

No Jesus? No Different. Know Jesus; Be Transformed.

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[0 : 00] We're back in the Gospel of John, back in chapter 9.

! So we're going to begin chapter 9 this morning. So this morning's sermon text is John 9, verses 1 through 12. If you don't have a Bible with you, there's a Bible in the pew that you can use.

If you don't own a Bible, please take that Bible with you home today as a gift from our congregation that you would continue to be reading the Word of God. John 9, verses 1 through 12, if you'd stand with me, as we honor the reading of God's Word together.

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?

Jesus answered, It was not that this man sinned or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day.

[1 : 16] Night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva.

Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which means scent. So he went and washed and came back seeing.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, Is this not the man who used to sit and beg? Some said, It is he. Others said, No, but he is like him.

He kept saying, I am the man. So they said to him, Then how were your eyes opened? He answered, The man called Jesus, made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, Go to Siloam and wash.

So I went and washed and received my sight. They said to him, Where is he? He said, I do not know. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word.

[2 : 27] Would you please be seated? In Acts chapter 4, Peter and John, if you remember, are arrested.

They've healed a man who was paralyzed. And then in that healing, they preach the gospel as a crowd assembles around them. And then they are arrested and they are brought before the council, the same council of men that conspired to murder Jesus.

Peter and John appear before them, and Acts 4 records Peter's bold testimony before this council. Acts 4, 13 through 14 records the council's response to Peter's preaching. It says, Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished, and they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. I love this chapter and Peter's bold proclamation of the gospel before these men because if you remember, it wasn't too much time before this moment in Acts chapter 4 where Peter was not boldly proclaiming the gospel.

[4 : 05] Remember, Peter and the rest of the disciples acted like cowards when they came to arrest Jesus.

Remember, even after Peter said, I will be with you. If they're going to kill you, they're going to have to go through me. Then as they led Jesus away, where was Peter?

Following at a safe distance. And then when Jesus was tried, where was Peter? He was outside. But when he was questioned by a little servant girl, this brave, strong, fisherman, man's man, was terrified.

Terrified of her accusations. Denied the fact that he knew Christ. Denied the fact that he had been with Christ. Three times. Then when Jesus was crucified, he with the rest of the disciples, once

again, went into hiding.

But then Jesus came back to life. And Jesus went and found Peter and his disciples. Remember, he reinstated Peter. He forgave Peter.

[5 : 24] He encouraged Peter. He emboldened Peter. And then on the day of Pentecost, after our Lord had ascended, and the Holy Spirit came, Peter was the man who preached.

And he preached boldly. He preached confidently. And as a result of his preaching, the Holy Spirit saved 3,000 people that day.

And the church was founded. Peter was no longer running and hiding. Peter was no longer denying Christ, but boldly proclaiming the gospel.

He was brave. He was thinking. And he was seeing with a new perspective. No longer fearing men. And though the council, who he was appearing before with John in Acts 4, had rejected the gospel, they could still tell that Peter and John were different men.

[6 : 25] And they understood that what made them different was that they had been with Jesus. Even though they had rejected Jesus and were still rejecting Jesus, they couldn't deny that Jesus Christ had transformed the lives of these men.

These uneducated and common men, as uneducated and as common as they seemed to be to them, they could tell that they'd been with Jesus.

And they were different. They were boldly proclaiming the gospel with the result that the Holy Spirit was using them, using their testimony, as they preached the good news of Jesus Christ to bring salvation and transformation to many, many others.

So the main idea for this morning's sermon has to deal with transformation. That's what this passage is about. Jesus Christ transforms lives.

Those who trust in Him are never the same. Jesus Christ transforms lives. Those who trust in Him are never the same.

[7 : 44] In this text, Jesus heals a man who is born blind. Chapter 9 is 41 verses long, yet only two of those 41 verses actually cover the man's being healed.

The miracles we know that Jesus performed were done with a purpose. And so as we go through John chapter 9, we'll see that the purpose of this miracle was to portray the transformative power of Jesus Christ.

