

Sunday March 19th, 2023.

Respond.

Scripture: John 9:1-7 and 35-41.



This week's text is another in a series of encounters with Jesus with this one focused on seeing rightly.

Our story unfolds during the Feast of Tabernacles where Jesus claims to be the light of the world. It ends where the blind man, who was assumed to be in spiritual darkness, seeing God's light as opposed to the Pharisees who could see physically and were thought to be enlightened, but were shown to be spiritually blind.

The Pool of Siloam, where the blind man is sent to wash his eyes, figured in water ceremonies at the festival, and Jesus had already invited the thirsty to come to Him and drink on the great day of the festival. Light was also an important theme, and Jesus declares Himself the light of the world at the festival.

Have you ever been out in a thick fog walking or even driving. You can't see more than a few metres in front. Do you continue finding your way in the fog or stop and wait for the fog to clear? It can be a frightening experience.

The man born blind was trapped in the fog from birth. His blindness came before he knew who he was. He was blind before he even could commit a sin. He never saw his parents' smile, or the colours of God's world, he had to rely on what others were telling him. Some of this was helpful, some was not.

It was common at that time to blame someone's suffering on the result of a sin. This is why we hear the disciples ask Jesus – who sinned, this man or his parents?

Jesus rejects this question of the man's blindness, which He interprets instead as an opening for the glory of God to be revealed while it is day, and the light of the world is active.

But the man was not the only one who was blind and after his healing he showed consistent growing faith.

The disciples were blind, they saw a theological problem not a troubled person.

The neighbours were blind, they saw a blind beggar not a burdened brother. They reacted with surprise and scepticism.

The Pharisees were blind, they showed disbelief and prejudice and an act against their laws.

The Jews were blind, they saw an imposter not an improvement.

The Parents were blind, they kept quiet for fear of excommunication, and saw a seeing son not the saving SON.

The only seeing eyes in the text belong to Jesus. He saw a man born blind from birth. There are many that are born blind from birth all around us; do we see them? And I am not talking about physical blindness but spiritual blindness.

You may ask – why doesn't God take the suffering away? If He did that every time, we would only be following Him for our comfort

and convenience, not out of love or devotion. Regardless of the reasons for our suffering, Jesus has the power to help us deal with it.

Observe the means of the Miracle!

- Blind obedience – the man obeyed without seeing who was in front of him.
- Saliva and dirt – you may think this is a yukky image, but if you look back to Genesis 2:7 we see that God formed Adam’s body from the dust of the ground. Jesus was using His original material to heal. He was demonstrating a creator’s awareness of the materials He first used to shape the human body.
- Water and washing – the man obeyed Jesus implicitly and washed in the nearby pool of Siloam. Like the act of baptism.

Only God could be glorified by the methods of this miracle.

The man gained not only his physical sight but also his spiritual sight as he recognised Jesus, first as a prophet, then as His Lord.

When we turn to Christ, we begin to see Him differently. The longer we walk with Him, the better we understand who He is. To know more about Jesus, we must keep trusting Him in every area of life. When we remain open and recognise our sin and repent, Jesus gives us spiritual understanding and insight.

This is fundamentally a story about grace, and the blind man sums it up beautifully for all of us: “One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

Conclusion: This man was trapped in the Fog. But the defogger came his way. If you're in the FOG today, Jesus wants to bring you out. He is all that we need.

To the Geologist, He is the Rock of Ages.

To the Florist, He is the Lilly of the valley.

To the doctor, He is the great physician.

To the Astrologer, He is the bright and morning star.

To the Anthropologist, He is the Son of Man.

To the Theologian, He is the Son of God.

To the sheep, He is the Shepherd.

To the Shepherd, He is the Chief Shepherd.

To the biologist, He is Life.

To the Jeweller, He is the Pearl of Great Price.

To the journalist, He is good news.

To the Ambassador, He is the Desire of the Ages.

To the Preacher, He is the Word.

To the sick, He is the Healer.

To the Dead, He is the Resurrection.

To the sinner, He is the Saviour.

Jesus is the great defogger and is greater than the fog you're trapped in. If you're trapped in the fog of life; Jesus wants to usher you into the **FOG** – that is, the **Favour of God**, of His blessings. He wants to fog up our minds, fog up our lives, fog up our church with His FOG. Seek His FOG with all your heart.