

'What Do You See?'

22 Oct 2017 (Warren Payne)

John 9: 1-11 'Healing of the Man Born Blind.'

Key verse 3b " This happened so the power of God could be seen in him."

Men and women in all countries and in all cultures face similar questions of life.

Why was I born in poverty?
Why was I born with this disability?
Why did I get cancer? (Friend in Japan)
What is the meaning of life?
I wish I was thinner or taller.
Why do I get depressed?

Interestingly people seldom ask questions like:

Why am I so healthy?
Why was I born into such a rich family?
Why am I so beautiful or handsome?
Why am I so happy?

The questions tend to come when we are struggling with something in life. We tend to pray more when we have a need than when we don't. There is no simple answer to why we suffer in life. What we do know is that as Christians we have hope. We believe that life is not just guided by fate, chance or good luck. But that our lives are in God's hands and He cares for us no matter what our circumstances are.

Through Jesus and His life we see and understand that God has a purpose in all that happens to us. We may not understand it all, or be able to answer all the questions our pain produces, but we do know our God is good and will always do what is right.

Jesus is God. He is the healer of all. Our problems can be physical, emotional, relational or spiritual. All can be healed by Jesus.

In John chapter 9 Jesus was asked why a man was born blind and his answer was very revealing.

V 3 " This happened so the power of God could be seen in him." Notice what Jesus said. The power of God could be seen in him. Seen = visible, obvious, clear and understandable.

Before we look at this story a little more let us listen as Chihiro shares her story about how the power of God was seen in her life.

Testimony

Thank you Chihiro. I am sure we have all been blessed and encouraged by what you have shared today.

As we all know coming to Christ is often only the beginning of a road leading to complete healing. God can and does heal instantly, but more often that healing is a process that starts when we believe in Jesus, but continues after that. Healing is always more than just physical healing.

For the blind man in John 9 there was a process that took place. He was healed of his blindness but not of his struggle to fit back into the social and religious fabric of his Jewish society. This blind man was healed by Jesus using a process that was familiar to the people of Jesus day.

- Saliva and earth = mud pack V6
- Wash in the pool of Siloam V7 The Pool of Siloam, also called the Pool of Shiloah has a rich and storied history, which involves an ancient king of Judah, a famous sermon, and the healing of the man born blind. Several rabbinic traditions identified the Pool of Siloam as the Messiah's Pool. It was the only source of fresh water within the walls of ancient Jerusalem.
- Came back seeing = Prophecy Isaiah 35: 5 "And when 'He' (Jesus) comes He will open the eyes of the blind."

You would think that everyone would rejoice with him but they did not. This is a long story that covers all of chapter 9 with 41 verses!

Lets look of this story in a little more detail.

Firstly he was healed in his body so the power of God could actually be seen. He was given a new start V3. The power of God could be seen by all. His identity was no longer that of a blind man but of a normal seeing man who could start a new life.

Healing gave him a new identity but it was not the end of his troubles. He had in many ways swapped one problem for another!

True identity does not come just through a healthy body, wealth, prosperity, employment status or any other material means.

Why did this man struggle after experiencing such a special healing?

1. Questioned by the religious leaders who should have known better V17 (Jesus comments about them was V41 "You claim you can see but really you are blind.") This is a claim you could make of modern man. The more we understand God's creation the further people seem to get from seeing the Creator through the creation.

2. Because of fear of the religious systems of the day, he was not fully supported by his parents V20 -23 (Trapped by the fear of man) People today can be trapped by the fear of what others will say about them if they become a follower of Jesus.

3. Healed but unsure of who Jesus was V17 (A faith journey of discovery)
4. Excommunicated from Jewish society V26 -34 (Penalised when he should have been praised)

Jesus said this miracle was done so we could see the power of God. It was a testimony of what God can do when we allow Jesus to minister His healing grace in our lives. Chihiro's story today is such a story. A story of God's healing and continued help. Our stories are still being written, but as we trust God day by day healing of body, mind and spirit come.

Story of girl with facial deformity who came for prayer.

Knowing who you are and how you fit into your world is what we call our identity. There is always a level of identity which comes from a healthy body, family relationships and being part of a community, religious or secular. However, true identity is only found when we meet the Creator Jesus Christ.

Like the blind man true identity as a human being is only experienced when we personally meet the one who loved us enough to be willing to die on the cross for.

Jesus identified with us as sinners in order that we could identify with Him as a child of God.

V35 tells us that Jesus heard what had happened to the man and searched him out. Yes, God knows all about our struggles and he searches for us. Like the healed man when we meet Jesus and believe, then and only then do we find our true identity. We find wholeness.

V35 – 38 Read.

What actually happens when we meet Jesus - when we believe that He is the Saviour of the world?

TV 'Lost and Found' program where people look for fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters. When these people actually see their real earthly father, mother, sister or brother all the imaging of who that person looks like disappears. They stop asking the question "Is that person my father?" All the images disappear in an instant because they have met their real parent or relation.

So it is when we meet Jesus. For the first time in life we know God's unconditional love through Jesus Christ. We meet our creator. Our spiritual blindness is taken away.

2 Corinthians 5 :17 " Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"

There is church group that make this declaration before the message every Sunday. It reminds us about who we really are and where our real identity is found.

I am not what I do.
I am not what I have.
I am not what people say about me.
I am the beloved of God.
It's who I am.
No one can take it from me.
I don't have to worry.
I don't have to hurry.
I can trust my friend, Jesus,
and share His love with the world. (Robert V Schuller)

Prayer