He is, as He said, the light and the life of the world. He brings sight to the spiritually blind and life to the spiritually dead.

Jesus transforms lives. The key verse for interpreting this passage, I think, is verse 39. Why was Jesus doing this?

What is He trying to get across? What message? I think verse 39 covers it. Jesus said, For judgment I came into this world that those who do not see may see and that those who see may become blind.

[8 : 58] As we go along, we'll unpack more of what Jesus means by that. But we can understand or what we need to understand today as we go along in these first 12 verses is that the first coming of Christ did not bring in the last judgment, but that time is fast approaching.

In fact, it could be today. We don't know. We just know that it's coming. But until it comes, we realize that we right now live in the age in the day of redemption.

Today is still the day of salvation. This is still the time for transformation in Christ when the blind are made to see and those dead in their trespasses and sins are raised to newness in life in Jesus Christ.

In verses 9, 1 through 12, we are presented with three realities of the transformed life. And my question to you before we go on is, has Christ transformed your life?

Has Christ transformed your life? If not, maybe it's because you think that you're too far gone.

[10 : 18] You think that you're unsavable. You think that you've messed up too bad. Or that you have to clean yourself up in order to be presentable to the Lord and His church.

And so I pray if that's the case for you today that you will hear and that the Lord will give spiritual sight and life to you today. If you have been transformed by Christ, I want you to think about as we go through this text is, are you seeing that transformative power of Him consistently displayed in your life?

Are you still being renewed? Are you still being changed? Are you still becoming made more like Christ? Are you being conformed into His image?

Are these realities of the transformed life evident within you? And if so, then rejoice and worship. But if not, repent, seek forgiveness, and be on your way.

Praying and seeking the Lord's will to be conformed evermore into His image. So three realities about the transformed life. First of all, first reality of the transformed life is that Jesus transforms our way of thinking.

[11:47] He transforms our way of thinking. That reality comes from verses 1 through 5. But before John shows us how Jesus Christ transforms our way of thinking, verse 1 says that Jesus was passing by when He saw the blind man.

And I love that verse. In fact, I think we could just preach, I could preach an entire message on just the fact that Jesus saw the blind man. Or that Jesus was out when He saw the blind man.

And I love this verse because it reveals that our Savior didn't waste time. He didn't waste His life. He wasn't idle in His ministry.

He was accessible. He went to people. He was engaged in His community. And it serves as a reminder to us that we should be too.

Accessible, engaged in our community, reaching out to them being active, being visible. And when we do so, we see, like with Christ and the disciples, that God creates these sort of divine appointments, opportunities for us to interact with unbelievers and to share the gospel with them, to share the love and the joy that we have and the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

[13:16] Jesus saw the blind man and so did His disciples. The blind man's condition created a theological dilemma in their thinking.

The question that they posed to Jesus assumed the popular Jewish doctrine of the time that anyone's physical suffering was a direct result of personal sin.

And that thought had been around for a while. If you've read Job, you know that Job's three friends were coming at him in the same way. They were adamant that Job's suffering was a result of God's punishing him for some unconfessed sin, but they left out the understanding that there is grace as a part of suffering for the Lord, that God has a purpose in that for us.

The disciples reasoned that the blind man's condition though was either a result of punishment for his sins or sins of his parents.

So that may have led to their understanding of Job or misunderstanding of that I should say may have led to them drawing that conclusion, but I think there's other factors at play as well.

[14:38] Hellenistic Jews influenced by Greek philosophers during this time argued for the soul's pre-existence. And so they taught that people could be punished in this life for sins that they committed in a previous existence, that their soul committed in a previous existence.

Now that thought is actually very similar to the theological concept of karma in Buddhist and Hindu religions. The idea that how you live your life will determine the quality of life you will have after you've been reincarnated.

In other words, you reap in the next life what you sow in this life. I once heard a testimony of an Indian Christian who came to life as a young man but he was born with polio and though there was a cure for polio his parents never sought that for him never sought to get him vaccinated.

