

INTRODUCTION

1. We come to the end of chapter 9 this morning in John's Gospel.
2. Having looked at the first 34 verses we saw the miracle Jesus did in healing a man of congenial blindness.
3. And now in verses 35-41 we see a second healing performed for the man who was formerly blind.
4. And that is the healing of spiritual blindness.
5. As I stated at the beginning of our study of this chapter, Jesus initiated the physical healing of the blind man.
6. And now we see Him again initiating the healing of his spiritual blindness.
7. That's how it is with salvation.
8. If God doesn't open your eyes, you will never be saved from your sin.
9. Like **Ephesians 2:4-5 (NASB)** ⁴ But **God**, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, **made us alive** together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).
10. He raised us from spiritual death (cf. Eph.2:1).

11. Just as this man needed God to open his physical eyes so that he could see, he also needed God to open his spiritual eyes in order to believe.
12. That is very clear from the passage we are considering this morning.
13. Throughout these 7 verses we Jesus' initiation of spiritual life with the healed man.
14. Let's read the passage starting at verse 35.
15. **John 9:35-41 (NASB)** ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He answered, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." ³⁸ And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him. ³⁹ And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.
16. As this chapter closes, we see two types of responses to Jesus.
17. We see those who denounced and called Jesus a sinner and we see this man who defended Jesus based on his healing.

18. He sums it up by saying in **John 9:33** "If this man were not from God, He could do nothing."
19. The Pharisees didn't know where Jesus came from and therefore dismissed Him.
20. This blind man also didn't know where Jesus came from but because He experienced a complete healing by Jesus, He not only concluded He was a prophet, but also from God.
21. Now as the chapter closes, we see the healed man with Jesus.
22. Remember after his healing he went back to see Jesus but He and His disciples had left.
23. He was then brought by his neighbors to the Pharisees.
24. After being "put out" of the synagogue, he now has a spiritual encounter with Jesus.
25. The narrative begins in verse 35 with *what Jesus heard*.

I. What Jesus Heard (v.35a)

Verse 35 begins, “Jesus *heard* that they had put him out.”

Jesus heard of the healed man’s excommunication by the Pharisees.

But He didn’t just hear it and feel pity for the man.

Verse 35 also tells us...

II. What Jesus Did (v.35b)

It says, “and finding him.”

In translating *and finding him*, it is important to note that some languages have several different words for “find.”

Sometimes the meaning is “to come upon something accidentally,” but in this particular context the implication is that Jesus, having heard about the man’s being expelled from the synagogue, went to find him.

That is, “looked for him and then found him.”¹

So John is indicating a search on Jesus’ part.

¹ Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of John*, Helps for translators; UBS handbook series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993). 317.

He didn't wait to see if He would run into Him. No, He searched for him and found him.

Chrysostom said, "The Jews cast him out of the Temple; the Lord of the Temple found him."²

Psalms 27:10 (NASB) For my father and my mother have forsaken me, But the Lord will take me up.

Just as Jesus initiated the blind man's healing, so He initiates His salvation.

Notice also in verse 35...

III. What Jesus Asked (v.35c)

After finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

Two important issues to note:

First, in Jesus searching and finding the man and then asking this important question reveals the sovereignty of God in salvation.

It's like **1 John 4:19 (NASB)** We love, because He first loved us.

² *The Gospel of John : Volume 2*, ed. William Barclay, lecturer in the University of Glasgow, The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000). 49.

It's like **John 1:43 (NASB)** where the apostle John says, "He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me."

Or **John 6:37 (NASB)** "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

Jesus says to His disciples in **John 15:16 (NASB)** "You did not choose Me but I chose you."

Spurgeon said, "You cannot look to Christ before He has looked to you. If you are willing to be saved, He gave you that will" (Effectual Calling, March 30, 1856).

If God did not take the initiative in salvation, no one would be saved, since sinners cannot seek Him on their own.³

Romans 3:10-12 sums up the sinner's inability.

Paul writes, "As it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; ¹¹ THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ¹² ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

The second issue has to do with the question.

³ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 412.

He asks, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

There are questions as to the correct rendering because the AV translates this, “Do you believe in the Son of God.”

Even though copiest changed ‘Son of Man’ to ‘Son of God’,...it is almost universally acknowledged that ‘Son of Man’ is original, not only because the earliest manuscripts support this reading, but also because it is hard to see why in this instance [they] would have introduced a harder reading.⁴

Also the rendering “Son of Man,” as John uses in his Gospel is inviting the man to put his trust in the one who is the revelation of God to man (*cf.* notes on 1:51; 3:13–14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; and especially Moloney, pp. 149–159).

Jesus himself is the Word incarnate, the one who uniquely reveals God.⁵

Notice that Jesus also used the personal pronoun “you” to emphasize the man’s need to respond; the question could be translated, “You ... do you believe in the Son of Man?”

⁴ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 376.

⁵ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 376.

not just as a miracle worker with power from God, but as Messiah.⁶

Notice in verse 36...

IV. What the Man Asked (v.36)

He answered, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”

The man’s reply revealed a heart divinely prepared to believe in Jesus.⁷

Using the word “Lord” did not mean He was referring to Him as deity but only that he was addressing Him as “Sir.”

Since the blind man had never seen Jesus (v. 7) nor met Him since he went to wash in the pool, he did not recognize Jesus at first as the One who healed him.⁸

So for him to ask, “Who is He, [sir]” was a request that the Son of Man be identified.⁹

⁶ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 412–413.

⁷ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 413.

⁸ John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997). Jn 9:36.

It's clear from the end of this verse that he is eager to believe in Jesus.

He has come to the end of his confidence in the traditional religious authorities.¹⁰

The word he used for "believe" (pistis) meant to "trust."

He asks that faith may find its object. His trust in Jesus is absolute.¹¹

The healed man receives an answer. Look at verse 37 and see...

V. What Jesus Said (v.37)

"Jesus said to Him, 'You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.'"

Jesus reveals Himself to the healed man just like He did to the Samaritan woman in **John 4:25-26 (NASB)**²⁵ The woman *said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He

⁹ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 376.

¹⁰ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 376.

¹¹ *The Gospel According to St. John Introduction and Notes on the Authorized Version*, ed. Brooke Foss Westcott and Arthur Westcott (London: J. Murray, 1908). 149.

who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." ²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am *He*."

R.C. Sproul says, "Jesus revealed Himself to the man and he went from seeing Jesus as a prophet to seeing Him as Messiah."¹²

Before a person is saved, He is blind to Christ and his sin.

But when Jesus reveals Himself to the unbelieving sinner, he believes.

Once Jesus reveals Himself to him something happens. Notice...

VI. What the Man Confesses and Does (v.38)

"And he said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshiped Him."

Confession in word and deed follows at once on the revelation. ¹³

Some consider this verse not to be an original part of John's Gospel, but rather a later addition connected with a baptismal liturgy.

¹² R.C. Sproul, *John* (Orlando: Reformation Trust, 2008). 182.

¹³ *The Gospel According to St. John Introduction and Notes on the Authorized Version*, ed. Brooke Foss Westcott and Arthur Westcott (London: J. Murray, 1908). 149.

It is true that the verse is omitted in more than one important Greek manuscript, but most commentators and translators consider it an integral part of John's Gospel. ¹⁴.

Without this verse we have no salvation of the healed man!

This is his confession!

And seeing him worship Jesus reveals that the eyes of the man's heart were opened, and he saw clearly who Jesus is. ¹⁵

This is always the inevitable results when Jesus reveals Himself.

And Jesus and Peter walked on the water, **Matthew 14:32-33 (NASB)** ³² When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. ³³ And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"

Preaching on this passage, Charles Spurgeon summed up the joy and delight the man must have felt at that moment:

¹⁴ Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of John*, Helps for translators; UBS handbook series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993). 318.

¹⁵ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 414.

