

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

JOHN 8:31-9:41

At each stop on his tours famous escape artist, Harry Houdini, boasted that there had never been a lock he couldn't pick, or a jail from which he couldn't escape.

Houdini dared anyone to prove otherwise.

A London bank hoping to show-off its vault's state-of-the-art locking system took up the challenge. Houdini was locked in the vault and had 3½ minutes to escape.

As with all his dangerous stunts Houdini had a stipulation written into his contract that before starting, he could kiss his wife good-bye... *just in case*.

But Houdini would get more than a kiss.

While lips to lips Mrs. Houdini would pass Harry a small piece of wire that he would use to pick the lock.

Houdini worked feverishly... After a minute he didn't hear the familiar clicking of turning tumblers... After two minutes there was still no sound... By this point the great Houdini had broken out in an intense sweat...

Would this be the end of his career? Had he finally met his match? As he pulled a rag from his pocket to wipe the sweat off his forehead he leaned against the door... it opened. Houdini never heard the click of the tumblers because the door had never been locked.

And this is the problem with many of us...

Jesus has freed us from bondage. The power of the cross has broken our chains. Satan is defeated.

We should be free. The reason we're not is that we've chosen to believe a lie rather than trust in the truth. As Jesus teaches, **it's the truth that sets us free.**

We continue in Chapter 8, verse 31, **"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed."** To **"abide"** means **"to trust or rest."** Here's a helpful word picture...

Lying on a hammock isn't like sitting on a stoop. You see a stoop and you take a sit - *but you're still in control.* You can jump off a stoop at a moment's notice.

But lie in a hammock and you lose yourself. You lose control. The hammock holds you. It keeps you. It's a place to lay back and rest, relax, lean, stay... This is to abide. Think of the words of Jesus as a hammock. Rest in His promises. Release yourself to His control...

Real disciples abide in Jesus and in His Word.

Verse 32, **"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."** Truth sets us free because it is deception that enslaves us. People submit to slavery when they believe they have no other alternative.

Lies are the chains of bondage.

Jesus tells us the truth, and if we believe His words enough to follow them they lead to abundant life. Folks get enslaved when they seek truth apart from Jesus.

Remember Jesus is teaching in the Jewish Temple. His audience is two-fold - *His own disciples* and *the Jews who are listening on*. Here the Jews chime in...

“They answered Him, “We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, ‘You will be made free’?”

Their pride and national patriotism swelled up inside them. They were Abraham’s kids! In essence they say, “*You can’t free us, for we’ve never been slaves.*”

But how could they make that statement? What about the 400 years they had spend in Egypt?

About 600 years prior to this moment in the Temple, Babylon had sacked Jerusalem and took the Jews captive to Babel. They were in bondage 70 years.

Since then Israel had been a province of Persia - then Greece. And even as this conversation unfolded a battalion of Roman legionnaires occupied a fortress on the Temple Mount a few yards from where they stood.

For the last six centuries Israel had been a political puppet at best. They were a slave to their own pride.

“Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, *whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.*” And Jesus exposes the real bondage - it’s *spiritual slavery*.

I’m sure you’ve heard the line, “*Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage...*” Real prison cells are made of faithlessness, fear, tainted perspectives, worry, foolishness, deception, disobedience, pride.

Each time you give-in to sin it's harder to say "no" the next time. You weaken your resistance until you end up with the backbone of a jellyfish. These Jews were slaves to their own sin and weaknesses.

The prisons of the soul are created when we believe and act on lies. It's the truth about me, and you, and God that sets us free! When a man sees the truth that in Christ forgiveness and victory over sin are possible; then he comes on line to experience true freedom.

Jesus adds verse 35, "And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

A slave can please his master, but he can never obtain *family status* and a permanent place in his master's house. Only a son knows he's a part of the family, come what may. And only Jesus, God's Son, can give this kind of assurance to God's people.

When you become a Christian you're "in Christ." God treats you just as He does Jesus. *That's real freedom!*

"If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed!"

In verse 37 Jesus says, "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do

this.” Jesus says there’s a difference between *pedigree* and *parentage*. You might have a person’s DNA, but that doesn’t mean you were raised by him.

And this was true of the Jews. They had Abraham’s DNA, but after that their resemblance to him ceased.

They certainly didn’t have his faith.

Jesus tells them, **“You do the deeds of your father.”**

And He was about to identify the father who raised them, when they get in an ugly dig... **“Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father - God.”** The Jewish leaders heard of Mary’s divine conception and Jesus’ virgin birth - but they didn’t believe. Now they’re casting aspersions on the legitimacy of Jesus’ birth. They hurl an ugly insult.