And he was told as a young boy by his Hindu priest whatever they call themselves that his condition was the result of sins of his past life.

Could you imagine being eight years old and being told that you are going to pay and you're going to suffer physically for the rest of your life because of sins that you committed in some past existence that you have no recollection of?

[16:30] The Bible rejects the idea of reincarnation and it does not support the idea of karma. Hebrews 9:27 and just as it is appointed for man to die once and after that comes judgment.

You see the Lord has a way of transforming our thinking. This verse Hebrews 9:27 states the truth that there is no endless cycle of life and death.

After death we face judgment. There is no second chance like there is in reincarnation and karma. You have one life and you have only one hope of salvation from the judgment that is to come and that hope is in Jesus Christ and Him alone who gave His life as a sacrifice for our sins that in believing in Him and what He has done not what we must do we are born again in this life set free from sin's consequences and God's judgment in the eternal life that is to come because again of His work on the cross not what we've done.

Ephesians 2 8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith this is not your own doing it is the gift of God not a result of works so that no one may boast.

See Jesus transforms our way of thinking however the Bible does say that suffering in general ultimately is a result of sin in general the curse of the fall remember in Genesis 3 God pronounced what the curses would be that there's going to be suffering now in life because sin has entered the world and the Bible makes mention of specific situations where an illness befell a person as a consequence of a specific sin think of Miriam for example who was stricken with leprosy for rebelling against Moses' authority in Numbers chapter 12 in John chapter 5 verse 14 Jesus cautioned the man whom he had healed at the pool of Bethesda see you are well sin no more that nothing worse may happen to you Paul likewise told the

[19 : 06] Corinthians who were partaking of the Lord's supper in an unworthy manner he's saying to them many of you are weak and ill and some have died because of how you have taken communion in an unworthy ungodly way so the Bible does mention some of those specific situations the Bible mentions God's carrying out punishment on subsequent generations for the sins of their fathers Exodus chapter 20 verse 5 you shall not bow down to them or serve them speaking of false gods for I the Lord your God am a jealous God visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generations of those who hate me the disciples may have determined in John chapter 9 as many Jews during that time did that the blind man was perhaps born blind because his parents participated in a pagan faith while he was still in his mother's womb and so they could have been of the mind that he was guilty by their association but

Jesus said it was not that this man sinned or his parents which resulted with his being born blind and we know that in all things Jesus ultimately is the authority the final authority so if it wasn't that then it wasn't that passages like Exodus chapter 20 verse 5 I think are best understood in a national sense or a societal sense the point is that the corrupting effect of a wicked generation seeps into subsequent generations that are to follow for example the Hebrew children in the Exodus suffered for 40 years in the wilderness wandering because of the sin of their parents generation tragically we know of many instances where a child has suffered for the consequences of their parents sinful choices a mother's abuse of drugs or alcohol negatively affects the health of her baby in the womb my children were born early and had to spend some time in the

NICU Jack for a week Hazel for a month Danny spent more of her time in there than I did but we spent a lot of time in the NICU and I'll never forget we'll never forget in some of those rooms the screams the crying of these children as they were having withdrawals because their mom was abusing substances while they were in the womb and we know too that even outside of the womb children suffer by the abuse of their fathers and their mothers in many different tragic ways but in the case of the man born blind Jesus states that his condition was not a result of his having some kind of pre-existing sin nor was he suffering because of his parents sin look again at verse 3 he explains why it was not that this man sinned or his parents but that the works of

God might be displayed in him what does that mean scripture interprets scripture scripture reveals that some suffering like the trials of Job are for God's glory some suffering serves to purify our faith some suffering serves to give us opportunity and a platform to declare the goodness of Jesus Christ 1 Peter 1 6-7 in this you rejoice though now for a little while if necessary you have been grieved by various trials so that the tested genuineness of your faith more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire may be found to result in praise in glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ sometimes suffering glorifies

God and experiencing how his grace sustains us through times of distress 2nd Corinthians 12 9-10 but he said to me my grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may rest upon me for the sake of Christ then I am content with weaknesses insults hardships persecution calamities all forms of suffering for when I am weak then I am strong in the case of the!

