

Spiritual Blindness

(A Study of the Gospel of John; Message #36)

John 9:35-41

- A. John 9 is devoted to the story of Jesus' cure of a man born blind
 - 1. This healed man has been rather impressive - he has boldly told the truth
 - 2. He becomes the prototypical "follower of Jesus"
- B. The blind man is back on the streets somewhat confused and bewildered

THE FIRST POINT

- A. A game people play is labeling others before they've looked inside
 - 1. Labels are convenient. They tell us what's inside and how to deal with it
 - 2. We stick them on people for the very same reason
- B. In John 9, Jesus and his followers come upon a man blind from birth
 - 1. "Let's apply a label. Let's talk about his sin." How could they be so "blind?"
 - 2. Applying "labels" allows us to feel righteous - self-righteous
- C. What if God labeled us before he looked in our heart?
 - "Don't judge other people, or you will be judged. In fact, you will be judged in the same way you judge others, and the amount you give to others will be given to you."*
(Matthew 7:1-2)
- D. Jesus knows it's easy to label those we don't know or agree with
 - 1. Some of us may relate to the man born blind: we've been labeled
 - 2. Some of us may relate to the observers: we've seen it/heard it done
 - 3. Many of us can relate with Jesus' disciples, we've labeled
 - 4. Who is really blind in this story?

THE QUESTION AND ANSWER (9:35-38)

- A. Jesus "notices" (9:1) and "pursues" rejected people (9:35)
 - 1. This is so Jesus! It is who Jesus is; it is what Jesus does
 - 2. When we are shut out, there is always one who receives us, binds up our wounds and fills us with his Spirit and sends us out to talk about Jesus
- B. Jesus asks the eternal question: "Do you believe in me/the Son of Man/Jesus?"
 - 1. Let me translate that: "Will you follow me?"

- 2. Jesus reveals just enough about himself to make our faith possible but hides just enough of himself to make our faith necessary
 - a. This once-blind man has now heard just enough to make his faith in Jesus possible and he is willing to take that large leap of faith...
 - b. It is not enough to merely confess, admire, or respect Jesus, he must be "worshipped!"
- 3. This chapter reminds us of Jesus' grace; shows us a sincere believer's growth in the faith, and notes his welcome into Jesus' family/group
- C. If we have everything, but don't have him, we have nothing. If we have him and nothing else, we have everything

JESUS' CHALLENGE (9:39-41)

- A. Those who believe they already see are a challenge for any doctor
 - 1. An uncomfortable principle: every time you hear Truth you are responsible for it
 - 2. Many in this story are blind to the realities clearly before their eyes
 - 3. "If only we were blind..." (i.e., if only we were willing to receive his help)
- B. When you see him, you will forget all about yourself
 - 1. Everything will change. He is coming
 - 2. And when you see Jesus, you will bow in worship
 - 3. All of heartaches of this world will disappear when our eyes are opened and we see Jesus face-to face...and we worship him!