

International Conversation Cafe

New Testament: Jesus Heals a Blind Man, John 9

In Jesus' day, blind people were beggars, dependent on the kindness of others to exist because they could not work. If the best people in society were pictured inside a circle, the blind would be on the outside edges, not important and not valuable.

Jesus, however, valued each person, no matter how they appeared to society as a whole or what kind of contribution they made.

John 9 Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who was blind. He had been blind since he was born. Jesus' disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned? Was this man born blind because he sinned? Or did his parents sin?"

"It isn't because this man sinned," said Jesus. "It isn't because his parents sinned. This happened so that God's work could be shown in his life. While it is still day, we must do the work of the One who sent me. Night is coming. Then no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

After he said this, he spit on the ground. He made some mud with the spit. Then he put the mud on the man's eyes.

"Go," he told him. "Wash in the Pool of Siloam." Siloam means Sent.

So the man went and washed. And he came home able to see.

His neighbors and those who had earlier seen him begging asked questions. "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" they asked.

Some claimed that he was.

Others said, "No. He only looks like him."

But the man who had been blind kept saying, "I am the man."

"Then how were your eyes opened?" they asked.

He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed. Then I could see."

"Where is this man?" they asked him.

"I don't know," he said.

The story continues with the religious leaders questioning the man Jesus healed. The leaders had a difficult time accepting Jesus as one sent from God because he did not conform to their rules about the Sabbath (a day of rest and worship). They also were jealous of Jesus' following. In the end, the leaders kicked the former blind man out of their synagogue (place of worship). Jesus knew about this, found the man, and asked him,

"Do you believe in the Son of Man?" (a descriptive term for the king the Jews looked for.)
"Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."
Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."

Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.

Discussion

1. *Retell the story in your own words.*
2. *People of that day believed that physical deformities happened because parents sinned or the person himself. Do you think that people today feel this way? What stories have you heard?*
3. *Keeping in mind the whole story, how was the man's blindness used to show God's work?*
4. *Jesus called himself, "the Light of the world." What do you think he meant by that?*
5. *Jesus accepted worship from the former blind man. What is significant about this?*
6. *How does Jesus bring light to your life?*



Assereto, Gioacchino. Christ healing the blind man, c. 1640. Oil on canvas. 97x138 cm. Carnegie Museum of Art. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania