

Series: The Gospel of John

Day 9: See and blind: Cause or purpose?

Prayer

O God, a paralyzing virus is raging around us. In the world the number of infections is growing exponentially. It is affecting some people's health, but also ruining businesses and people are losing their work. Many are hungry.

What is the cause Lord? Is it our sin or someone else's? Is this my sin? Yes, Lord, speak to us from Your Word. Open our eyes, take our blindness away to see Your glory in the midst of the circumstances around us.

Amen

The first eight days...

Let us look at what we have learned in the first eight chapters:
John gave the reason for writing this book:

*31 but **these are written**
so that you may believe*

What should we believe?

that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,

What will happen if we believe?

*and that by believing
you may have life
in his name. (John 20:30-31)*

Signs and wonders, to believe, to have life eternal.

- In Chapter 1 we saw that the Word became flesh and lived among us and we saw His glory. In His fullness we received grace upon grace.
- Chapters 2, 5 and 6 told us about signs and wonders. The description of the signs was short, but the rest of the chapter looked into the deeper meaning.
- Chapter 3 told us about being born again.
- In Chapter 7 and 8 had no stories about signs and wonders. Jesus just spoke and explained that when you are born again, our hearts of stone will become hearts of flesh and we will be filled with the Spirit, and then we will bear fruit of gratefulness.

Now the question: If all these wonderful things happen, then why do believers go through difficult times?

Chapter 9

Now we are at day 9 looking at John 9. I made the title see and blind: Cause or purpose? I trust it will become clear to you as we walk through the chapter. It says in verse 5:

*5 As long as I am in the world,
I am the light of the world."*

And in verse 7 the miracle is done: A blind man can see.

...7... and came back seeing.

Just one verse for the miracle. As in chapters 5 and 6, a short account of the miracle, but a long chapter to dig into the deeper meaning. In the rest of long chapter are five conversations in which the deeper meaning of this miracle becomes visible. Notice how the blind man, who has never been able to read a Bible, sees more and more and the Pharisees, who knew the Bible well, became more and more blind, as we go through these five conversations.

Conversation 1: With the neighbours

Conversation 1 with the neighbours from verse 8 to 12.

*10 they said to him,
"Then how were your eyes opened?"*
*11 He answered,
"The man called Jesus...
Healed me and I
...received my sight."*

He refers to Jesus as the man and he testifies to what happened to him: received my sight.

Conversation 2: With the Pharisees

Conversation 2 with the pharisees from verse 13 to 17.

*13 They brought to the Pharisees
the man who had formerly been blind.
14 Now it was a Sabbath day*

You will remember in chapter 5 the same thing happened. Jesus healed the paralyzed man on the Sabbath and that caused controversy. But Jesus does the same thing again, he performs a miracle on the Sabbath again. It says:

*14 Now it was a Sabbath day
when Jesus made the mud
and opened his eyes.*

He performed a miracle through breaking the law. He wasn't allowed to make the mud on the Sabbath, and once again he brings controversy.

*16 Some of the Pharisees said,
"This man **is not from God,**
for **he does not keep the Sabbath.**"
But others said,
"How can a man who is a **sinner**
do such **signs?**"
And there was a division among them.*

Increasing blindness, division among the Pharisees.

*17 So they said again to the blind man,
"What do you say about him, since he has **opened your eyes?**"
He said, "**He is a prophet.**"*

In the previous conversation he said: The man. And his understanding and knowledge grows and he calls Him a prophet.

Conversation 3: With the parents

Conversation 3 with the parents from verse 18 to 23.

*18 The Jews did **not believe**
that he had been blind and had **received his sight,**
until they called the parents of the man who had **received his sight**
20 ... "**We know** that this is our son and that he was **born blind.**
21 **But how he now sees we do not know...**
22 His parents said these things because they feared the Jews,*

So actually they knew...

*for the Jews had already agreed
that if anyone should confess **Jesus to be Christ,**
he was to be put out of the synagogue.*

That didn't mean to only be put out of church, but to be cast out from the nation. You will be an outcast, you won't be able to do business, and his parents didn't have the courage to endure that.

Conversation 4: With the Pharisees

Conversation 4 with the pharisees again, from verse 24 to 34.

24 So for the second time
they called the man who had been blind
and said to him,

"Give glory to God.

*We know that **this man** is a sinner."*

25 He answered,

"Whether he is a sinner I do not know.

One thing I do know,

that though I was blind, now I see."

What a beautiful testimony! Sometimes we wonder how we can testify, and we don't have words, but a simple testimony of what He has done for us is all we need to do. I do know I was blind, now I see. The conversation continues:

26 They said to him,

*"What did he do to you? How did he **open your eyes?**"*

27 He answered them,

"I have told you already, and you would not listen.

Why do you want to hear it again?

Do you also want to become his disciples?"

Wow, from a man who was blind his whole life, he is full of bravery. All of a sudden he has the courage to speak.

28 And they reviled him, saying,

"You are his disciple,

If they hear him speak and see his courage, they realize he is a disciple. But they tell him, they are not disciples of Him...

but we are disciples of Moses.

29 We know that God has spoken to Moses,

*but as for this man, **we do not know** where he comes from."*

And so they hold on to what they know, their rules and regulations, and laws and not to Jesus Christ.

30 The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing!

You do not know where he comes from,

and yet he opened my eyes.

32 Never since the world began has it been heard

*that anyone **opened the eyes of a man born blind.***

33 *If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”*
34 *They answered him,*
“You were born in utter sin,

He speaks about eternity; they speak about this life.

and would you teach us?”
And they cast him out.

His parents were scared of being cast out. He wasn't scared, witnessed and were cast out.

Conversation 5: With Jesus

The last conversation is with Jesus in verse 35-41.

35 *Jesus heard that they had cast him out,*
and having found him
Jesus heard and he went to look for him, when he found him...
he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

36 *He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?”*

37 *Jesus said to him, “You have seen him,*

You, blind man, you see, but you see much more, you see the Son of Man. When he speaks about the Son of Man it is the one who brings salvation...

and it is he who is speaking to you.”

38 *He said, “Lord, I believe,”*
and he worshiped him.

And this is the pinnacle of the chapter – the reason why he needed to see. He needed to see Jesus Christ's glory and then glorify Him.

38 *He said, “Lord, I believe,”*
and he worshiped him.

Then Jesus brings this conversation to a close:

39 *Jesus said, “For judgment*
I came into this world,

I have a purpose, a plan, what is the reason?

that those who do not see
may see,
and those who see
may become blind.”

Those who see in a certain way, but cannot see me and cannot see my glory will become blind. And those who see and realize how dependent they are on Me, like we saw in chapter 3, where He said look up to the cross and you will be saved. If you see in that way you will be saved, then you will have life.

40 *Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things,
and said to him, "Are we also blind?"*

41 *Jesus said to them,
"If you were blind,
you would have no guilt;
but now that you say, 'We see,'*

You say we see, but we know that is not the truth, therefore

your guilt remains.

Everyone is guilty, we are guilty as well. If we hold on to the wrong things that we think know and what we think our religion is about and we do not realize it is about Jesus Christ and that we need to see His greatness and His salvation for us on the cross, then our guilt remains. But if we see that we are blind then we will see Jesus Christ.

Cause?

1 *As he passed by,
he saw a man blind from birth.*
2 *And his disciples asked him,
"Rabbi, who sinned,
this man
or his parents,
that he was born blind?"*

They are looking for the cause or the reason. Why is this man blind? Isn't that we also do? We look for the cause. Why me? Why did I have to lose my job? Why do I have to be ill? Why is there cancer in my body? Why the virus in our country? Why does the doctor get sick when he tries to help? What is the cause? And then God answers and says:

3 *Jesus answered,
"It was not that this man sinned,
or his parents,
but
that the works of God
might be displayed in him.*

Where they are looking for the cause, God has the purpose. He says it is not about the cause, but the purpose. It is about what I will accomplish through what has happened to

you. I have a purpose, I have a plan. This man has been blind from birth, I have been there from the beginning of time, in all eternity there has been no one who has healed a blind man. My purpose is set in the light of eternity, not only in what happens on earth. What happens to you while you are on earth I use for an eternal purpose. And for that reason, I tell you:

28 And we know that for those who love God **all things work together for good**, for those who are called according to his **purpose**. (Romans 8:28)

He called you. And what is currently happening to you has an eternal purpose.

Conclusion

Let us conclude:

I came to this world to...

and those who see may become blind."

(Seeing Pharisees)

But how?

Not from God...

How he sees now, we don't know...

We know

This man is a sinner

We are disciples of Moses...

From birth

You want to teach us

Are we also blind?

that those who do not see may see,

(Blind man)

The man ... I can see

He is a prophet

what I do know

I was blind, but now I see

You are His disciple.

from the beginning of time

if this man wasn't from God...

"Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

Jesus said I came to this world with a purpose and those who see may become blind and that those who do not see may see. How did the conversations progress?

- They ask but how? The man who was blind says: I can see.
- They say it is not from God, because he is working on a Sabbath, he says he is a prophet.
- He grows in his sight. His parents says how he sees now, we don't know...they don't have the courage to testify yet.
- The Pharisees says we know, but he says he also knows.
- They say we know this man is a sinner. He says no, I know, I was blind, but now I see.
- They say we are disciples of Moses, you are His disciple.
- You are blind from birth, I have God who is from eternity to eternity. You want to teach us, no God teaches me.
- Are we also blind? "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

Did this passage cure your blindness? Do you also want to shout out: **"Lord, I believe," and worshiped him?**

Reflection

Today we were cured of our blindness. Read the passage again and reflect and write down what you saw of God, the Father and the Son? What did you learn about yourself?

Thanksgiving

The blind man were not only cured of his blindness, he was also given a boldness. When you reflect what you wrote down, what does it mean to you that you now can see? Does it also mean as much to you as to the blind man that you would be willing to witness boldly, even if it is just a simple sentence? Write down one, very specific, thing that you are going to do differently during today.

Prayer

O Lord, thank you for opening our eyes. We see You and we believe Lord, and therefore we want to worship You. From all eternity You have been there, You made everything. In everything that is happening to us, You have a purpose. An eternal purpose. We were blind and trapped in what we thought we knew. Now all we know is: You cured our blindness. We believe Lord! You are the only living God.

To you be the praise and the honour and the glory forever and ever!

Amen