

Was Blind  Now I See


† washed (vv.1-7)

† taught (vv.13-17)

† saved (vv.34-39)

In the name of Jesus, our miraculous Savior, dearly redeemed children of God:

My last sermon on this text was nine years ago (S#1349, 3/27/2011), barely two years after the Swine Flu outbreak, 200 times more deadly than the Corona Virus. “Swine flu (H1N1) is now considered normal seasonal influenza...included in flu vaccine...CDC estimates swine flu infected nearly 61 million people in the US...caused 12,469 deaths. Worldwide, up to 575,400 people died from...swine flu. <sup>1</sup>” So why don’t folks remember when our news is 51 deaths in the US as of Friday? Media reporting? Politicking? Or more knowledge about pandemics? Does the Internet fuel panic more distressing than the disease?

God’s Word helps us step back and breathe the clean air of God’s truth. We’re blessed by kind words of our Creator, personal sacrifice and guilt deliverance by our Redeemer, the solid, steady peace of our Sanctifier: **“Cast all your cares on him because he cares for you.”** (1 Peter 5:7 MC) This too shall pass. But will we be wiser? Will more of our fellow sinners be on their knees asking God’s forgiving grace? Will more souls be prepared for the Last Day to face our Eternal Judge? Grace is still calling each of us: **“Look, now is the favorable time! See, now is the day of salvation!”** (2 Corinthians 6:2 EHV <sup>2</sup>) It’s good to be in this hospital for souls. We need help with our own condition: **Was Blind  Now I See.**

† washed (vv.1-7)

Shocking! A man quarantined off a cruise ship getting death threats against him and his family! Where is God’s Golden Rule? **“Love your neighbor as yourself.”** But before we pass judgment, did you hear the question of Jesus’ own disciples? **“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”** Someone has to be blamed? Same question in what may be the oldest book of the Bible, all about tragedy. Physically, emotionally, spiritually – Job lost everything – health, marriage, family. What did his highly religious friends try to do? Blame it all on Job. At the end of the book Job must repent for questioning God. But his friends need forgiveness because God is angry they did not speak correctly about Him. Are we too ready to assign blame? As blind as Jesus’ disciples? According to the Old Testament reading today: **“Who is as blind as my servant...blind as my associate, as blind as the servant of the Lord? You, Israel, see many things, but you do not observe.”** (Isaiah 42:19f EHV)

We need to be washed. **Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that God’s works might be revealed in connection with him. I must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work.** He also says, **“We must do the work of him who sent me.”** (NIV, et al) Jesus who says, **“As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the World,”** also says, **“You are the light of the world.”** (Matthew 5:14 EHV) Limited time! Today – shine this light.

**Jesus spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and spread the mud on the man’s eyes. “Go,” Jesus told him, “wash in the pool of Siloam” (...“Sent”).** More powerful than modern medicine! **He went and washed, and came back seeing. Washed** and miraculously healed!

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.verywellhealth.com/what-is-h1n1-swine-flu-770496>

<sup>2</sup> EHV ~ Evangelical Heritage Version (<http://wartburgproject.org>) © 2019. NPH: 800-662-6022; also Amazon-Kindle.

Everyone is happy, right? No so fast. Let's say you take God's Word seriously and repent of sexual immorality, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, thievery, greed, drunkenness, verbal abuse, swindling. Paul told the Corinthians such people living in sin cannot inherit the kingdom of God. ***"And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."*** (1 Corinthians 6:11 NIV84) God welcomes you home for Jesus' sake, while friends forsake you. And this man – **washed** – found trouble at church!

### ✠ **taught (vv.13-17)**

The crowd wouldn't believe he was the blind man. Religious leaders, self-righteous Pharisees, would not believe he was born blind. His parents were afraid of reprisals and dodged the question about how their son was healed. Division among authorities arguing whether Jesus came from God because Jesus made mud and opened the man's eyes on the Sabbath Day. The Sabbath was meant for physical and spiritual rest, but over the centuries Jewish elders made it into a set of empty rules. Apparently, they ruled it was illegal "work" to spit, make mud, and heal a blind man with it?

Can you see the blindness? First, Jesus' disciples – like us by nature. Religious leaders, church people all blind about Jesus. It's blindness to question God's power and love in our lives! The only one who can really see in this story is the man who was born blind. He could see from God's Word about Jesus: ***"He is a prophet."*** He who was **washed** had also been **taught**. Insulted Pharisees threw him out.

Years later a hardened sailor needed to be **taught**. His teenage immorality disgusted his father, a slave ship's captain, and crew. Later he deserted the British Navy...captured, a tormented toy of a slave trader's mistress. Finally going home he accidentally read a Christian book and slammed it shut wondering, "What if Christianity is true?" A violent storm nearly sent the ship to the deep. **Taught** by terror, he finally read his Bible. John Newton wrote: "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found was blind but now I see!"

### ✠ **saved (vv.34-39)**

Our blind man **washed...taught...seeing** – needed one more thing. At this point he could only stumble in spiritual darkness, a victim of disease, fearful of failure, prisoner of church and government abuse. Like us, he could never find what he needed. So Jesus found him. What awesome love that seeks and saves the lost. Faithful family, good friends, loving Christian neighbors – God uses us all to find souls for Jesus who found us first. ***"Do you believe in the Son of God?" "Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" "You have seen him, and he is the very one who is speaking with you." "Lord, I believe!" and he knelt down and worshipped him...."For judgment I came into this world, in order that those who do not see will see, and those who do see will become blind."***

All people are born spiritually blind. Millions stumble through life convinced they can see! So they remain lost in the blindness of sin and unbelief. When Jesus finds you with His Word and sacrament, He gives you the seeing eyes of faith and turns on the light of God's Word. His amazing grace **saved** you for heaven, but also for a healthy life of service on earth – even in times of sickness.

Martin Luther was asked about his decision to stay in Wittenberg with wife Katie to care for the sick during The Black Death plague. Though we are nowhere near that level of danger, his wise words shed light for us too: "I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."<sup>3</sup> Amen.

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<sup>3</sup> *Luther's Works*. Vol. 43, p. 132. Letter: "Whether one may flee from a Deadly Plague," written to Rev. Dr. John Hess. For *The Preacher's Apprentice (TPA)* sermon study or copies: [m.cordes@comast.net](mailto:m.cordes@comast.net). New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church You can also call: 651-484-1169. Hear the sermon at [www.wels.us/newlife](http://www.wels.us/newlife). 180 County Rd F - Shoreview, MN 55126