Then, further, *he acted as a believer*: for “he worshipped him.” This proves how his faith had grown. I should like to ask you who are the people of God when you are happiest.... My happiest moments are when I am worshipping God, really adoring the Lord Jesus Christ.... It is the nearest approach to what it will be in heaven, where, day without night, they offer perpetual adoration unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Hence, what a memorable moment it was for this man when he worshipped Christ! Now, if Christ was not God, that man was all idolater, a man-worshipper.... If Christ was not God, we are not Christians; we are deceived dupes, we are idolaters, as bad as the heathen whom we now pity. It is making a man into a God if Christ be not God. But, blessed be his holy name, he is God; and we feel that it is the supreme delight of our being to worship him. We cannot veil our face with our wings, for we have none; but we do veil them with his own robe of righteousness whenever we approach him. We cannot cover our feet with our wings, as the angels do; but we do take his blood and his righteousness both as a covering for our feet, and as wings with which we fly up to him; and though as yet we have no crowns to cast at his dear feet, yet, if we have any honor, any good repute, any grace, anything that is comely, anything that is honest, we lay it all at his feet, and cry, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth’s sake.” (“A Pressed Man Yielding to Christ,” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* Vol.

46 (Pasadena, Tex.: Pilgrim Publications, 1977),
46:142. Italics in original.)¹⁶

After the healed man confesses his belief in Jesus and worships Him, we hear...

VII. What Jesus Says to the Pharisees (vv.39-40)

Listen to...

A. His Statement (v.39)

“And Jesus said, ‘For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind.’”

This verse at first appears to contradict **John 3:17 (NASB)** "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

We hear other verses like this one...

John 12:47 (NASB) "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

Jesus came, according to **Luke 19:10 (NASB)** “to seek and to save that which was lost.”

What did Jesus mean in John 9:39 then?

¹⁶ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 415.

It means that saving some, nevertheless, involves condemning others.¹⁷

This verse does not contradict the others. It compliments them.

They are two sides of the same reality.

To reject Jesus' peace is to receive His punishment; to reject His grace is to receive His justice; to reject His mercy is to receive His wrath; to reject His love is to receive His anger; to reject His forgiveness is to receive His judgment.

While Jesus came to save, not to condemn (cf. 12:47; Luke 19:10), those who reject His gospel condemn themselves, and subject themselves to judgment (John 3:18, 36).¹⁸

The second part of verse 39 reveals that spiritual sight comes only to those who acknowledge that they do not see, who confess their spiritual blindness and their need for the Light of the World.

On the other hand, those who think they see on their own apart from Christ delude themselves, and will remain blind.

¹⁷ John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997). Jn 9:39.

¹⁸ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 416.

They will not come to the Light, because they love the darkness and do not want their evil deeds to be exposed (3:19).¹⁹

In verse 40 we hear...

B. Their Response (v.40)

John says, “Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, ‘We are not blind too, are we?’”

Their question reveals their spiritual condition.

The form of their question in the Greek expects a negative answer.

Surely Jesus could not be suggesting that they were spiritually blind like the common people who did not know the Law (7:49)?

After all, they were the elite, self-proclaimed experts in the Law and devout disciples of Moses (9:28).

As the recognized religious leaders of Israel, they were confident that they did not lack spiritual perception.

But the reality was that they were blind to spiritual truth, even though they did not know it.

¹⁹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 416.

And by refusing to admit their blindness, they confirmed the darkened condition of their hearts and increased their hatred for the only One who could save them from Satan and their damning sin.²⁰

In verse 41 we hear...

C. His Response (v.41)

“Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.’”

In other words, if they knew their lostness and darkness and cried out for spiritual light, they would no longer be guilty of the sin of unbelief in Christ.

But satisfied that their darkness was light, and continuing in rejection of Christ, their sin remained.²¹

CONCLUSION

1. What about you?

²⁰ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 417.

²¹ John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997). Jn 9:41.

2. Do you see your sin and your need of Christ?
3. The place to go to see Christ is the cross.
4. His death and resurrection is pictured beautifully in the Lord's Supper.
5. As we participate in Communion this morning, examine yourself to see whether you be in the faith.
6. Let's pray.
7. The Lord's Supper.