

The Gospel of John

9:35-41

Welcome back to this week's study in the book of John.
As with this study and all bible studies, remember to pray before you start.

The last two weeks we have been studying chapter 9 with the man who was born blind and Jesus healed him. After this man was healed, the religious leaders grilled him asking him how he was healed. He told them over and over how Jesus had healed him by making clay from the dirt, put it on his eyes and after he went and washed it away he could see, just as Jesus said.

After much questioning and even brining his parents over to ask them too, he responded with.

✎ **John 9:27** *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?"*

This made the religious leaders angry and they cast him out of the synagogue, just as they warned the people that they would do.

✎ **John 9:22** *His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.*

So we will pick up the story this week after he was cast out and he finally sees Jesus for the first time.

✎ **John 9:35** *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?"*

Here this man was cast out of the synagogue because he believed that Jesus healed him, and Jesus comes along and asks him, "**Do you believe in the Son of God?**"

Sounds like a strange question, doesn't it?
But not really.

I still remember when I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. I was so excited and felt like I could just fly away because all the weight of my sins were taken off of me at that very moment. It was like hiking for 19 years with a backpack full of rocks that weighed 200 lbs., then all of a sudden someone comes along and removes that backpack and you feel all that weight being taken away that you had been carrying around all those years.

For me, I was carrying the weight of my sins around for 19 years, day after day adding to that weight as I continued in my sins. I always wanted that weight taken away but never knew how to get rid of it. Until one day when my dad and the pastor of the church he went to called me into his office.

You see, my dad was an alcoholic and was on his third marriage. He was a woman chaser an alcoholic and into pornography. I was raised to use women, drink, cuss and party even as a young teenager. Not that my dad told me to do these things, but he would sometimes include my sisters and me in his parties. Allowing us to drink and as I think about it encouraged me to chase after young girls. My dad was the one who taught me how to dance and he also taught me to go to bars and clubs by his lifestyle.

Then one day he came back to the Lord, Who he had accepted as a young boy. It was truly a miracle for my dad to stop drinking. This same man who would call his scotch in the morning his instant breakfast. He was now a new man who went to church and I still remember him sitting in the kitchen in the mornings, drinking his coffee and reading the bible.

I watched him for months. Soon my dad became the grounds keeper of the church, and here it was a Saturday and I was just hanging out with him as he was mowing the lawn at this small Baptist church. Then it happened, he walked into the pastor's office and was there for a few minutes. Then he came out and asked if I wanted to join him talking to the pastor. I said yes and off we went. Soon the three of us were sitting there as the pastor started to share Jesus with me, and how Jesus had died for my sins.

Then the question came. *"Do you want to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior?"* Now I had been to church off and on over the years with my family. Maybe every few months or so we would go, or my parents would try to get me into some type of youth group, which never lasted very long.

I had heard the message of salvation over the years and had heard the invitations in church. I always wanted to go forward but never did. I would even pray the prayer when the pastor did but never told anyone. I would go home and vow to start reading my bible. I would start in Genesis and end in Genesis as I only got into a few chapters until I started to read about the begats (You know, Adam begat Cain and so on).

But now I had been confronted face to face for the first time. I had seen the change in my dad and knew that I also wanted a change in my life. So, I said yes. The pastor and my dad lead me into the sinner's prayer as I confessed my sins to the Lord and asked for His forgiveness using my own words and speaking from my heart to the Lord.

I was so excited, and then it happened later that day. We went back to my dad's house and I told his wife (who also became a Christian when my dad did). As we sat there and talked about it, that joy I had seemed to fade away as she started to tell me about how many struggles I would have and how hard it would be to be a Christian. It would be like telling a newborn baby about all the bad things in the world, and warning the little day old baby about these things. The joy of the new baby is gone. I was feeling awful. But the Lord restored my joy.

Over the next few nights as I went to work (I worked the swing shift), I would share my new life in Jesus Christ with others. I've mentioned this before, but I had the foulest mouth on this earth. I would make sailors blush with my language. They knew me as this young kid with a foul mouth who liked to party. But I was now a new person, totally changed. No more cursing, because this was taken away immediately. No more partying and taking part in their sick dirty jokes.

Then I was asked my first theological question. Now I was big time into reading the bible. Every chance I got I would read my bible. But I wasn't ready for this question. What was it?

It was, *"How do you know that this Jesus is real. After all, wasn't it your parents who first told you about Him?"*

"Well of course they did," I would say.

