

The Old Paths

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“The Healing Of The Blind Man”

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John 9:1-41 records the occasion of Jesus healing the man who had been born blind. This chapter clearly illustrates the divisions among the Jews at this time. On one hand, there were those who lovingly believed that Jesus was who He said He was, and followed Him. While on the other hand, there were those who blatantly rejected the Lord in spite of the evidence before them. If you had been present on that Sabbath day 2000 years ago, where would you have been? Who would you have followed — the Lord or men? Let us study this account together.

The “Messiah Miracles”

The account in John 9 is considered by scholars to be one of the “Messiah miracles.” What is a “Messiah miracle”? Put simply, before Christ came to earth, the Jewish rabbis devised a way to determine whether or not Messiah had come. This was to keep from being fooled by frauds. These miracles included: 1) Casting out devils/demons, which Jesus did in Matthew 8:16 and 9:32-33. 2) Healing a Jew of leprosy, which Jesus did in Matthew 8:1-3 and Luke 5:12-14. 3) Giving sight to one born blind, which happened in John 9. The irony is, when the time came, they rejected the very One who showed Himself to be the Messiah!

The Miracle Performed

Jesus said that this man was

born blind so that the works of God might be manifest (“revealed,” NKJV; “to render apparent,” Strong’s). The apostles asked “*who sinned*,” i.e. who committed the sin that caused this man’s blindness? If him, then he sinned before he was born (Jn. 9:1, 8). If his parents sinned, this gives credence to Calvinism and contradicts Scripture (Ezek. 18:2; Jer. 31:29; Deut. 24:16; II Chron. 25:4). Jesus answered and said his blindness was not a punishment for sin, but so that the works of God might be made apparent or clear to folks (Jn. 9:3).

Notice Jesus’ urgency in this chapter: “*I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work*” (Jn. 9:4). He knew His earth-life would be short! In fact, this is something all of us should realize (Ecc. 9:5; Job 14:1-2; Heb. 9:27). We have no lease on life! Christ’s work upon earth was to save lost souls. (Lk. 19:10; I Tim. 1:15). In like manner, our work is to follow in the footsteps of Christ and bring lost souls to Him while we live (II Tim. 2:2; Mk. 16:15-16; I Pet. 2:21).

Responses To The Truth

As we know, people will respond when the truth is preached. The people on this occasion definitely responded! In fact, their response to what Jesus did covers a major part of John 9.

As we read John 9, we find some who responded with joy. The blind man was such a person and he was ready and willing to spread the good news (Jn. 9:11, 15, 27, 30,

35-36). Others that day responded in disbelief and surprise (Jn. 9:9). Also, some responded by rejecting the evidence (Jn. 9:13-41). There were some who rejected Jesus as Christ because He healed on the Sabbath day (Jn. 9:14). They failed to realize that Christ is “*Lord of the Sabbath day*” (Matt. 12:1-8). Still others admitted the veracity of the miracle, but wondered how a “sinner” could do such things. Of course, the fear of others is what caused the blind man’s parents to not affirm what had happened to their son (Jn. 9:19-23, 12:42-43). How terrible!

Brethren, we need to realize that the truth will divide right from wrong, innocence from guilt, and it divides God from Satan (Jn. 17:17; Jn. 8:44). Notice please that the responses to the truth in John 9 were similar to the responses the apostle Paul encountered when he was in Athens (Acts 17:32, 34).

A Defense Of What Occurred

John 9:24-34 record a dialog between the Jewish leaders and the former blind man. The Jewish leaders used such derogatory terms as “this man” to refer to Christ (v. 16, 24, 29). They called the former blind man to them with the attitude that they knew Jesus was a sinner and they wished for the man to confirm it. Their attitude was, “Don’t confuse us with the facts, our minds are already made up!” The former blind man challenged the Pharisees greatly with his statement: “*Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see*” (v. 25). No one could deny the evidence! In his statement, we see John 9:3 fulfilled.

The former blind man issued another challenge in John 9:31-33. It was a brilliant argument from logic proving Jesus’ deity and identity. His major premise

was, "...God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (v. 31). His minor premise was, "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind" (v. 32). His conclusion was: "If this man were not of God, he could do nothing" (v. 33). In his statement, *the judges are judged!!* The Jewish leaders are shown to be in the wrong for fighting against and denying the Son of God. The Pharisees allowed their pride to shine forth! They accepted the evidence of Christ's miracles, but rejected the conclusion!

This chapter ends with Christ's exchange with the Pharisees (Jn. 9:39-41). They are called "blind" because they did not know the truth and had no information about Jesus as the Son of God. "Ye should have no sin" means no sin of unbelief. Since they said they could "see," i.e., they claimed to know about Christ (v. 41); then their "sin remaineth." Truly, they had no excuse for rejecting Christ!

Conclusion

This miracle not only declared Christ's inherent power as deity over time, but also proclaimed His power over adversity and to turn adversity into a blessing. The purpose of this miracle (and all miracles) was to produce faith in men (Jn. 9:35-38; 2:11, 23; 11:14-15, 45-48). It did just that, for we read the former blind man's confession, "Lord I believe" (Jn. 9:38).

Have you been guilty of rejecting Christ? Repent and accept the Lord's plan of salvation (Acts 2:38). We must believe and obey the same Savior who healed the blind man long ago.

(For more study in John 9, you may request a CD of the sermon preached on 3/11/07.)

It is not *inventive* genius we need in the Church, nor *explorers* to *invent* something new, or to *make discoveries*; but we need humble and honest men, who know and love truth, and will press it on the world. We know humble men, of but limited talent and information, who are building up churches, reforming men and women, and bringing them to God. We know also men of considerable learning and talent, who do not turn a bare dozen to the Lord in a year, and who build up no churches nor anything else, but who are starting subtleties, speculations and questions to no profit, but only tend to subvert the hearer. Why can men not be content with the plain truth, the precious truth that makes men wise to salvation, through faith in Christ? It is easily learned, easily preached and readily believed and obeyed to the salvation of the soul. It is for the people, the whole people, and adapted to them. The kind of greatness we need, is that which manifests itself in preaching great truth in plain and easy terms, and bringing it to the comprehension of the people. The command is, and will be till the Lord comes, "Preach the word."

From Benjamin Franklin, A Gospel Preacher From The 1800's, In His Book Entitled: Book Of Gems, p. 242

A.D. 33 OR 1906?

James P. Miller

Searching the Scriptures, April 1962

I am indebted to our beloved brother A. W. Dicus for this masterpiece of logic relative to the establishment of the church. In conversation with one of the brethren in Tampa who had revolted against the score of loyal churches in the city and divided the body to start an institutional group on the north side, brother Dicus asked this question, Can a church be a loyal congregation of the Lord's people and not contribute or believe in contributing to a human institution out of the treasury? If the brother had answered, "Yes," he then would not have been justified in starting another congregation. However, he answered, "No," to which brother Dicus replied, "Well, you will have to change the date for the establishment of the true church of Christ. You will have to stop preaching that it was established on Pentecost in A.D. 33, and start teaching that it began after the founding of Spring Hill Orphan Home in 1906." Brethren, that is not about it, as one of the old greats used to say, that is exactly it. The church of the Lord as it was known in the New Testament and as we know it today, did not give a dime out of the treasury for 1800 years. Are you ready to change the date?

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"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Jer. 6:16)