

FOR OVER A HALF A CENTURY,,, **MARTIN** WAS TOTALLY BLIND. HIS ENTIRE WORLD WAS JUST A HUGE “**BLACK**” HOLE. HE LITERALLY HAD TO “**FEEL**” HIS WAY,,, THROUGH HIS LIFE IN DARKNESS. THEN,,, A SURGEON OPERATED ON **MARTIN’S** EYES AND FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE,,, **MARTIN** COULD SEE. HE SHOUTED;

*I NEVER DREAMED THAT “**YELLOW**” IS SO **YELLOW**,,, BUT,,, **RED**,,, THAT’S MY FAVORITE COLOR. OUR SUNRISES,,, IN THE MORNING AND OUR SUNSETS IN THE EVENING,,, ARE SO BEAUTIFUL. AT NIGHT,,, I CAN SEE THE MOON AND I CAN COUNT THE STARS IN THE SKY. BEING BLIND,,, I COULD NEVER HAVE KNOWN,,, HOW WONDERFUL AND BEAUTIFUL EVERYTHING IS.*

DID ANYONE EVER ASK YOU TO CLOSE YOUR EYES,,, THEN TAKE YOU BY YOUR HAND AND LEAD YOU AROUND? I’LL BET THAT WOULD BE AWKWARD!

NOW,,, NOT BEING BLIND,,, I CAN’T IMAGINE WHAT IT’D BE LIKE,,, **NOT TO BE ABLE; TO SEE THE ONES THAT I CARE ABOUT AND THAT I LOVE,,, TO READ THE BOOKS THAT I LIKE,,, TO DRIVE MY CAR,,, TO BE ABLE TO CELEBRATE MASS,,, ON THIS HOLY ALTAR,,, OR,,, TO EXPERIENCE THE TYPES OF WONDEROUS AND BEAUTIFUL THINGS THAT **MARTIN** WAS ABLE TO SEE AFTER HIS SURGERY.**

WORST OF ALL,,, I CAN’T IMAGINE WHAT IT’D BE LIKE,,, TO LIVE MY LIFE IN TOTAL DARKNESS.

BUT,,, THERE’S SOMETHING ELSE,,, A LOT WORSE,,, THAN PHYSICAL BLINDNESS.

I’M TALKING ABOUT **SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS!**

NOT KNOWING; **WHERE YOUR LIFE’S GOING,,, IF YOU’RE RIGHTEOUS WITH GOD,,, OR,,, IF YOU’RE GOING TO HEAVEN WHEN YOU DIE.**

YES,,, SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS,,, IS MORE TRAGIC,,,
THAN PHYSICAL BLINDNESS,,, AND IT'S MORE
TRAGIC,,, BECAUSE;

IT'S ETERNAL BLINDNESS!

IN THIS WEEKS GOSPEL,,, WE SEE JESUS HEAL AN
ORDINARY MAN,,, BORN PHYSICALLY AND
SPIRITUALLY BLIND SINCE BIRTH,,, AND HOW THIS
MAN,,, HIS FAMILY,,, FRIENDS,,, NEIGHBORS AND THE
PHARISEES,,, REACTED TO JESUS' MIRACLE.

THERE'S AN OLD SAYING THAT GOES LIKE THIS;

***“THERE'S NONE AS BLIND,,,
AS THOSE WHO WON'T SEE.”***

AND IT APPEARS TO COME TRUE IN TODAY'S GOSPEL.

IMAGINE,,, THAT WE'RE IN JERUSALEM,,, JUST
BEFORE THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN,,, AND
JESUS HAD JUST HAD A SERIOUS CONFRONTATION
WITH THE PHARISEES,,, OVER WHAT **THEY THOUGHT**
WAS AN OUTRAGEOUS CLAIM,,, WHEN JESUS SAID:

***I TELL YOU THE TRUTH,,, BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS
BORN,,, I AM!”***

THE PHARISEES WERE INFURIATED AT HEARING,,,
WHAT THEY BELIEVED,,, WAS GROSS HERESY!

BUT,,, IT WAS TRUE!

THE PHARISEES DIDN'T BELIEVE JESUS' CLAIM,,, SO
THEY BEGAN TO MAKE PREPARATIONS TO STONE
HIM TO DEATH.

