

Sermon outline notes: John Chapter 9—A Blindness cured and exposed!

Introduction

It's a sad thing, of course, to be blind, but much sadder to be blind and unaware of it. That's what this chapter is about. On the surface of it, it is just one more miracle, the fifth that John has recorded in his Gospel and the third involving a healing—this time the healing of a blind man from birth. But underneath this story, as in all the miracles that John records, a deeper issue is being raised: a blindness, not to physical light, but to spiritual light. A blindness not of the eye, but of the mind and heart, and most tragic of all a blindness which those who are afflicted by it refuse to acknowledge.

1) A blindness cured vv 1–7

- Story opens with a theological problem—whose sin is responsible for the man's suffering?
- Jesus categorically denies the theory that all suffering is divine retribution and judgement.
- Enshrined within the narrative detailed in John's Gospel, there is always a spiritual symbolism. In chapter 8 v.12 Jesus made a remarkable public statement—"I am the light of the world". This healing has to be understood in the context of that claim.

John sees a symbolism in the directions Jesus gives; the blind man receives two things, an anointing and a washing. Note the pool is named Siloam, that means 'sent'.

2) A blindness exposed vv 8–34

- One consequence of the strange way that Jesus performed this miracle was that the man actually received his sight some distance away from his immediate relatives and neighbours.

- There are several attempts to undermine the miracle—he's not the same man as was blind; he was not really blind at all.

There is a superb sarcasm and ironic humour from John the writer in the use of the verb 'to know'. John tells us of what people said they knew but really didn't know at all, and what one man said he didn't, but really did know. (See verses 20, 21, 24, 25, 29, 30).

- In verse 31 the blind man plays the religious leaders at their own game when he spots the illogicality of it all.

3) A blindness judged vv 35–41

- John is presenting Jesus as 'The Great Divide'. All who meet him seal their destiny in their encounter with him.
- Notice how the healed man's response to and understanding of Jesus changes as the story progresses, (compare and contrast v 11, 17, 30, 33, 36–38).
- However the religious leaders could not recognise who Jesus was, and they were not prepared to acknowledge their need for spiritual illumination.

Conclusion

We do not have to wait until the end of the world to hear God's judgement on us. Judgement is implicit here under the word of God. It's implicit in your attitude to Jesus.