It was pretty tacky for a group of distinguished priests to resort to denigrating a person's mother.

“Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.”

Remember this is the claim to deity Jesus often used. Human beings don’t exist before their birth.

No other human had come from God. But Jesus pre-existed before His birth. He had divine origins.

“Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.” And here Jesus lowers the boom. You could say, *He drops the mic!*

The Jews have a father all right... Jesus says, “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.” Jesus knew the devil firsthand. He’d been dealing with him for a long, long time.

Satan was “*a murderer from the beginning.*” Humans are made in God’s image. Thus, to kill a human being is to mar God’s image. This is the devil’s motive.

Jesus continues speaking of Satan, He says, “When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” Satan is skilled at spinning a lie, and the Jews were just like him. The Jews were the spitting image of their father. The devil was a liar and murderer from the start. The first human homicide wasn’t Cain and Abel. It occurred earlier...

In the Garden of Eden the devil tried to snuff out Adam and Eve - spiritually as well as physically.

His weapon was deception. God told the first couple not to eat the forbidden fruit lest they die. But Satan countered with an outright lie, “*you will not surely die.*”

Satan is “*the father of lies.*” In the Hebrew language the phrase, “*the father of*” means “*the originator of.*” Satan was the first to think of twisting the truth.

The devil doesn't play by the rules. His temptations are potent because they contain elements of truth laced with lies. He’s the master of the half-truths.

Paul warns us in Ephesians 6:11, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” He’s wily, subtle, tricky, deadly.

The devil is a liar and murderer. And the Jews were acting just like him. During the feast they’d entertained fake news about Jesus, and had plotted to kill Him.

Verse 45, “But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.” They were so use to dealing in lies, they didn’t recognize the truth when Jesus spoke it to them.

He continues “Which of you convicts Me of sin?” The answer was no one! “And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?” Jesus is pointing out a contradiction, *You can’t deny Me, but you won’t believe Me!*

“He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God. Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?”

Earlier they try to discredit Jesus by insulting His mother - *now they use racial slurs and blasphemy...*

Samaritans were interracial - Jewish blood crossed with Gentile blood. The term was an insult to a Jew...

And to accuse Jesus, God’s Holy One, of having a demon was absolutely horrendous. *Passed the pale.*

Verse 49, “Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges. Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.”

Jesus responds to these insults with a bold claim. He must be God, for He assumes the right to grant eternal life. *“If anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.”* **By the day’s end, not everyone believed in Jesus, but no one was confused about His claims.**

Verse 52, “Then the Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.’ The Jews revered Abraham and the prophets just below the angels. Abraham was called “a friend of God.” He was the father of their race.

Yet both Abraham and the prophets were subject to death - *how can Jesus grant eternal life?* That would mean Jesus was greater than their father Abraham...

They ask Him, “Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Whom do You make Yourself out to be?” Jesus answered, “If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, ‘I do not know Him,’ I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word.”

And here Jesus drops another bombshell...

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad. Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” The Jews

question Jesus, He was not yet fifty years old, yet He saw Abraham who lived 2000 years before him. *How could that possibly happen?*

God's Son appeared to Abraham several times in the OT. In Genesis 18 three visitors came to Abraham's tent. When you read the text carefully you'll see one of the men speaks for God in the first person. Clearly it was the pre-incarnate Christ... It's also possible the High Priest Melchizedek was also a pre-Bethlehem appearance of the Son of God. Abraham saw Jesus.

And if Jesus' previous statements were bombshells, here He drops a nuke. If Jesus had lived in the days of Twitter, verse 58 would've exploded the twitter-verse.

“Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” This was the name Yahweh revealed to Moses at the burning bush, **“I am who I am. Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I am has sent me to you.'”** Now Jesus quotes the same holy, revered name, **“I AM,”** and applies it to Himself.

Here, Jesus is removing all doubt about His deity. He's being crystal clear. Jesus is identifying Himself as the God who spoke to Moses from the burning bush.

And this was more than these narrow-minded Jews could bear. They knew exactly what Jesus had said. This is why they instantly go into assassination mode...

“Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.” I believe this was a miracle.

These men were angry. Rocks were in their hands. They weren't going to let Jesus walk away from the claims He'd made. But like Moses parting the Red Sea, Jesus splits the crowd and walks out of the Temple. A supernatural shield must've protected Him.

As a side note, John records seven of Jesus' **"I AM"** statements in his Gospel. In 6:48 He says, "I am the bread of life." In 8:12, "I am the light of the world."

