

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #160

The Healed Man's Neighbors Respond Jn 9.8-12

8 His neighbors and those who saw that he used to be a beggar were saying, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some were saying that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him."

But he himself was declaring, "I am the man."

10 "How then were your eyes opened?" they asked.

11 He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and anointed my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

12 "Where is this man?" they asked him.

"I don't know," he said.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Streets of Jerusalem
Timeline	September (Month 31)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VI: Jesus' Later Judean Ministry
	B. Jesus' Ministry at the Feast of Tabernacles
	4. Jesus is the Light of the Blind"
Title	ii. The Healed Man's Neighbors Respond

COMMENT:

The rest of John Chapter Nine describes the responses of people to Jesus as the light of the blind. We will see four different reactions: the "lighted" man, his neighbors, his parents, and the Pharisees. Today's reading portrays the response of the man's neighbors.

Jesus had said in Chapter Eight that his true disciples "abide" in his word, while the children of the devil refuse to receive and believe his word. Unfortunately, the healed man's neighbors, parents, and the Pharisees are all examples of people who refused to believe in Jesus' word, in spite of empirical evidence--the healed man himself--who was shining proof that Jesus truly is the light of the world. They remained blind in their sin.

John's gospel is full of the reactions of people to Jesus--much more than the synoptic gospels. John used this technique to cause his readers to identify their own reactions with the responses of people in the narrative who were like their own. Then, John shows the foolishness of not believing that Jesus is who he said he is. Believing in Jesus as our Messiah is a far more reasonable response to his life and word than believing that he was a fake, or liar, or mere misguided man. Rejecting Jesus is totally unjustified by the evidence.

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Just as we can shut our eyes to the light, or choose to step into a dark location, we can decide to remain in a state of spiritual blindness and darkness. The problem is that we think we can “see,” when our sight is actually blurred to the point of total blindness to the truth.

Jesus was using this miracle to teach that people who refuse to believe in him are spiritually blind. The New Testament also describes blindness among Christians. After describing the qualities of Christ-likeness that should be part of our character as followers of Jesus, the Apostle Peter wrote: *“The person who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten their purification from their former sins.”* II Peter 1.9.

In the same way that people who refuse to accept the light of Jesus’ Word remain in spiritual darkness, believers in him can also begin to lose their spiritual vision by forgetting what Jesus has said and done for us. Blurred spiritual vision among believers is as much a tragedy as the spiritual darkness blighting those who reject Jesus.

APPLICATION:

The question “how?” can be dangerous when we consider the things of God.

The healed man’s neighbors asked, *“How then were your eyes opened?”*

A blind man was instantly healed. Because his neighbors could not understand the “how” of his supernatural healing, they refused to believe in the FACT that it actually occurred, in spite of the evidence that was staring them in the face. This is all too easy for any of us to do.

We are called to believe that Jesus is and does what he says. We are not called to understand the “how” of his deeds. We would have to be omniscient to understand how God does everything!

How is your spiritual vision doing these days?