

HEAR MINISTRIES

SERMON FOR **SUNDAY, March 15th, 2026**

Text: John 9:1-41

Sermon recorded by: Tammy Springer

Let us Pray: Father, we come this morning to hear Your truth and how it applies in our lives. Clear our thoughts and minds and open our hearts to receive what You have for each one of us. Help us to really LISTEN to Your word and not just hear words today. Holy Spirit lead, guide and direct us in all Truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Look around you. (Give people a minute to look around) What do you see? Maybe people, stained glass windows, the cross. **Now, look again more carefully. What do you see this time that you didn't see before?**

The world we live in is experienced by our overall perceptions. By what we take in with our eyes and ears, and by what we filter out. **All too often, we do not see things as they really are, but by how we perceive them to be.** The sad thing about this is that we all too often see only what we choose to see.

This morning, **in our Gospel reading**, we encounter the disciples walking down a city street with Jesus when they meet up with a man who has been blind since birth. During the course of the account, this **man is transformed from a humble blind beggar to a fearless evangelist. How? By his encounter with Jesus.** By his coming to see the one thing that Jesus wants for all of us to see. Let's find out what that is.

This man, once again, has been blind from birth. In those days, his fate was sealed, making him a beggar on the streets of Jerusalem. To make it worse, most of the people he ran into would assume he did something wrong to "earn" his blindness. Either he or his parents must have done something wrong. Someone must have sinned. He would have endured many a whisper and wise-cracks through the years. Even Jesus' disciples wonder what this man did wrong, or what his parents did wrong, that caused him to be blind.

I wonder, sometimes, if things have really changed that much. At our worst we still assume that those who succeed in life are somehow more blessed by God, and those who

suffer do so because of their sin. **At our worst, we still judge other people based on these assumptions, including ourselves.**

But **Jesus sees things differently**. He tells his disciples that **there is more to life than meets the eye**. This particular man was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. **God had a plan and a purpose for his life that no one could see until Jesus came along. I wonder if that's true for us, too???**

In a downtown part of Los Angeles there was a homeless man, sitting across the street from an artist's studio. The artist saw him and thought he would make an interesting portrait study. So, from a distance, he painted this man sitting by the road with a discouraged look in his downcast eyes. It was a sad, almost defeated, look on his face. When he was finished, he took the portrait over to the beggar so he could look at it.

"Who is that?" the beggar asked. The portrait faintly resembled him, but it showed a person of dignity, sitting upright, with bright eyes, a determined look on his face. The beggar said to the artist, *"Is that me? I don't look like that."*

But the artist replied, *"That is the person I see in you."*

That is **true for the artist called Jesus**, too. **He sees something in us that we don't always see in ourselves**. And He wants to restore our dignity, to forgive our sin, to bring us back to God. **Jesus came so that we might truly see: See who we are, and see who others are, as God sees them.**

Today's Gospel reading is about much more than physical sight. In this account, the healing of the man's physical sight is told in just two verses. **Just two verses of a 41-verse account**. Helping this man to physically see, in other words, was the easy part for Jesus.

It is what took place around this healing that created such an issue. After this man's sight was restored, the people argued about whether this man really was born blind or not. **They refused to see that a miracle had occurred**. They'd rather blind themselves to the truth than have to re-think the world and their place in it. **They couldn't see this miracle because they were unwilling to believe it.**

The **Pharisees**, on the other hand, were less concerned about whether the miracle really happened or not. Their **concern was that it happened on the Sabbath day**. They, too, were unable to see this miracle because they were blinded by their rules and regulations.

And then there were the **blind man's parents**. They were **so afraid of being kicked out of the synagogue for being followers of Jesus that they refused to say what happened to their son**. Let him speak for himself, they told the Pharisees. Their **fear** blinded them from seeing and celebrating the miracle for which they had probably been praying.

So, **is there ANYONE in this account who is NOT blind in some way???** By the end of the Gospel reading **there will be one**, and that is the man born blind! He is an amazing man. But even he must grow in his faith before he can see and believe who Jesus truly is.

After his physical sight was restored, he was brought before the Pharisees, who pestered him with all kinds of questions. He shared, openly and honestly, what happened. And, when **they asked him what he thought about Jesus**, he said to them, "*He is a Prophet.*" You see? He was beginning to see, but he was not there yet.

Later, after his own parents abandoned him, the man who was blind was brought before the Pharisees once again. They demanded he tell them that Jesus is a sinner! His answer? "*I do not know whether He is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.*"

Well, the Pharisees didn't like his answer, of course. They ed him out of the synagogue, just as they threatened to do to his parents. And, perhaps, this suffering was part of the process toward his seeing who Jesus truly was. **God can use even our most difficult experiences to help us and believe in Him.**

In fact, Jesus told them the blind man's inability to see was not a consequence of sin, either of the man's or his parents', or his ancestors at all! The blindness was not about sin. **The man's blindness will testify to the glory of God, from age to age, across time.**

So, what about us? What does Jesus want us to see to believe today? Where are our blind spots? What is God's amazing grace doing in our lives right now? These questions all take us to the heart of today's Gospel reading. In John's writing we experience Jesus' encounter with a blind man. Jesus helps the man to see who he is, and who Jesus is. A man born blind, a beggar, who is now a fearless evangelist! **A model for us all! He now sees who he is, who Jesus is, and he is helping those around him to see with new eyes.**

When Martin Luther died, a scrap of paper was found in his pocket. On it was written, "*We are beggars, this is true.*" After all that Martin Luther had taught and done throughout his life, this was the truth that he clung to as he lay dying. We are beggars, this is true. We are all blind sinners. It is also true that we are loved, forgiven and redeemed by Jesus Christ

our Lord. **If there is one thing we can know, it is that though we once were blind, in Christ we now can see!**

As we sang in the words of our opening hymn:

*Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.*

May we see ourselves through the grace-filled eyes of Jesus. And may we help others to see themselves through those same loving eyes.

Amen.