[24 : 34] blind man his suffering Jesus said would serve to glorify God through the miraculous healing that he was about to experience you know God transforms our way of thinking and no doubt many of you have suffered in many different ways but I'm sure that you can say with me that you've seen in that suffering that God has a purpose God has a purpose though it may not always be presently known to us we have assurance from him that his purpose in all things is ultimately for the good Romans 8 28 and we know that for those who love God all things good things that we perceive as being good things bad things the way that we perceive them God works all things

together for good for those who are called according to his purpose Jesus was transforming the thinking of his disciples correcting some bad theology his healing the blind man would demonstrate his ability not only to bring physical sight to the blind but more importantly display his ability to give spiritual sight to those who are born blind by sin to save sinners and transform them into a new creation this is what

Jesus is going to show through this blind man but imagine being him for a moment imagine being that blind man doesn't say how old he was but he was a man so he had lived for quite a while he had been blind his whole life I wonder that as Jesus was having this conversation with the disciples I wonder if he could hear what they were saying I wonder if he was just sitting right there you know I'm here I hear what you're I wonder if that wasn't the case I'm sure it was in other cases he's there he's begging and people are talking about whether or not he's been born blind because of some pre-existing sin of his or some unconfessed sin of his parents as if he wasn't just blind he was deaf and dumb could you imagine being in that situation and I'm sure that the more that he heard these things maybe he began to believe it

I'm cursed and it may have been some sin I committed that I don't even know about maybe it's something my parents did but I'm cursed I am in a cycle of despair that cannot be broken maybe he used that as an excuse there's no hope for me no hope just to sit here and beg maybe that's the way that you feel right now you feel like there's no hope for you that you are cursed that you're a part of a cycle of abuse you've been hurt and you're doomed to experience it and you're doomed to repeat it in your own life to the people whom you love but oh there is hope for you there is hope for you in

Jesus Christ Jesus Christ will set you free he will break the cycle he has broken sins curse and like the blind man then he sees you today and he's able to transform you as well there is hope for you if you put your faith in Jesus Christ and his ability to transform you Romans 10 9 it's so simple you want to be transformed you realize that you feel cursed and you feel like there's no hope but if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved you'll be transformed that cycle will be broken you'll be a new creation you will be a person with hope hope for now hope forever!

you are saved you know that you think changing the way that you see sin transforming your mind as you read his word the disciples brought their questions to Jesus and so should you you know they had a theological dilemma and they asked Jesus about it that was the right thing to do and Jesus didn't say oh you dummies what a dumb question no Lord's not going to do that to you either if you have questions go to Jesus for answers you can do that through prayer reading his word and asking other Christians for clarity this is how we sharpen one another ask your questions seek answers think differently the text instructs us to do just that to think differently to think transformationally notice how the disciples focus was backwards their thinking was backwards they were stuck analyzing how the blind man came into this condition that he was currently in but [30 : 43] Jesus focus was forward not backwards and our focus should be forward too unbelievers don't need us to psychoanalyze them they don't need us to serve as their therapists digging through their past to try to understand why they are the way that they are we know why they are the way that they are because they're sinners just like we are in need of the same salvation that we have received they need to know!

and hope for them ahead through Jesus Christ and not only that that he redeems our past by forgiving it and he walks with us now and forever in the present and in the future that is always and continually hopeful that's what they need to hear from us and there should be within us an urgency for this as there was with Jesus look at verses 4 and 5 he says we must work the works of him who sent me while it is day night is coming when no one can work as long as I am in the world I am the light of the world and so here Jesus makes a reference to the fact that shortly in a few months he is going to be crucified the disciples are going to hide but Jesus knowing that this time was fast approaching was diligent and urgent to do his father's will he wasn't sulking he wasn't despairing oh night is coming what am I going to do just sit here and wallow in pity feel sorry for me no he was working and so should we be things are getting dark in our world and our society and our nation and that should give us all the more reason like