BUT JESUS WAS FULLY AWARE,,, THAT HIS PASSION
TIME,,, HAD NOT YET COME YET,,, SO HE SLIPPED
AWAY FROM THE TEMPLE GROUNDS.

FROM THAT MOMENT ON,,, THE PHARISEES KEPT A
VERY CLOSE WATCH ON JESUS,,,

***TRYING TO CATCH HIM,,, BY USING ANY FALSE EXCUSE
THAT THEY COULD,, TO BRING AN OFFICIAL CHARGE
AGAINST HIM.***

AS JESUS WALKED AWAY FROM THE TEMPLE,,, HE
SAW A MAN,,, WHO HAD BEEN BLIND SINCE BIRTH,,,
BEGGING,,, IN ORDER TO EARN A LIVING.

THE DISCIPLES,,, LIKE US SOMETIMES,,, WERE ANXIOUS TO ASK JESUS,,, THE TYPE OF QUESTION TO WHICH,,, THERE ARE SOMETIMES NO CLEAR ANSWERS.

THEY ASKED JESUS;

*RABBI,,, WHO SINNED,,, THIS MAN,,,
OR HIS PARENTS,,, THAT HE WAS BORN BLIND?*

THIS HAS BEEN A HUGE TOPIC OF SPECULATION,,, THROUGHOUT THE AGES. JOB WRESTLED WITH IT,,, AND THE PROPHETS AGONIZED OVER IT,,, SO,,, IT'S NO WONDER,,, THAT THE MYSTERY OF THIS ILLNESS WOULD BECOME A THEOLOGICAL MYSTERY.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? ASKED THE DISCIPLES. THE MAN HIMSELF,,, OR,,, HIS PARENTS?

THE JEWISH RABBI'S HAD THE IDEA,,, THAT;
IF A PREGNANT WOMAN SINNED,,, THERE COULD BE A DEFORMITY IN THE CHILD,,, EVEN BLINDNESS.

NOW,,, THIS MAKES SOME SENSE,,, BECAUSE,,, IT'S TRUE! THERE IS OFTEN,,, A RELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN **CAUSE** AND **EFFECT**; **THE CAUSE,,, IS SIN!**
AND THE EFFECT,,, IS OUR SUFFERING!

- 1. ALTHOUGH FOR US,,, SIN HAS PRODUCED A SUFFERING WORLD,,, THE BIBLE ALLOWS US,,, TO HAVE A COMMON CONNECTION,,, BETWEEN SIN AND SUFFERING,,, DUE TO THE FALL OF MAN!
BUT IT ALSO REFUSES TO PERMIT THE RULE,,, TO BE SET IN STONE.*

A PERSONS SUFFERING,,, IS NOT AUTOMATICALLY DUE TO THEIR PERSONAL SIN.

THEN JESUS ANSWERED THE DISCIPLES QUESTION. *NO,,, HE SAID. IT WASN'T THE SIN OF THIS MAN,,, OR,,, OF HIS PARENTS. THIS HAPPENED,,, SO THAT THE WORK OF GOD,,, MIGHT BE DISPLAYED IN HIS LIFE!*

JESUS MADE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR,,, THAT HE WAS THERE TO REVEAL THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING AND THE WORK OF GOD,,, THROUGH THIS MAN.

JESUS WAS THERE; TO REVEAL THE GLORY OF GOD,,,
AND HIS POWER.

**JESUS KNEW THAT GIVING SIGHT TO THE BLIND
BEGGAR,,, WOULD BE ONE OF THE SIGNS,,, THAT
WOULD VALIDATE HIS CLAIM,,,**

THAT HE IS THE SON OF GOD.

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD,,, HE SAID.

**AND HE PROVED IT,,, *BY CHANGING THE DARKNESS OF
THIS MAN'S WORLD,,, INTO LIGHT.***

**THIS ACT,,, WAS SYMBOLIC OF JESUS' GREATER
WORK,,, WHERE HE WOULD RELEASE ALL MANKIND
FROM THE POWER OF SIN AND DARKNESS,,, BY**

HIS ATONING WORK ON THE CROSS!