John 10:7, "I am the door of the sheep." In 10:14, "I am the good shepherd." In 11:25, "I am the resurrection and the life." In 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Lastly 15:1, "I am the true vine."

One day when he was 12 year old, Zach asked me to hold his glasses. Just for kicks I slipped them over my eyes, and to my surprise the whole world became sharper. For the first time, I realized I needed glasses.

A month later an eye exam confirmed my discovery. I remember saying to the optometrist, "Doc, this just can't be. I've always had 20-20 vision. What's going on?" His answer was so depressing, "*Well Sandy, when you get older your eyes just start to deteriorate.*"

Hey, who's getting older? But we all do! Your eyes grow dim... some people go blind. It's tough to accept.

Yet in Chapter 9 we find a man who had no problem accepting his blindness, since he had lived with his handicap his whole life. This man had never seen.

Chapter 9, “Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.” Every 20 minutes someone in the United States goes blind. It’s a terrible tragedy to lose your sight. There’s only thing worse, and that’s to have never had the opportunity to see in the first place.

Imagine being born blind. You lived your whole life having never seen a sunset - or a azalea bush or dogwood tree blossom - or the smile on a giggly child.

A man born blind has no reference point. He has no recollection to draw on. He has no paints or brushes to color in the pictures on the canvas of his imagination.

His mental images all look alike - *grey, and empty, and blank.* Such was this man’s sad lot in life.

Verse 2, “And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” What a contrast in perspectives!

As we’ll learn later Jesus looked at this man and thought of **alleviating his suffering**. His disciples saw him and thought of **affixing blame**. Jesus asks, “How can I help?” His men ask, “Who can we condemn?”

But the disciples were only reflecting the current understanding of disease and suffering among the Jews at the time. The rabbis believed every illness or natural disaster was caused by some specific sin.

Sin and suffering supposedly had a cause and effect relationship... *Tornados touch down on the evil. Cancer strikes the carnal. Heart attacks happen to the heathen. Forest fires destroy the faithless, etc., etc.*

One Jewish rabbi commented, "There is no death without sin, and there is no suffering without iniquity."

Other rabbis went so far as to teach that a child could sin en-utero and be punished with a deformity.

Other Jewish rabbis were crueller. They asserted that if a child was born with a disorder it had to be the result of their parent's sin... Jesus' disciples were merely echoing the erroneous theological theories of their day.

In verse 3, "Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him." Jesus shoots down the theology of the rabbis. *Birth defects, incurable illnesses, natural disasters* can't always be pinned on a specific sin.

They may not be due to any particular sin at all.

When sin entered the world the whole created order became subject to randomness and futility. Theologians call it "The Fall." Today, Mother Nature doesn't always work in sync with her Father God.

Suffering is now the fallout of the fall. In the here and now, seldom does God specifically inflict on a man a sentence of pain. But He does take our pain that's a consequence of the fall, and uses it for His glory!

In his commentary on Job, Frank Anderson writes, "The Bible explains suffering, not so much in origins as in goals. The purpose of pain is seen, not in its cause, but in its results. The man was born blind so that the works of God could be displayed in him."

The disciples asked Jesus, *"Why was this man born blind?"* In essence Jesus answers, *"It doesn't matter, what counts is how God uses the situation to bring Himself glory!"* God allowed this man to be born blind so the people in the Temple that day - and people in the ages since - might behold the wonders of His Son!

Here, **a man who was born blind encounters a Man who can turn on the lights!** *A sensational miracle occurs and a spiritual message will follow.*

In verse 4 Jesus says, *"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work."* One of the marks of Jesus' ministry was His sense of urgency. The sun rises and sets. The day begins and ends. And likewise the plans of God have a start and a finish. *When the sun goes down on the last day, all that are not saved will never be saved.*

This is why, like Jesus, we need to be busy doing the works of God - works of compassion, and mercy, and forgiveness, and reconciliation. George Mueller puts it all in perspective, *"When the day of recompense comes, our only regret will be that we have done so little for Him, not that we have done too much!"* **It's day now, but the nighttime is coming.**

At the outset of the Civil War General George McClellan was the commander of the Yankee troops. McClellan was by nature an overly cautious man, and for months he refused to move his troops into battle. His inactivity angered and frustrated President Lincoln.

Finally, Lincoln wrote him, "My dear McClellan, if you don't want to use the army, I'd like to borrow it for a while. Respectfully yours, Abraham Lincoln."

King Jesus likewise gets frustrated with our inactivity.