"Well didn't they also tell you about Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny?" They would say.

"Yea, but this was different?"

But they wouldn't buy it.

Then the question we all hear. *"How do you know the bible is real and not some story that men made up?"*

Good question and all I could say as a less than a week old little Christian was, *"Because I know it's true and it's God's word"*

This they also didn't buy as I was almost in tears, because I knew Jesus was real and so was God's word. But I couldn't explain this to them to make them understand.

Sad to say but no one accepted Jesus Christ, at least not while I was there. For the next two years they would watch me, this young kid on fire for the Lord start to fade back into my old lifestyle, and there was this woman there that I had to have, even though I was married. I pursued after her, but nothing ever happened between us. Eventually I did leave my wife and baby boy and went back into partying, big time, once again chasing after women. A young 21 year old now trying to sow his wild oats as the world would put it.

Years later I would remarry a woman I picked up in a nightclub as I tried to get back with the Lord. We went to church, had home bible studies with my sisters and their families and our friends from church. But soon my wife would leave the house at night after I went to bed and not get home until 5:00 in the morning. This started to happen all the time. We eventually divorced as I found out that she had turned into a lesbian.

Once again I turned my back on the Lord.

I ended up out in the party scene again, Praise be to God I never became an alcoholic but I did drink. I went out basically to dance, which I loved to do, and pick up on women. I eventually meet a woman and we lived together for a few years. (Don't worry; the good part is coming up!)

Now you have to understand that this woman was gorgeous. Any man would want her. But I knew that something was missing from my life and I knew that something was Jesus.

Then one day as I was listening to the radio and a song came on by DC Talk. Now this was secular radio, but the song was different. I couldn't explain it at the time, but just the way the song was, what it was about, and the calmness I felt whenever I heard it made me wonder if these guys were Christians. They didn't say Jesus or God in the song, but something was different about them. So I went out and bought the CD, and as I listened to the rest of the CD it was very clear that they were Christians.

This was the start of a real change in my life. As I listened to the words of some of the songs I knew I was playing in the dirt of a pigpen and it was time to get out.

I knew that I had walked away from the Lord on many occasions and I was playing with fire and about to be burned to a crisp if I didn't truly repent and change my ways.

For the first time in over thirty-five years I knew what it meant to give my life to Jesus.

You see I had prayed the prayer and tried on my own strength to follow Jesus, but I also held onto things I never should have.

So over twenty years ago I vowed to give Jesus my life, because He gave His for me. I handed everything over to Jesus, including this woman I was living with.

I tried to explain it to her and told her that I had to move out because we were living in sin against God's will.

She said in so many words that I had a choice, either the Lord or her.

I hope she's doing ok.

I got my own place and was in love with the Lord. Sure I had been on fire in the past, but for the first time, I was in love with Jesus.

I spent hours reading the bible. I would play worship songs on my keyboard and sing out to the Lord. No one else was around, but then it didn't matter, because I was doing it all for the Lord anyway, not to entertain a crowd. When I wasn't reading or playing worship music I would listen to teaching. I hardly ever watched TV anymore, usually just to watch the news.

Honestly a lot of things happened to me that first year. A lot of trials and temptations. A lot of tears as I would cry out to the Lord for help.

I suppose I could spend a whole study just telling you about that first year. (Maybe some other time or study.)

But in spite of all I had done in my past, I am blessed by the Lord to be able to teach God's word on the Internet, and praise be to God it's growing with more and more people learning and studying God's word here. Only God could take someone like me, and the past that I have had, and still forgive me and use me. But then God can, and will do the same with you, if you only allow Him to and fall in love with Jesus.

So how does all of this fit into this week's study?

Remember the last woman I lived with and how she gave me an ultimatum?

This man was also given this same choice. Will you serve and love the Lord, or are the things of this world more important to you.

 ***“Do you believe in the Son of God?”***

That's sort of what Jesus was asking him. Not for Jesus' benefit, but for the man's.

He had a choice to either deny Jesus and be allowed back into the synagogue or put his faith in Jesus and leave the things of the world behind.

He knew he didn't want anymore of those religious leaders with all their rules, no more of the world, no more of the lies and deception. He wanted a new life, not a better life that the world offered, but rather a new live with God.

✠ **John 9:36-38** *He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.*

Just as I went to church as a young boy and had heard about Jesus, no one ever personally came up to me and shared Jesus with me face to face and asked if wanted to know Him or even if I had questions about Him. This man may have heard about God, and even Jesus, as word got around about all He did and said. But no one ever brought him to Jesus, but that didn't stop Jesus from going to him. We read that at the very beginning of the chapter.