Jesus to let our shine like a city on a hill that people would see that people would believe that people would be changed by Jesus who is the light of the world Jesus transforms our way of thinking the second reality of the transformed life is that Jesus transforms our way of seeing verses

6 through 8 we'll read verses 6 through 7 again having said these things Jesus spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva and he anointed the man's eyes with the mud now we've seen Jesus use his saliva to heal before as was the case with the deaf and mute man in Mark chapter 7 but here he makes mud with his spit and directly applies to man's eyes why why did he do that well some of the early church fathers believed that what

Jesus was doing here was a reflection of Genesis chapter 2 where God formed Adam out of the dust out of the dirt breathed life into him and so maybe here Jesus is making some eyes with the mud and that's what he gave to the man so that he could see but we know that Jesus healed many people in many different ways didn't he sometimes it was just with a word sometimes it was just with a touch sometimes he wasn't there at all he was from a distance far away still healing people by his word why did he heal in so many different ways well I think that his!

this is what I think to keep our focus off the method and onto him if now think about it if every healing recorded in the Bible involved Jesus using spit to make mud out of dirt and then applying it to every person what would we be doing today this would be a muddy we'd be covered in mud wouldn't we well the answer is in the method get a wheelbarrow of dirt in here let's all hock loogies into it and start rubbing it all over how disgusting would that be so whatever the reason why he did it this way I think what we've got to keep in mind is that it's not the method that brought the healing it was the person who is Jesus Christ and so Jesus did I think it's interesting here that

[35 : 38] John notes the name of the pool that it's called sent and he's making a connection here between the pool's name and Jesus being the son of God sent to save sinners sent to give life to the dead sent to give sight to the blind if you remember at the feast of tabernacles we were there not that long ago in John chapter 7 water was drawn from this same pool and Jesus demonstrated then how that ceremony foreshadowed him and his coming John 7 37 through 38 on the last day of the feast the great day Jesus stood up and cried out as they were doing this as they were!

pouring! this water out rivers of living water and so all of this imagery should prompt us to see how this miraculous healing served as a living parable of what happens in salvation when the spiritually blind are made by God to see the Bible says that people are blinded by sin 2nd Corinthians 4 4 that lost sinners have no capacity to recognize the Savior or find him on their own Romans 3 11 8 so it is in salvation if God had not reached out to spiritually blind sinners no one would be saved Romans 5 6 John 6 44 45 and just as the blind man was healed only when he obeyed Jesus command and washed in the pool of

Siloam so also are sinners saved only when they humbly and obediently embrace the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ Romans 1 5 15 18 16 26 Hebrews 5 9 2 Thessalonians 1 8 1 Peter 4 17 lot of tongue twisters today that's why I love that song when my lisping stammering tongue is silent and I say amen Lord that is me instructed by Jesus the blind man went obediently he washed as Jesus instructed and he was healed and he came back and he could see being saved by Christ means having your sight transformed not just your mind but the way that you see you see the world through the lens of scripture you see your life as belonging to Christ you see your worth in not what you own or what you have on this earth but based upon whom

God has made you to be through his son Jesus I obviously wear glasses and when I'm not wearing my glasses I can make things out I know I'm in a sanctuary right now obviously right I can kind of tell who people are based upon the colors of clothes that I saw you wear today or where you normally sit but like in the back I don't know I can't see and even the text in front of me from right here gibberish I can make it out though I think sometimes if we're not careful we can drift away from truth we can be that wandering sheep when we do so we lose those lenses those corrective lenses of scripture of prayer and we can still see things out we know some things but it's just not as in focus as it needs to be when you are with the

