

## Seeing Jesus, the Christ of God

✠ healing Light (vv.1-7)

✠ Sabbath Prophet (vv.13-17)

✠ the Son of God (vv.34-39)

In the name of Christ Jesus, the world's Light, dear fellow redeemed:

Stories of immigrants coming to America can be both tragic and heroic. I've heard of highly educated professionals who can't find the same work over here. Former lawyers and engineers work menial jobs just to get a new start. Some admit their need and go back to school. They finally work their way up again. You have to admire their drive, determination and humility to start over for a better life.

But what if you came with the cure for cancer and no one would listen? What if you were God's own Son with medicine for the soul and body that could help and heal everyone? You've seen this at work. Someone gets a great idea, but it's shelved or stolen by the people in charge. ***“There is nothing new under the sun.”*** (Ecclesiastes 1:9) The blindness of God's people in our Old Testament Lesson (Isaiah 42:14-21) was still there when Jesus arrived 700 years later. His status back home in heaven should have been honored here too. Talk about education; Jesus knows God! Jesus is God. But **Seeing Jesus as the Christ of God** is a miracle more marvelous than seeing with your physical eyes. This man needed the...

✠ healing Light (vv.1-7)

Glasses would not help the disciples with a question like this. They see a man blind from birth and ask Jesus so respectfully, ***“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”*** What is it about us “human beans” that no matter how bad the situation, we can always manage to make it worse? We constantly assume the worst about people suffering. Remember how hard Job's friends tried to prove his suffering was from something really wrong? God was not pleased. The Bible tells us suffering came into the world because of Adam's sin. But you can't always blame a certain sin for people's plight. Jesus warns, ***“Unless you repent, you too will all perish.”*** (Luke 13:3 NIV84)

No normal glasses could give insights like Jesus' answer. For this you need the heart of God. Jesus reveals what human eyes cannot see: ***“Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.”*** How would you ever know what a great roof you have on your house without a good storm now and then? How can you know the power in your pickup if you never have heavy loads to haul? How can you know the love of God if you never have troubles beyond your ability? How could we better appreciate God's power to help us than by watching Jesus heal this man born blind? It was Jesus' work on earth. ***“I AM the Light of the world.”***

Don't expect God's **healing Light** to function like a flashlight. Jesus does the last thing you might expect for Him to heal the man's eyes. He spit. That's right. Jesus spit on the ground and made some mud. Then He smeared the mud on the man's eyes and told him, ***“Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam.”*** If Jesus' had snapped His fingers or waived a magic wand, some might call this an accident. But strange deeds make strong wonders and signs that cannot be denied. So don't expect everything to go your way all the time. Jesus is the **healing Light** in your life too. You might want a million dollars; He'll give you mud instead. You might want wealth; He says, ***“Go, wash...”*** in the waters of Baptism. People pay tens of thousands for an education. God's insights are free, and freely given in God's Word.

Who would refuse God's **healing Light** and constantly avoid **Seeing Jesus, the Christ of God**? Is it simple confusion? This man's friends and neighbors argued whether he was the same blind man they knew. But how do you explain this? The man was in trouble with the authorities.

## ✠ Sabbath Prophet (vv.13-17)

It seems there was a problem with his healing. No, his eyes were perfectly fine. He wasn't overcharged. Unfortunately, some very powerful people did not like the day on which he was healed. Imagine that! They thought it was against God's Law to heal on the Sabbath.

1500 years earlier through Moses, God had commanded His people not to work on Saturday. Their Hebrew Word "Sabbath" means "rest." Sadly, they forgot the other half of God's command: Go to church! Hear God's Word. *Chicken Soup for the Soul* is just a book title. "Rest" for your soul is what God gives in His holy Word and what He wants for all of us. When they missed this Good News, they made up their own bad news. They defined "work" as dragging your staff on the ground – "plowing!" Or healing someone like this blind man. So they accused Jesus of sin for healing him on the Sabbath. But when they asked the formerly blind man what he thought of Jesus, he got it right. "**He is a prophet.**"

Have you reached that place in your spiritual journey where you consider Jesus "**a prophet**"? Muslims and Mormons will give Jesus that much. Mohammed and Joseph Smith, of course, considered themselves to be greater prophets. But that's because they missed the **Sabbath** part of Jesus' prophetic work. If you have fooled yourself with work righteousness and think you're a good person without **the Christ of God**, you will never get beyond Jesus as just a "**prophet**" – a few good things to say, but not really relevant today. Blind Pharisee. And they cursed everyone who disagreed with them. They accosted the man's parents whether their son was actually healed. They threatened to throw anyone out of the synagogue who said Jesus was the Christ. And you're right there with them if you think Jesus has nothing to say to you as God. But if you feel your guilt and shame, if you admit the sickness in your soul, then you should also listen to Jesus express God's love for you. As the **Sabbath Prophet** He says, "**Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.**" (Matthew 11:28–30 NIV84)

## ✠ the Son of God (vv.34-39)

What is it that makes some people so angry about Jesus? The Pharisees actually summoned the blind man again to argue that Jesus must be a sinner and could not possibly be from God. But the man was amazed at their confusion and tried to convince them, "**If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.**" That really put them over the edge. "**You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!**" Can you believe it? They were so angry at Jesus, they threw the man out.

Don't expect the world to love you. Don't expect the religious community to give you accolades, serenades or marmalade just because you love Jesus. "Christian" to them does not include Christ and all His teaching. For many it's just a cultural thing into which they were born. They keep Christ at arm's length or out of sight. Our sinful eyes do not choose to see Him as **the Christ of God**.

Yet you never need to feel dejected for being rejected by the world. All this man did was stick up for Jesus who gave him the priceless gift of sight. What he did not realize was that Jesus was not done blessing him yet. Now I ask you, was the man looking for Jesus the first time? No, he was blind. Now that he can see physically, is he looking for Jesus? No, he's still blind inside his soul. But guess what! Jesus is looking for him. And Jesus is looking for you in order to complete His miracle in your life.

"**Do you believe in the Son of Man?**" Jesus is **the Son of God**, but He usually calls Himself "**the Son of Man.**" He identifies with us just as He identified Himself to this blind man. **Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."** Blind souls who insist they can see without Jesus are judged blind. All who admit their blindness will find God gracious and kind. God heals you. God forgives you. *Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind; Sight, riches, healing of the mind, Yea, all I need, in thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.* (CW 397:4) Amen.