

Connecting with the Sunday Readings

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Gospel Word

John 9:1–41

Today we hear the story of the cure of the Man Born Blind. Unlike other miracles the Man Born Blind never asks to be healed. Jesus just does it. The Gospel for this Sunday is about seeing Jesus, *the real Jesus*. There are two primary approaches to Jesus given in this Gospel. The blind man represents seeing Jesus for who he is, the Son of God, along with the good that Jesus has accomplished. The Pharisees, on the other hand, could not believe the miracle even though it was right in front of them. They had no faith. Jesus does something absolutely good and wonderful. He gives sight to the blind man. But the Pharisees focus on the fact that Jesus “worked” on the Sabbath. The cured blind man saw the good, and the Pharisees totally missed it because they were focused on the law and not on the person and action of God.

Sometimes we spend our time making judgments about “good and bad” in others. Maybe we need to reflect on Jesus’ statement that he is “the light of the world.” Notice that he didn’t say “the light of God.” His emphasis is on shedding light on the meaning of this world. His life, his deeds, and his words, showed what the world really is deep down. It is God’s. But when evil is present—people are often blinded by it. They cannot see and therefore do not believe.

Living the Word

There is an approach to life these days that goes under the label of “Affirmative Inquiry.” It is sometimes used in business circles when companies seek ways to improve their bottom line. Improvement of anything is always challenging. Sometimes it requires people to change well developed and deeply rooted habits. The theory behind A. I. is that growth is more effective and easier when we build on what’s going well, rather than focusing on “what’s wrong with us.” Today’s Gospel helps us focus on the good that Jesus did, and by implication, on everything that Jesus was doing. If we continue doing what he did, we will help people do the same.

Parents do this all the time as they point out the beauty of the world to their children. So do teachers who help students see life and life’s issues more clearly. In fact, much of human communication is about helping each other to see more clearly. A big part of the Christian life is expressed in the prayer sung in the musical *Godspel* “to see thee more clearly” our own.

-by David Thomas, PhD, Co-Director,
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One-line Prayer

Dear Lord, help us to see you more clearly and love you more dearly.
Amen.