**THE HEALING OF THE MAN'S BLINDNESS,,, WAS A
MIRACLE!**

**THE MUDPACK OF CLAY WHICH JESUS SPAT ON AND
SMEARED ON THE BLIND MANS EYES,,, REVEALED
ONCE AGAIN,,, GOD'S CREATIVE WORK,,, FROM THE
BEGINNING,,, AS MAN WAS MADE FROM THE DUST OF
THE EARTH,,, IT WAS THE SAME GOD THAT WAS
GOING TO MAKE HIM WHOLE,,, AND IT WAS THE
SAME GOD,,, THAT WAS GOING TO DEMONSTRATE;**

***THAT HEALING,,, CAN ONLY COME FROM THE LORD
HIMSELF!***

THEN JESUS SAID;

GO,,, WASH IN THE POOL OF SILOAM.

**IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS CURE,,, THE BLIND MAN
HIMSELF,,, HAD TO "*CO-OPERATE*" WITH JESUS!**

**HE HAD TO SHOW HIS FAITH,,, IN THE LORD'S WORDS
THROUGH HIS OBEDIENCE OF FAITH IN HIM,,, AND**

THE BLIND MAN LISTENED!

**SCRIPTURE SAYS; HE WENT,,, HE WASHED,,, AND HE
CAME HOME,,, ABLE TO SEE.**

THE BEGGARS DARKNESS WAS TURNED INTO LIGHT!

**THE PHARISEES WEREN'T OPEN TO JESUS,,, OR HIS
MIRACLES.**

BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF,,, THEY REFUSED,,, TO ACCEPT WHO HE WAS AND BEING AN UNBELIEVING,,, QUESTIONING LOT,,, THEY DECIDED TO GRILL THIS BLIND MAN,,, TO TRY TO CATCH JESUS DOING SOMETHING WRONG.

THEIR ATTITUDE SEEMED TO BE:

DON'T BOTHER US WITH THE FACTS OUR MINDS ARE MADE UP

ISN'T IT INCREDIBLE? THESE MEN,,, WHO REVERED THE SCRIPTURES,,, AND WHO WERE PASSIONATE FOR GOOD WORKS,,, REFUSED TO HUMBLE THEMSELVES SO THEY COULD SEE,,,

THAT JESUS,,, WAS TRULY,,, THE PROMISED MESSIAH!

THE NEIGHBORS,,, WHO HAD FINALLY REALIZED THAT THIS WAS TRULY,,, THE MAN THAT THEY KNEW AS A BLIND MAN,,, BROUGHT THE BLIND MAN TO THE PHARISEES AND THEY SAW,,, THAT HE WAS HEALED.

NOW,,, YOU'D THINK,,, THAT SEEING THIS MIRACLE,,, THEY'D HUMBLE THEMSELVES AND PRAISE JESUS.

BUT NO,,,

THE PHARISEES WERE FILLED WITH DARKNESS.

WHAT THEY SAW,,, WAS THAT JESUS DID HEAL THE BLIND MAN,,, *BUT,,, HE DID IT ON THE SABBATH,,, AND THAT WAS ONLY PERMISSABLE,,, WHEN LIFE WAS IN DANGER.* AND ALSO,,, *JESUS HAD WORKED,,, IN A MANNER THAT WAS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN,,, BY MAKING MUD,,, ON THE SABBATH!*

SOME SAID; *THIS MAN IS NOT FROM GOD,,, BECAUSE HE DOES NOT KEEP THE SABBATH!* HOW PETTY?

THEY COULDN'T FACE THE FACT THAT GOD,,, WHO HAD GIVEN THEM THE SABBATH,,, MIGHT HAVE OTHER WONDERFUL THINGS TO REVEAL TO THEM.

AFTER BEING GRILLED BY THE PHARISEES,,, THE BLIND MAN REFUSED TO CHANGE HIS STORY.

HE SAID: *IT WAS ME,,, THAT JESUS HEALED,,, AND IT HAPPENED,,, AS YOU WERE TOLD. I DID WHAT JESUS TOLD ME TO DO,,, AND THEN,,, I COULD SEE.*

THE PHARISEES DIDN'T LIKE HIS TESTIMONY,, SO THEY TRIED TO GET HIS PARENTS TO COLLABORATE THEIR FACTS.

INSTEAD,, THEY TOLD THE PHARISEES THAT THEIR SON WAS OF AGE AND THEY COULDN'T SPEAK FOR HIM. *PLEASE UNDERSTAND,, THE PARENTS WEREN'T STANDING UP FOR JESUS,, THEY WERE JUST PASSING THE BUCK,,* BACK TO THEIR SON.

