

## (5) The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)

1. The man born blind episode demonstrates how one person's test can provide instruction to a multitude of individuals.
2. Instruction opportunity #1: Jesus' disciples (Jn. 9:1-5).
  - a. The disciples were under the false-teaching perspective that all physical infirmities were consequences of sin.
    - 1) Sometimes blindness was an application of divine discipline (Gen. 19:11; Deut. 28:28-27; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kgs. 6:18-19; Acts 9:8; 13:11).
    - 2) Sometimes blindness was a consequence of demonic affliction (Mt. 12:22; Lk. 7:21).
    - 3) Assumption of personal guilt does not edify (Job 4:7).
  - b. Children face consequent circumstances because of their parents' sins but not divine discipline (Ex. 20:5 cp. Ezek. 18:2,19-20).
  - c. Jesus taught that some afflictions are not divine discipline but rather undeserved suffering for the manifestation of God's faithfulness (Jn. 9:3).
  - d. The recognition of the Father's ongoing work is a motivation for our own continued working (Jn. 9:4) especially when we become convicted of the shortness of our time here (Jn. 9:5).
3. Instruction opportunity #2: the man born blind (Jn. 9:6-7).
  - a. The man born blind heard the title Rabbi (Jn. 9:2) and the testimony as the Light of the World (Jn. 9:5).
  - b. The man's instruction opportunity was an illustration of obedience (Jn. 9:7).
    - 1) A mechanism was sovereignly designated and the procedure was volitionally obeyed.
    - 2) The miracle came into effect upon the volitional obedience to the sovereignly designated mechanism.
  - c. The man does not question who the Light of the World rabbi thinks he is (cf. Jn. 8:53), nor does he balk at the instructions he's been given (cf. 2<sup>nd</sup> Kgs. 5:11-14).
  - d. After receiving his sight, Ἀναβλέψας \* returned to find that the Light of the World rabbi had departed. \*(Pastor Bob's nickname for "one who received sight")
    - 1) Ἀναβλέψας knew that the Light of the World rabbi was a prophet (Jn. 9:17).
    - 2) Ἀναβλέψας also knew that His personal name was Jesus (Jn. 9:11).
    - 3) Ἀναβλέψας undoubtedly heard the Lord's message during the feast (Jn. 8:12).
4. Instruction opportunity #3: his neighbors and associates (Jn. 9:8-12).
  - a. The neighbors and others weren't quite sure he was who they thought he was (Jn. 9:8-9).
  - b. The benefit he received became the testimony he had to offer (Jn. 9:10-11).
  - c. The testimony should also include guidance as to where the Lord can be found (Jn. 9:12).
  - d. Remember at this point the man's only benefit is in terms of physical health. He is still an unbeliever (Jn. 9:38).
5. Instruction opportunity #4: the Pharisees (Jn. 9:13-17).
  - a. Some of the Pharisees are handicapped by their theology (Jn. 9:16a). To them, Jesus was a sabbath-breaker.
  - b. Others accepted the testimony of the sign (Jn. 9:16b).
  - c. As the only "eye witness" available, the man born blind was asked to evaluate the sinning sabbath-breaker (Jn. 9:17). His answer shows the incomplete & finite understanding of one who is still being brought to faith.
6. Instruction opportunity #5: his parents (Jn. 9:18-23).
  - a. The parents were faithful synagogue attendees, but they feared the Jews more than they feared the Lord (Jn. 9:22).
  - b. The parents knew the truth but their testimony would have consequences they were unwilling to bear (Jn. 9:23).

7. Instruction opportunity #6: the man born blind learns from the angelic conflict manipulations of the adversary (Jn. 9:24-34).
  - a. The Pharisees couch their evil schemes in religious vocabulary: give glory to God (Jn. 9:24).
  - b. Everybody has sinned (Rom. 3:23 ἁμαρτάνω hamartanō #264<sub>43x</sub>).
    - 1) “Sinners” (ἁμαρτωλός hamartōlos #268<sub>47x</sub>) to the Pharisees in the Gospels are characterized by a manner of life that makes no attempt to do otherwise.
    - 2) Those who did not observe the Law in detail and therefore were shunned by observers of traditional precepts. They are contrasted with those who are God-fearing (Jn. 9:31).
  - c. Ἀναβλέψας refused to characterize Jesus’ spiritual walk, but repeatedly testified to Jesus’ spiritual fruit (Jn. 9:25).
  - d. The Pharisees pursued a tactic of repeated questioning. Military police interrogation tactics call this the “repetition method.” Jesus cited the methodology positively in terms of prayer diligence (Lk. 18:1-8).
  - e. Ἀναβλέψας won’t change his answer, but he tweaks the Pharisees greatly with his suggestion that they want to become disciples of Jesus (Jn. 9:27).
    - 1) The Pharisees angrily defend their Mosaic orthodoxy (Jn. 9:28-29).
    - 2) Ἀναβλέψας happily restates his testimony, and his convictions based on that testimony (Jn. 9:30-33).
    - 3) The Pharisees final conclusion is to evict Ἀναβλέψας from their presence (and likely ban him from synagogue participation as well) (Jn. 9:34 cf. v.22).
8. Instruction opportunity #7: the man born blind learns but the Pharisees are more blind than he ever was (Jn. 9:35-41).