✠ **John 9:1-2** *Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"*

The disciples walked with Jesus and they pointed him out to Jesus, but they never brought him to Jesus. It just goes to show you how much the power of prayer is. You may not be able to bring someone to church because they refuse to go, but that doesn't mean you can't point them out to Jesus in prayer.

When I was finally told face to face about Jesus, I was asked if I had any questions. I had no questions; I was so excited and I was ready to pray. I had been waiting for this moment for 19 years and here it was looking me in the face, and I had the same response this man did *Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.*

But then there where others around who heard this man who now proclaimed Jesus as Lord.

✠ **John 9:39-41** *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." 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."*

So now you have read my story, but what about yours? Have you been blind all these years to the truth of God's word? Maybe you say no, and that you have everything figured out. The problem in your figuring is that you don't include God or Jesus in your plans. Sure you have heard about them and even think about them once in a while. But the truth is you don't think you need Jesus and you will make it just fine.

You see your future as something bright and good because you work hard, or you are well educated, have plans to marry or maybe you are married with a great spouse and kids. So why would you need this Jesus, you may think, and I'm not blind because I see a bright future for my family and myself.

The problem is that you are basing everything upon your own standards. You have decided what is right and what is wrong. Whereas others may have a different opinion. So who is right, you are them. Of course we all think we are right and everyone else is wrong. If they would only think like I do, then everything would be ok. If the world would think like you do, then everyone would end up in hell!

God makes it very clear that we are all sinners. No one has the right way. Only God's way is the right way and if you go against just one of God's ways then you are wrong. You think you will get to heaven by your own merit and standards, but God has higher standards than you could imagine. He also knows that we cannot fit up to those standards and that's why He sent His Son Jesus to pay the price for us all. God would now see us as perfect through what Jesus did on the cross. But first you must accept God's way and that Jesus is the only way to heaven.

Sure things may look good right now, but what about when you die? What about when your children die, where do you really want them to go, heaven or hell? I followed after my dad's example and was headed for hell and he was leading me all the way, until he took a U turn and started to head for heaven. Praise be to God that I choose to follow that way also and I am also heading for heaven.

Right now at this very moment, my dad is in heaven with Jesus. In spite of what he did in his past and how he taught us all those wrong things. He changed and gave his heart to Jesus and Jesus cleansed him of all the wrong he ever did and that's why he is with Jesus right now.

Someday I will also be with Jesus and my dad in heaven because I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and I know without a doubt that Jesus died for all of my sins, all my mess-ups and all my stupidity. One day I will be able to stand before the Throne of God, not because of what I did, but because of what Jesus did on the cross. Sure you could try to stand there telling God how right your ways were, but God would only ask you one simple question. What did you do with my Son Jesus? Your answer would be that you rejected Him.

† **Matt 7:23** *And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'*

† **Matt 10:32-33** *Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.*

You can make up all the excuses you want right now, but when you are standing before God, you will have no excuse. You will know that you were wrong and God is right.

Right now Jesus says to you who think that you are right and you have the right answers.

✎ *Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains."*

As I was asked face to face if I wanted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, I now ask you face to face, even though we can't see or hear each other. God sees you and will hear you if you say yes. He will also hear you if you say no. When you die and are facing God, which will God remember you saying, as right now God is offering you forgiveness and eternal life through His Son Jesus; Yes or No?

I have to say this was a good study for me as I remember all the Lord has done for me over the years. In fact, the last few weeks have been spiritually tough on me. I have felt tremendous attacks and I now know why. Because in my years of teaching on the Internet, I have never given my testimony. Sure you may have gotten a glimpse here and there, but this is the first time you know how I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. I pray that many will read this and see the Love of Jesus and how forgiving and loving God really is. How God will forgive anyone just as He has forgiven me. The purpose has not been to bring glory to my past or myself, because I have no boasting in the things I have done. Rather my boast is in Jesus Christ who knew 2000 years ago what I would do, but was still willing to go to the cross for me. He also knew what you would do, but still He was willing to go to the cross for you too.

Next week we start in chapter 10 as we read of Jesus being the good shepherd. I pray after this week's study, that if you weren't a part of His flock that you are now!

May God richly bless you in His love, grace and mercy and may you tell others of the wonderful things He has done for you too!