HIS PARENTS,, HAD COME TO A DECISIVE MOMENT IN THIER LIVES,, JUST AS WE ALL MAY HAVE TO,, AT SOME POINT IN OUR LIVES.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,, TELLING THE TRUTH,, **HAD CONSEQUANCES THAT COULD HAVE BEEN TERRIBLE IN THOSE DAYS,, JUST,, AS THEY COULD TODAY!**

THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES,, DECIDED THAT ANYONE WHO ACCEPTED JESUS AS THEIR MESSIAH,, WOULD BE EXPELLED FROM THE SYNAGOGUE. THAT MEANT THAT THEY WOULD BE TOTALLY CUT-OFF FROM THE RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL LIFE OF ISRAEL.

THE PHARISEES THREW THE BLIND MAN OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE AND JESUS,, HEARING OF THIS,, FOUND HIM AND ASKED HIM;

DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE SON OF MAN?

THE BLIND MAN SAID; *I DO BELIEVE LORD!*

THEN JESUS SAID:

I CAME INTO THIS WORLD FOR JUDGEMENT,, SO THAT THOSE WHO DO NOT SEE,, MIGHT SEE,, AND THOSE WHO DO SEE,, MIGHT BECOME BLIND.

THE BLIND MAN HAD LOST HIS POSITION,, IN HIS RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY,, BUT,, BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH,, HE RECEIVED HIS SIGHT,, AND,, HE WAS ASSURED A HOME IN HEAVEN.

SOME OF THE PHARISEES HEARD JESUS' WORDS AND SAID; *SURELY,, WE ARE NOT ALSO BLIND,, ARE WE?*

JESUS RESPONDED; *IF YOU WERE BLIND,, YOU WOULD HAVE NO SIN; BUT NOW,, YOU ARE SAYING,, WE SEE,, SO,, YOUR SIN REMAINS.*

THOSE WHO PRETENDED TO SEE,,, BECAME TOTALLY BLIND TO THE SIGNS MADE BY JESUS. THEY WERE THE SAME ONES,,, WHO PRETENDED **THAT THE BLIND MAN,,, WAS BORN BECAUSE OF SIN** AND THEIR REFUSAL,,, TO ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS,,, MADE THEM THE REAL SINNERS.

AS FOR THE BLIND MAN; HIS DISCIPLESHIP WAS COSTLY!

WE TOO MUST DECIDE,,, IF WE'RE WILLING TO ACCEPT THE COST,,, OF FOLLOWING THE LORD! THE PHARISEES WERE HUMAN,,, LIKE YOU AND ME. THEY HAD GOOD INTENTIONS,,, THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE DOING THE RIGHT THING,,, BUT THEY WERE BLIND,,, AND DIDN'T KNOW IT!

THE TRUTH IS; **EVERY ONE OF US,,, WERE BORN INTO THIS WORLD,,, SPIRITUALLY BLIND!** BUT,,, THAT'S NOT THE WORST SIN,,, IN THE WORLD.

THINKING WE CAN GET ALONG WITHOUT JESUS; IS! THE BLIND MAN HAD HIS OPPORTUNITY TO BELIEVE IN JESUS AND HE ACCEPTED IT! HIS PARENTS AND THE PHARISEES,,, WERE GIVEN THE SAME CHANCE,,, AND THEY REJECTED IT!

NOW,,, IT'S YOUR OPPORTUNITY! JUST LIKE THE BLIND MAN,,, IN THIS STORY,,, YOU'RE INVITED,,, TO BELIEVE IN AND ACCEPT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!

WHAT'S YOUR CHOICE GOING TO BE?

MY BELOVED,,, IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO,,, I ENCOURAGE YOU,,, TO TAKE THIS MOMENT,,, TO INVITE JESUS INTO YOUR LIFE,,, BECAUSE,,, BELIEVING,,, IS SEEING JESUS,,, STANDING RIGHT BY YOUR SIDE,,, WAITING FOR YOU TO ACCEPT HIM,,, **AS YOUR LORD AND MESSIAH.**

I PRAY,,, THAT TODAY,,, YOU WILL RESPOND,,, LIKE THE BLIND MAN DID,,, AND ACCEPT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST INTO YOUR HEARTS BY FAITH!

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER,,, AND OF THE SON,,, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1,768 Wds, 7 Pgs