

**I Am the One  
John 9:8-12  
Pastor Duane Lawrence**

How often have you and I judged someone simply based on his or her appearance? The people who were supposed to be the neighbors of this blind man Jesus healed knew him only as a label, a blind man. That label was based on his physical blindness and his need to beg. He would probably go to the same spot daily and earn his living as a beggar. His neighbors apparently never spent enough time to move beyond the label, a blind man, to the man. They did not know him, only his label, the blind man. They did not bother to befriend him because he was a blind beggar. The neighbors knew about him but they really did not know him because they did not invest the time to get to know him.

One day he was blind, the next day he was without his stick and beggar's basket and probably marveling at the beauty of God's house which he had never seen before because he was born blind. The sudden and drastic change of the blind man caused those who knew him and perhaps those who had only heard of him to, without proof, believe that he was not the person whom they knew to be born blind.

In ancient times, a person who had such severe physical deformities as congenital blindness was sentenced to a life of begging as the only means to receive financial support.

Another similar account of a man born lame, not blind, from birth is recorded in Acts 3:1-7 –

The Jews had three daily times of prayer, 9:00 a.m., 12 Noon, and 3:00 p.m. The lame man was laid near the gate called Beautiful. The Beautiful Gate would have been an ideal place for the lame man to position himself for begging.

“...Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer,...” and they immediately let the lame man know that they did not represent themselves in what they were about to do. They represented Jesus Christ because of His name – Who He is – the lame man would receive the ability to walk.

There are some similarities and differences of these two accounts as recorded in scripture. Both men were physically afflicted, one was lame from birth, the other was born from birth. The lame man came in contact with the apostles, Peter and John, the blind man came in contact with Jesus. The lame man obeyed the command of Peter as “... he took him by his right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.” The blind man obeyed Jesus after “...He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.” The lame man received the ability to walk and the blind man received his sight.

Even though these two accounts have similarities and differences, I believe that the major difference was the response of the people.

## **2 – I Am the One**

**The people in Acts 3:10, “...they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.”**

**The people in John 9:8-9, doubted that this was the same man and questioned how was he healed. “Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, “Is not this he who sat and begged?” 9 Some said, “This is he.” Others said, “He is like him.”**

**In Acts 3, the people did not need to be convinced that something wonderful and amazing had taken place but the people in John 9 were not convinced that a miracle had taken place.**

**The man who was born blind and has now received his sight had to keep saying, “I am the one.” He had to keep saying this because no one would believe the mighty change that had occurred in his life. They thought he was “just a normal person” and not the recipient of a miracle.**

**Place yourself in the blind man’s place. Would you profess that you were him or deny it?**

**The blind man was not concerned about what others thought because he knew that his sight had been restored, he knew that in the past, he was blind, but now, in the present, he could see.**

**There will always be those who will remind us of our past as the people reminded the blind man of how he used to sit and beg before his sight was restored by Jesus. The blind man knew that a miracle had taken place in his life and he was not ashamed to let it be known.**

**We need to cry out: I am the one God saved, I am the one God healed, I am the one who has been transformed and made whole! After healing, we are made “normal” just like anyone else and there is no sign on us that says: “a mighty miracle was done here.” When we are saved and enlightened by the grace of God, we should own the fact that it was through God that the blessing of salvation came to us.**

**Romans 5:6 – “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”**

**God loved us “when we were still without strength” and ungodly. God’s love for us is not based on how lovable we are but on the constancy of His own character. God’s supreme act of love came when we were at our most undesirable.**

**We should not be ashamed when Jesus intervenes in our lives but we should rejoice, be thankful, and proclaim the good news.**

### **3 – I Am the One**

**After the blind man was healed he stopped begging. He used to sit begging, but now no more. After a life of blindness he now had to go out and learn new skills and perhaps work in the field. Miracles end something, that is why some people do not want them, an identity is lost, a place, an occupation a “sitting” somewhere. Miracles often lead to increased responsibility – when Paul was knocked off his horse and then healed of his “blindness”, it was so he could become an apostle.**

