

BIBLE READING DAY 24, TUESDAY: MARCH 22

Jesus Heals the Man Born Blind,

John 9:1–41

As Jesus passed by, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Master, who sinned—this man, or his parents—that he was born blind?”

“It was not because this man sinned, or his parents,” answered Jesus, “but in order that the works of God might be manifested in him. We must do the works of him who sent me, while it is still day; the night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

Jesus spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle. And he anointed the eyes of the blind man with clay, and said, “Go and wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means “sent”).

So, the man went and washed, and came back seeing. Then his neighbors and those who had observed him as a beggar said, “Isn’t this the man who used to sit by the wayside and beg?”

“Yes, he is the man,” said some.

“No, he only looks like him,” said others. Then the man himself said, “I’m the man!”

“How were your eyes opened?” they asked.

“The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said, ‘Go to Siloam and wash,’” he replied, “so I went and washed, and received sight!”

“Where is this fellow?” they asked.

“I don’t know,” he replied.

They took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees therefore asked him again how he had received his sight.

“He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see,” he said.

Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”

“But how can a man who is a sinner do such miracles?” said others and they were divided in their opinion. Then they spoke to the blind man again: “What do you say about him? It was your eyes that he opened!”

“He is surely a prophet!” replied the man.

The Jews doubted that the man actually had been blind and had received his sight until they called his parents and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How is it that he is now able to see?”

“We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind,” answered his parents, “but we don’t know how it is that he now can see, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age, and he will speak for himself.” The parents said this because they feared the Jews who had agreed that anyone who acknowledged Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. That is why they said, “He is of age; ask him.”

They summoned the man born blind a second time and said, “Give God the praise! We know that this man is a sinner.”

“Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know,” replied the man, “but I can tell you one thing for sure: I used to be blind, but now I can see!”

“What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” they asked.

“I have already told you, but you wouldn’t listen,” he replied. “Why do you want to hear it again? Do you, too, want to become his disciples?”

They turned on him in a rage, shouting, “You are his disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don’t even know where he came from.”

“Now isn’t this an amazing thing!” replied the man. “You don’t know where he came from, and yet he opened my eyes! We know that God does not hearken to sinners, but to those who truly fear him and do his will. From the beginning of the world, it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”

“You were altogether born in sins!” they shouted, “and are you presuming to teach us?” And they threw him out.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out. And when he had found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of God?”

“Who is he, sir?” asked the man. “Tell me, that I may believe in him.”

“You have seen him,” said Jesus, “and it is he who is speaking to you.”

“Lord, I believe!” he said. And he knelt before him in worship.

Then Jesus said, “I have come into this world bringing judgment, that the blind may see, and that those who see may become blind.” Some of the hPharisees standing near Jesus heard him.

“And are we blind?” they asked him.

“If you were blind,” said Jesus, “you would not be guilty; but since you insist ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.”

I AM The Door & I AM the Good Shepherd, John 10:1–21

Jesus said, “I tell you truly, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber, but he who enters in through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hearken to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he has brought all his sheep out of the fold, he leads the way before them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but will run away from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand the meaning of what he said. Therefore, Jesus spoke to them again:h

“I tell you truly, I am the door for the sheep. All who came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hearken to them. I am the door: if anyone enters the fold through me, he will be safe, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and to kill and destroy, but I came that men may have life, and that they may have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives his life for his sheep. He who is only a hireling rather than a shepherd, who does not really own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches them and scatters the flock. He runs away because he is only a hireling and does not really care about the sheep.

“I am the good shepherd, and I know those who are mine, and they know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. I will give my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold. I must lead them also, and they will hearken to my voice, and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

“This is why the Father loves me: because I lay down my life, that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own choice. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This is the commandment I received from my Father.”

Again, there was a division of opinion among the Jews because of these words. Many said, “He has a demon and is mad. Why listen to him?”

“These are not the words of a man who is demon possessed,” said others. “Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

Approximate Timeline of Jesus’s Public Ministry														
EARLY LIFE	EARLY MINISTRY	1 st Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	1 st Feast of BOOTHS	WINTER	2 nd Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING

DEVOTIONAL DAY 24 (TUESDAY MARCH 22)

Jesus Heals the Blind and the Blind Spots

Based on John 9:1–41

A few months ago, I once again became a member of the “Truck Club”. I bought a 2015 Dodge Ram. My two previous trucks had been Chevy trucks but neither had an extended cab and neither had a huge blind spot. Several times, cars coming up on my right have surprised me. I went out the first week and bought two little oval “fish-eye” mirrors to help me see, but the new mirrors are still in the cab. And thus, my blind spot remains.

I thought about my blind spots in my truck when I read today’s passage. Little places (and some not so little) where sins lurk just beside me, ready to sneak up and suddenly pounce on me.

John Newton had a severe blind spot. He was totally blind spiritually in his younger years, serving as a captain of a slave ship and then even after his salvation, maintaining a financial interest in the slave shipping business.

It’s ironic, but not uncommon, for people to commit sins of which they themselves were once a victim. Newton had been forced into naval service, but that was not his enslavement. He tried to desert from the Royal Navy and as punishment he was flogged with 96 lashes, but that was not his greatest hardship.

For three years, Newton was owned, humiliated, and abused by Princess Peye in west Africa, describing this period as being a “slave of slaves”. He was finally rescued, and on his trip home, a severe storm caused him to cry out to God. He made it back to England, accepted Christian principles, changed somewhat in his lifestyle, and began reading the Bible. But Newton would say later, he was not a “full believer” yet.

In John chapter 9, the man born blind was instantly healed by Jesus. But other times, the blind were healed progressively (see Day 19, Mark 8:22-26). Some were healed by Jesus spitting a clay mixture like today’s reading, other times, just by spitting in their eyes, and still others He simply touched them (Day 16).

But there were some types of blindness Jesus did not heal: those who were spiritually blind and would not admit it. I think about my own blind spots (not those on my truck!): tender spots perhaps from past hurts that haven’t totally healed. Past sins of which God has forgiven me, but I have not forgiven myself, at least not totally.

Jesus often asked the blind and lame what they wanted done for them. Even today, some would rather stare into darkness and keep their sin than be released. Others receive their sight, but, like Newton, refuse to release those who are trapped in the same slavery which once held them.

Within Newton’s most famous hymn, *Amazing Grace*, he penned the words, “I once was lost but now I’m found, was blind but now I see.” It took Newton years to quit the slavery business and decades to speak out against it. But when he did, he along with William Wilberforce, finally accomplished that wicked sin’s abolition in England in 1807. Newton died in December that same year.

A lesser known but equally powerful quote from Newton came during his latter years of advanced age, when he did not always recognize people nor remember things. During this time he said:

**“Although my memory’s fading, I remember two things very clearly:
I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior.”**

Continued on the following page

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs

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Today's passage concludes with Jesus's statement, *"If you were blind, you would not be guilty; but since you insist, 'We see,' your guilt remains."* In other words, "You cannot heal a wound by simply saying, 'It isn't there.'"

Lord Jesus, thank You for healing the blindness of my sin. But I admit, my blind spots still trip me up. Like head checks when driving, remind me to do heart checks in my spirit, confessing and forsaking my sins to keep me from crashing. Thank You for Your amazing grace and for being a great Savior.

--By Tim McKeown