

Good Shepherd
Bible Study
March 19, 2023: John 9:1-41
Lent 4

Opening Prayer (together): O Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

First Reading - New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We^[a] must work the works of him who sent me^[b] while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” ¹⁰But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹²They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.” ¹⁸The 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 ¹⁹and asked them, “Is this your son,

Second Reading – The Message

¹⁻² Walking down the street, Jesus saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked, “Rabbi, who sinned: this man or his parents, causing him to be born blind?”

³⁻⁵ Jesus said, “You’re asking the wrong question. You’re looking for someone to blame. There is no such cause-effect here. Look instead for what God can do. We need to be energetically at work for the One who sent me here, working while the sun shines. When night falls, the workday is over. For as long as I am in the world, there is plenty of light. I am the world’s Light.”

⁶⁻⁷ He said this and then spit in the dust, made a clay paste with the saliva, rubbed the paste on the blind man’s eyes, and said, “Go, wash at the Pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “Sent”). The man went and washed—and saw.

⁸ Soon the town was buzzing. His relatives and those who year after year had seen him as a blind man begging were saying, “Why, isn’t this the man we knew, who sat here and begged?”

⁹ Others said, “It’s him all right!” But others objected, “It’s not the same man at all. It just looks like him.” He said, “It’s me, the very one.” ¹⁰ They said, “How did your eyes get opened?” ¹¹ “A man named Jesus made a paste and rubbed it on my eyes and told me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ I did what he said. When I washed, I saw.” ¹² “So where is he?” “I don’t know.”

¹³⁻¹⁵ They marched the man to the Pharisees. This day when Jesus made the paste and healed his blindness was the Sabbath. The Pharisees grilled him again on how he had come to see. He said, “He put a clay paste on my eyes, and I washed, and now I see.”

¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “Obviously, this man can’t be from God. He doesn’t keep the Sabbath.”

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who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"²⁰ His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind,²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus^[l] to be the Messiah^[l] would be put out of the synagogue.²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner."²⁵ He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."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?"²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, 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."³⁰ The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes.³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will.³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."³⁴ They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Spiritual Blindness

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"^[l]³⁶ He answered, "And who is he, sir?^[l] Tell me, so that I may believe in him."³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he."³⁸ He said, "Lord,^[l] I believe." And he worshiped him.³⁹ Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind."⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?"⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

Others countered, "How can a bad man do miraculous, God-revealing things like this?" There was a split in their ranks.

¹⁷ They came back at the blind man, "You're the expert. He opened *your* eyes. What do you say about him?" He said, "He is a prophet."

⁸⁻¹⁹ The Jews didn't believe it, didn't believe the man was blind to begin with. So they called the parents of the man now bright-eyed with sight. They asked them, "Is this your son, the one you say was born blind? So how is it that he now sees?"

²⁰⁻²³ His parents said, "We know he is our son, and we know he was born blind. But we don't know how he came to see—haven't a clue about who opened his eyes. Why don't you ask him? He's a grown man and can speak for himself." (His parents were talking like this because they were intimidated by the Jewish leaders, who had already decided that anyone who took a stand that this was the Messiah would be kicked out of the meeting place. That's why his parents said, "Ask him. He's a grown man.")

²⁴ They called the man back a second time—the man who had been blind—and told him, "Give credit to God. We know this man is an impostor."

²⁵ He replied, "I know nothing about that one way or the other. But I know one thing for sure: I was blind . . . I now see."

²⁶ They said, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

²⁷ "I've told you over and over and you haven't listened. Why do you want to hear it again? Are you so eager to become his disciples?"

²⁸⁻²⁹ With that they jumped all over him. "You might be a disciple of that man, but we're disciples of Moses. We know for sure that God spoke to Moses, but we have no idea where this man even comes from."

³⁰⁻³³ The man replied, "This is amazing! You claim to know nothing about him, but the fact is, he opened my eyes! It's well known that God isn't at the beck and call of sinners, but listens carefully to anyone who lives in

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What one word, phrase or image catches your attention? • And, how does this passage inform our boldness and creativity for building God's kingdom? How does this passage touch your life today?	<p>reverence and does his will. That someone opened the eyes of a man born blind has never been heard of—ever. If this man didn't come from God, he wouldn't be able to do anything.”</p> <p>³⁴ They said, “You're nothing but dirt! How dare you take that tone with us!” Then they threw him out in the street.</p> <p>³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and went and found him. He asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”</p> <p>³⁶ The man said, “Point him out to me, sir, so that I can believe in him.”</p> <p>³⁷ Jesus said, “You're looking right at him. Don't you recognize my voice?”</p> <p>³⁸ “Master, I believe,” the man said, and worshiped him.</p> <p>³⁹ Jesus then said, “I came into the world to bring everything into the clear light of day, making all the distinctions clear, so that those who have never seen will see, and those who have made a great pretense of seeing will be exposed as blind.”</p> <p>⁴⁰ Some Pharisees overheard him and said, “Does that mean you're calling us blind?”</p> <p>⁴¹ Jesus said, “If you were really blind, you would be blameless, but since you claim to see everything so well, you're accountable for every fault and failure.”</p> <p>How is God inviting you to change today?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is God inviting you to do today?• Who is God inviting you to be today?
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