**I Timothy 1:12-14 – “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”**

**Before Paul became a Christian he was speaking against God and pursuing Christians like a hunter pursuing his prey, he was a violent man acting out of personal pride. Paul was a Jew who was pursuing the persecution of Christians because he believed that he was right in doing so. He was a person who was overly difficult to please, believing that this would earn him salvation, but he was lost and condemned for Hell. Paul, like so many Jews, did not understand the truth of Christ’s gospel and was honestly trying to protect the Jewish religion. But Paul, just as all the rest of us, “...found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” (Genesis 6:8) He admitted his sins and recognized that what he did he “...did it ignorantly in unbelief.”**

**Paul willingly repented when he was confronted by Christ and as a result, God used him to write most of the New Testament. What a Mighty God we serve!**

**The blind man in our text also recognized that he too had to change His way of living because he also had been confronted by Christ.**

**Why should we respond when asked, “How have your spiritual eyes been opened?”**

**Our response should be like that of the blind man, “...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.”**

**Incidentally, this is one of at least 12 times in John’s Gospel that Jesus is called a man. John emphasizes that Jesus is God but beautifully shows us that Jesus was also a true man.**

**The incarnation was not an illusion.**

**I John 1:1-4 – “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life – 2 the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to 4 – I Am the One**

**you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us – 3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.”**

**We should be reminded that what Jesus did was the fulfillment of prophecy.**

**Jesus means Savior and He saves us from sin and sickness and death. At this point the once-blind man had no theology, he did not even call Jesus a prophet or a rabbi, but he was still healed. It was only later in the chapter, when Jesus meets him that he comes to faith. This tells us that a right heart is more important than right theology when it comes to seeing God at work.**

**Somebody, hold my mule while I shout right now!!! My! My! My! Praise God for this Man called Jesus!!**

**The blind man who was blind but now can see, gives a full account of what happened to him.**

**We too, should be ready to give an account of what happened to us when we met Jesus.**

**Why should we communicate what Jesus has done for us? Glad you asked -**

**We should communicate what Jesus has done for us because in doing so it brings glory to God and it gives instruction and encouragement to others.**

**The once blind man had to keep saying, “I’m the one!” – because no one would believe the mighty change that had occurred to him. They thought he was just a normal person and not the recipient of a miracle.**

**We too need to cry out: I am the one God saved, I am the one God healed, I am the one who has been transformed and made whole!**

**The blind man’s neighbors (John 9:8-9) did not believe that this was the same man who use to sit and beg. Still others were saying that this looks like the blind man but this could not be him. But thank God that the blind man did not allow his neighbors to stop his testimony for he kept saying, “I am he, I am the one.”**

**This reminds me of how some of our family members and neighbors respond to us when they see the obvious change in our lives after accepting Christ. They know that we are still the**

same person but they cannot believe the change that has taken place. They “see” the change but they cannot “understand” the change.

## **5 – I Am the One**

But we, just as the blind man, must continue to witness that, “I am he, I am the one.” I am the one who has been changed because of Christ.

The neighbors of the blind man, who now can see, were perplexed in that they knew that something had changed for the blind man because now he can see. They then wanted to know, “ ..., How were your eyes opened?” v. 10

The blind man who can now see did not fully understand how Jesus opened his eyes. He just shared with them what Jesus did and what Jesus told him to do and how he responded to Jesus.

He told them, “ ...,”A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ v. 11

He told them that he simply followed the instructions that Jesus gave to him and that as a result, “... I went and washed, and I received sight.” v. 11

The man who was born blind but now can see, willingly –

- (1) Followed the instructions of Jesus – blind man did as he was told
- (2) Fulfilled the instructions of Jesus – He does not mislead, deceive, or disappoint
- (3) Finished the instructions of Jesus – results were amazing, he came back seeing

We as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ should have a testimony that we will –

- (1) Follow His plan – believe what He says (blind man obeyed)
- (2) Fulfill His purpose – act on what He says (blind man went and washed)
- (3) Function in His power – rely on His strength (blind man came back seeing)

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost but now I’m found, was blind but now I see!

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