# Congregational-Presbyterian Church

 **“Jesus Heals a Blind Man”**

**John 9:1-7**

**March 10, 2019**

In the movie, Grand Canyon, a man is driving through a very rough neighborhood when his car stalls. He calls for a tow truck, but before it arrives, five young street toughs surround his disabled car and begin to threaten him. Then, just in time, the tow truck shows up and its driver begins to hook up the disabled car. The toughs begin to harass the truck driver for interrupting their fun. But, he’s not intimidated. Instead, he looks at the young men and says: “This is not the way things are supposed to be. I’m supposed to be able to do my job without you harassing me, and the guy in the car is supposed to be able to wait with his car without you threatening him. Everything is supposed to be different than what it is here.”

We live in a world where things are not the way they’re supposed to be. Ours is fallen world, a broken world, a world which is not what it once was in the Garden of Eden and is not what it shall be when God will make all things new. For the present we are troubled with hurts and difficulty and hardship. Things are not working the way they are supposed to. Take, for example, the hardship of blindness. In John 9:1-7 we read the story of a man born blind and I invite you to turn there with me

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. “Rabbi,” his disciples asked him, “why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?” “It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,” Jesus answered. “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work. But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world.” Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man’s eyes. He told him, “Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “sent”). So the man went and washed and came back seeing!

Things are not the way they are supposed to be. This man should not have to live his entire life deprived of physical sight, but up until this point he has. Notice the two basic responses to his situation. Jesus sees a blind man who needs healing, while the disciples see a blind man who they classify as a sinner. Jesus’ response is to address the problem, while the disciples’ response is to analyze the problem.

When you and I come face-to-face with the impact of a fallen world in a person’s life, our first call as followers of Jesus Christ is to love that person. We are to do as Jesus did, which is to confront brokenness with whatever means we have available in order to bring healing and wholeness. Wouldn’t it have been wonderful if the disciples, upon seeing the blind man, instead of asking about sin, had said to Jesus: “Rabbi, we pray that you heal this man.”

This is a wonderful story of Jesus healing a man born blind. If you read the rest of the story, which continues through the end of the chapter, you will learn that the man is not only healed physically, but he comes to know Jesus as his Lord and Savior and is healed spiritually. But, as with each of the miracle healing stories in John’s Gospel, this story has a deeper meaning than simply that of Jesus’ impact in a particular person’s life. This is a miracle that speaks of our future hope.

When the disciples ask Jesus whether the man’s blindness was caused by his sin or the sin of his parents, Jesus answers: “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him.” Yes, the power of God is seen in the healing itself, but Jesus has something greater in mind. In this man’s healing there is the promise of the final healing that God will bring to the whole earth. It is the mustard seed planted in the ground that will grow into a great tree. It is the treasure hidden in a field that a person discovers and, in order to purchase the field and have the treasure, sells all he has. It is what all who by faith trust in Jesus are moving toward. It is the truth of what God will bring about on the Last Day when he transforms all he has created including you and me. Within the suffering of the world, within its blindness and hurt and chaos, within this world where things are not what they are supposed to be, there is the promise that something new is coming.

The Gospel of John is filled with tangible examples of the promise. The healing of the blind man, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, the forgiveness of the woman caught in adultery, the feeding of the five thousand, the offer of living water to the woman at the well and of new birth to Nicodemus. These are all signs of the promise. Above all, the resurrection of Jesus that we will celebrate on Easter Sunday next month is the sign that the end of the story has not yet been told. There is more to come. In the restoration of all things, blindness, rejection, death and sin will be no more.

Yesterday we celebrated the life of Al Johnson, a beloved member of our church who God called to his heavenly home, and we read Revelation 21:3-5

I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!”

When blindness meets the Light of the world, the blind receive their sight. When sinners meet the Savior, the sinful receive forgiveness. When the hungry meet the Bread of Life and the thirsty meet the Living Water, the hungry are filled and the thirsty are quenched. When lost sheep meet the Good Shepherd, the lost are found. When the rejected meet the One who is Love, the rejected are accepted. When the broken meet the Healer, the broken are made whole. And, when the dead meet Christ who is the Resurrection and the Life, the dead are raised to new life.

The question is, will we trust God until then, as we go through the difficulties and disappointments of this fallen world where things are not as they should be. Will we live in hope, or will we only see the present circumstances and allow ourselves to sink into bitterness and despair? As surely as the sun rises and conquers the dark of night, and as surely as spring will come and the snow will finally melt off our lawns, God’s new day will heal all the wrongs of the world. Jesus said, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

All of us are blind in some way, all of us have been impacted from birth by this broken world, and we are in need of Jesus’ healing touch. One day when God will make everything new our healing will be complete. It is the promise of God, contained in a simple story of a blind man who received his sight.