What are we waiting on? Its past time for the army of God to move out and started serving our Lord. We all need a sense of urgency in our walk and witness.

Verse 5 stirs up the faith of the blind man. He says, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." *Did the blind man wonder what was next?*

"When (Jesus) had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay." Here's one mudslinging campaign that had a happy ending.

These miracle mud packs had special meaning. Spit was considered by the ancients to be the essence - the life of man - put there by God. Dirt was a symbol of the body. Adam was formed from the dust of the ground.

In the method Jesus chose for this miracle He was illustrating the origin of His ministry and the source of His power. He was God mixed with dirt! He contained the divine (*the spit*) but also the human (*the clay*).

Verse 7 "And (Jesus) said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent)." All of Jesus' miracles recorded in the Gospels were staged to prove He had been "sent" from God and by God.

“So he went and washed, and came back seeing.” It was a miracle. The guy born blind now has 20-20 vision. And understand, the *spit* was not necessarily *it!*

In Mark 10 Jesus healed blind Bartimaeus by just speaking the word. He healed blind eyes on other occasions through different methods. It wasn't the spit - it was the power of God that opened this man's eyes.

But the spit played a role. The ancients believed human saliva had medicinal properties. Perhaps Jesus used the mud packs, something tangible, to stir up and stimulate his faith. Likewise, in Acts it was not *Paul's handkerchiefs* or *Peter's shadow* that healed, but they were tools used by God to stir up the people's faith.

Verse 8 “Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, “Is not this he who sat and begged?” Some said, “This is he.” Others said, “He is like him.” He said, “I am he.”

Therefore they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?” Throughout Chapter 9 you'll notice everyone is concerned with “**how**” this miracle took place. This is always the case. We're intrigued with a miracle's *mechanics*, but God is more interested in its *message*.

If you could figure out *how* a miracle happened it wouldn't be a miracle. **The question any miracle should answer is not *How*, but *Who*.** Notice, “**how**” and “**who**” are the same three letters - just change how you see them - put the “*W*” in front of the “*H*.” The *Who* of this miracle was much more important than the *How!*

The man “answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." Verse 12, “Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

As we move through Chapter 9 I want you to watch the progression in this man's relationship with Jesus...

In verse 11 he calls Jesus “a man.”

In verse 17 the man says, “He is a prophet.”

In verse 27 He’s viewed as a man of such stature that He would attract His own disciples.

In verse 33 He calls Jesus a man “from God.”

And finally in verse 38, He refers to Jesus as the “Son Of God” - worthy to be worshipped.

Verse 13 “They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.” And of course, Jesus always healed on the Sabbath. *He relished the confrontation.* Nothing did more to contrast *the compassion of God and the callousness of the Jews.*

“Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.” It’s always amazing how petty and picky the legalist can get. The rules grow so large in his mind they’re all he can see.

The rules cloud out the love of God - the power of God - the wonder of God. The Jews were so prejudiced and narrow-

minded they looked past an obvious miracle and focused only on a technicality.

When it's obvious God is at work there comes a time when you should start questioning the technicalities.

According to Sabbath traditions, in healing the blind man Jesus was guilty of 3 violations - or acts of work.

He made the clay... He made an application to the man's eyes... And He brought about the healing...

They said, "Sorry Jesus, 3 strikes, you're out!" They ignored the most obvious fact - the blind could see!

Verse 16 ends, "Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them." Apparently, some Jews were starting to see *spiritually* as the man was *seeing physically!*

"They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight (they questioned the miracle), until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.

And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for

the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ (or Messiah), he would be put out of the synagogue.” Rather than testify of Jesus and show some gratitude for healing their son, the parents take the fifth! Pass the buck. *“Our son is a grown man. Let him speak for himself!”* They were fearful of the Jews.

Yet, their reaction should not have come as a shock. They had left their son on the street to beg for a living.

They cared more about their social standing than the boy they brought into the world. *“Heaven forbid, we get kicked out of the synagogue, and lose our friends.”*

They denied Jesus for fear of the crowd.

Though this man’s blindness wasn’t the result of his parent’s sin, let me suggest many of our young people today are blind spiritually because they have a mother and father who are just as pathetic as these parents.

Parent, do you care more about your image, than what Jesus has done and can do in your kids?

Back to the trial, verse 24, *“So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, “Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner.”* In other words, deny Jesus - tell us what we want to hear.

“He answered and said, “Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.” I like this quote, *“A man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.”* The work of God in a

person's life speaks much louder than the skepticism of folks around them.

Verse 26, "Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" He says this tongue and cheek. The formerly blind man mocks their stubbornness... It must have infuriated the Jews.

"Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples." If they'd been smart they would've stopped arguing with this guy. A half-hour earlier he was blind as a bat. If they want to discredit the miracle they won't do it talking to this guy.

The Jews are about to prove they're the blind folk.

But they argue, "We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from."

The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing (*in other words, you got to be kidding?*), that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!" *A man gives sight to a man born blind and He's not from God? How can that be?*

This man is about to give the theologians a lesson in practical theology... Hopefully, he opened a few eyes...

Verse 31, "Now we know that God does not hear sinners (*that is, God isn't obligated to hear sinners*); but if anyone is a

worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him.” God is more inclined to hear a believer.

These are true generalizations.

But the man continues, “Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.” This was an unprecedented miracle. Thus, “If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.” Finally, his logic was overwhelming. His healing was a miracle only God could perform.

“They answered and said to him, “You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?” And they cast him out.” Wow, you don’t like the *message* so completely dismiss what’s said, and just throw out the *messenger*. How pompous and blind they’d become.

Bible scholar, Alfred Edersheim, tells us the rabbinical Jews had three kinds of excommunication...

First was a “**rebuke**.” It lasted for seven days. It was probationary. It was a mild means of discipline.

Second was an “**admonition**.” The person who was guilty was ostracized from the synagogue for thirty days. He was treated as an outcast and a sinner.

Finally, the most radical form of excommunication is when the unrepentant person was “**cast out**,” - literally, “**un-synagogue-ed**.” He was permanently alienated from the community of Israel for an indefinite period of time. No one was allowed to *speak to* or *eat with* the excommunicated. The person was considered dead.

It seems the Jews ran this man through all three phases of excommunication at once... **Verse 18 they rebuke the formerly blind man. Verse 28 they admonish him. Verse 34 they toss him out for good.**

It's sad that one of the first sights this man saw was the venomous looks on the scrunched-up faces of these angry and close-minded Pharisees.

Verse 35, **"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"** I love this, Jesus searched for this man, and **"found him."** The Good Shepherd leaves the 99 and goes after the one lost sheep.

Chapter nine is the harbinger of things to come!

A man is cast out of Judaism, but was welcomed by Jesus. He would be the first of many more to follow.

After the resurrection, people left Judaism in droves to be members of Jesus' Church. Legalism blinds everyone living under it, but when Jesus enters our lives we can see! *The blind continue to receive sight!*

Jesus had asked, **"Do you believe in the Son of God?"** **"He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" He wants to believe....**

Verse 37, **"And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you."**

The first time this man interacted with Jesus he heard His voice, but didn't actually see Jesus. But he would never forget that voice. Now though, He sees Jesus - he looks in His face - *the result of a miracle.*

“Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.” Remember, Jews detested idolatry. By the first century the Jews had been cured of the idolatrous tendencies that brought on judgment in the OT... At the time of Jesus they worshipped no one but Yahweh.

And this man knew he’d found God in Jesus. He worships Him - *and Jesus does nothing to stop him!*

Recall, in Acts 14 after Paul healed the lame man at the gate of Lystra, the people of the city wanted to worship him and Barnabas, but Paul shut it down.

Paul and Barnabas were mere men - not worthy to be worshipped. Jesus on the other hand, allowed people to worship Him **because He was God!**

Verse 39, “And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

I like what author Phillip Yancey writes, “What began as a tragic tale of one man's blindness ends as a surreal tale of everyone else’s blindness.”

A newspaper reporter wrote a story about three little girls outside a toy store. One of the girls was blind - the other two were trying to describe to her toys she’d never seen. Their efforts were in vain. Yet the reporter was touched by the scene. He wrote of it in his column.

The same night his story appeared in the newspaper, the reporter was scheduled to attend the DL Moody crusade. The reporter was a skeptic, and he intended to pick the evangelist

to pieces. He wanted to write a scathing editorial. But during his message Moody used the reporter's own words from the paper to describe how difficult it is to explain the glories of Jesus Christ to someone who had never seen them for himself.

Again the newspaper reporter was moved with emotion. He realized how spiritually blind he had been and came forward at the invitation to receive Christ.

Jesus is giving the same invitation to us tonight, "If you think you see you'll remain blind, but if you realize you're blind to spiritual things you'll suddenly see!"

Verse 40, "Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also? Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains." The Pharisees were blind because they assumed they saw the truth clearly.

Pride always causes a spiritual blindness.

The know-it-all is the person who is most ignorant. Only when we admit that our vision is impaired will God put the mud packs on our eyes and help us to see.