faith to Jesus. He now believes that Jesus is the Son of Man who has come from God.

## [Psalm 27:1]

Then in v.38 the healed man makes his final step towards genuine or saving faith in Jesus. He calls Him “Lord” and falls down and worships Him. The word “worship” means to lay prostrate before another and when you are laying before God, it has the meaning “worship. This man now knows that Jesus is the Revealer and Redeemer sent from God. So this man’s progression of faith goes from seeing Jesus as a man (v.11) to Jesus being a prophet (v.17) to Jesus being the Son of Man (v.35) to finally Jesus being His Lord (v.38). This was his journey from the darkness to light. This is the same journey all people take to come to Jesus as Lord. It may be a quick journey or one spanning years.

There is an interesting use of a Greek word in vv. 36 and 38. The word can mean “sir” or “Lord”. In v.36 based on the context, the word should be translated “sir” as the man doesn’t yet know who Jesus is. Yet, in v.38 it’s better translated “Lord” as by that point he’s come to know Jesus. This brings up the final difference between the man Jesus healed in chapter 5 and this man. This man was saved. He came to genuine faith in Jesus and is filled with His light. The man in chapter 5 remained lost (though hopefully he came to know Jesus later and it just wasn’t recorded by John).

Q: For what purpose did Jesus say He came into the world? *(v.39 - for judgment)*

Q: On what factor would Jesus judge the world? *(v.39 - that those who are blind could see and those who see would become blind)*

Remember, this conversation is happening in a public location and the Pharisees are still loitering around and are able to see and hear what is transpiring between Jesus and the man He healed.

Back in John 3:16-21 Jesus said He didn’t come to judge the world. So, what gives? Is this a contradiction in Jesus’ teaching? No. The point is the same. Jesus did not come into the world to condemn the world; He came to save it. However, there is a paradox to divine revelation. Those who accept it are saved while those who reject it condemn themselves. Think of this: in order to bring grace, God’s revelation must first give offense to those seeking grace. This offense can lead to one of two outcomes. It can either lead the person to become offended at their own sin and repent thus have their sins fully forgiven or the person can become offended at the notion that he is a sinner and reject the offer of forgiveness as they see nothing in themselves that needs to be forgiven. This action actually binds sin to themselves while admitting the sin releases it from the person. The second half of Jesus statement in v.39 is a purpose clause. Those who claim to see yet are blind are those who refuse to allow grace to work in their lives and lead them to condemning sin within themselves. Jesus’ judgment is for that purpose - to show which way people handle the light He brings - to salvation or not. Those Jesus is saying are blind are those living in darkness and are those who are lost. Jesus’ purpose was to come and give light to people could see - their sin and God’s Messiah who takes away sin and be saved. There is a certain poverty of spirit, abasement of personal pride, and candid admission of blindness that are indispensable characteristics of a person who receives spiritual sight through Jesus Christ. Like in previous chapters, Jesus is using a physical/earthly condition (like hunger and thirst in past chapter) to illustrate a spiritual truth. Spiritual sight comes from admitting sin and one’s need for a Savior whereas spiritual darkness falls upon a person who thinks they don’t need Jesus.

Q: What was the Pharisees question to Jesus? (*v.40 - We are not blind too are we?*)

Q: How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees question? (*v.41 - That if they admitted their spiritual blindness, they would receive their spiritual sight but since they still cling to the notion that they possess spiritual sight, they are proving that they are truly blind.*)

So out of all of this, the Pharisees understood precious little of what Jesus was saying. The Pharisees' assumption that they could see without Jesus' intervention proved their spiritual blindness. Jesus stated that there was no remedy for this blindness as long as they persisted in believing they had their sight. The same is true today. Until a person comes to the place where they know they are a sinner and need a Savior, they act and live out of their own blindness. It's interesting as the Pharisees were content with the dim light they held onto from the traditions of the Law. However, this led them to fully reject the true Light of the world.

**[Isaiah 6:8-10]**

**[Proverbs 26:12]**

Jesus did not enter a world of sinners aware of their need and eager to be rid of their sins. This narrative teaches us a good deal about genuine faith and the Light brought by the full revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Even those who depend upon the genuine but inadequate light of Old Testament revelation may prove to be too ignorant to admit the depths of their blindness and seek the brilliance only found in Christ's light. This account of the man healed of blindness both serves as an evangelistic appeal but also a warning to those who would cling to their darkness. Again, this entire chapter is an illustration of how Jesus as the Light of the world impacts and transforms human lives as they accept or reject Him.

Q: Do you have any questions, comments, rebukes or rebuttals?