Lord things come into focus don't they changing the way you think changing the way that you see third reality of the transformed life Jesus will transform us in ways that will cause some to believe and others to doubt cause some to believe others to doubt so the blind man comes back he can see his neighbors are obviously astounded they've known him as a beggar his whole life as someone who could never see but now he can how is that possible and so some people were saying it's him it's him I can tell it's him others were saying no it's not him it's somebody who just looks like him the blind man kept saying though it's me it's really me and they asked him how did this happen how were your eyes open and he said Jesus did it and though the man at this point didn't know where Jesus was when they asked him he knew who it was who had given him sight and had transformed

his thinking his seeing his life and he testified to that though many doubted as will be the case for us those of you who have been transformed by

[40 : 45] Christ people will doubt that no surprise 2nd Corinthians 4 3 through 4 and even if our gospel is veiled it is veiled to those who are perishing in their case the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God but we keep on sharing we keep on testifying because others will believe as will be the case when you share the good news of Jesus Christ 2nd Corinthians 3 18 and we all with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord are being transformed at the image of the Son from one degree to another for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit Jesus Christ transforms lives and those who trust in him are never the same Ephesians 1 18 through 19 having having the eyes of your hearts enlightened that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power towards us who believe according to the work of his great might has he opened the eyes of your heart to see!

and if he has not! but today today he's revealing to you that you're a sinner that judgment is coming that you don't know Christ as your Lord and Savior you may be again of the mind that there is no hope for you I'm cursed the cycle is too powerful to be broken you need to hear today what I pray that you would understand and believe is that Jesus Christ brings transformation to your life you will never be the same again and if you're realizing that today you're blind but now you see we want to know

I want to pray with you we're going to go through our application questions but I want to make sure that I say this I'll be down here I want to pray for you I know that may not be comfortable and so I'll be around today would you please come and find me I want to know we have a responsibility we want to celebrate with you what God has done we want to disciple you in what call me or email me whenever application questions for us to consider about this passage and we'll go over tonight there are four the last one is really one I want you to spend a lot of time thinking about in prayer on your own and do all of these on your own but again come tonight it's a good study good time of conversation!

First question the disciples and the blind man's neighbors are there people that you know groups of people in our society and you look upon them like the disciples did and many of the Jews did at the blind man and that guy is just a curse there's no hope for him but we see that there is hope in Christ there is no lost causes when Jesus is in the picture second question besides the gospel what other methods or means do people trust for life transformation how effective or lasting have their results been I can tell you that self help self improvement books are being written every year so whatever has come before hasn't solved the problem third question what other examples of scripture can you think of where an encounter with

Jesus left that person transformed in their thinking and seeing what other examples of! can you think of where an encounter with Jesus left the person transformed in their thinking and seeing flip back through the gospels and all of the instances where they were completely changed by meeting Christ and and lastly is there something is changing your thinking or seeing today is there something today that he is challenging the way that you've seen before thought before have seen before how is he changing it how does he want you to respond so that the way that you think and the way that you see becomes more and more like Jesus Christ let's pray heavenly father we thank you that there is transformation through Jesus Christ that there is hope in Jesus Christ that there is no cause that is so far lost or so far gone that you aren't capable of bringing redemption to it we know that you can and we know that you are able

[46 : 03] God we pray that for those of us whose lives you have transformed that we like so many others in scripture would be those who boldly proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ with the hopes that others would hear our testimony of you and be saved by you as well God I pray if there's someone who is here or listening today who is not saved who has been led to believe that their situation is hopeless that they're doomed forever that they're a part of a family curse that they're doomed to repeat God I pray that you would reveal them of the truth that there is no curse powerful enough that it cannot be broken by you including the curse of sin we thank you that you have God we pray for those that they would turn to you and that they would see and know the hope that we who have been transformed by Christ have

Lord we pray that like Jesus we would be out and about looking around for people like the blind man to share the good news of Jesus Christ in the hopes that their life will be transformed with his glory to you as well we pray these things in Jesus amen