

John 9:13-23

Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, ¹⁴because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. ¹⁵The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, “He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!”

¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, “This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath.” Others said, “But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?” So there was a deep division of opinion among them.

¹⁷Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, “What’s your opinion about this man who healed you?”

The man replied, “I think he must be a prophet.”

¹⁸The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. ¹⁹They asked them, “Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?”

²⁰His parents replied, “We know this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹but we don’t know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself.” ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. ²³That’s why they said, “He is old enough. Ask him.”

Background

This healing is one of seven “Sign Miracles” chosen by John to demonstrate Jesus’ deity and lead people to believe in Him as the Son of God. (John 20:30-31). When the healed man was brought before the Pharisees, some accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath, claiming that making mud to heal was “work” and thus a violation of the law. However, these Sabbath restrictions were mostly man-made additions, not from God’s original law given through Moses. Jesus often healed on the Sabbath to challenge these legalistic notions and reveal the true intent of God’s law regarding the Sabbath.

Teaching Points

1. People are divided when confronted with the miracles of Christ.

In verse 16, the Pharisees were divided over Jesus’ miracles. Some completely denied them, while others accepted the miracles but not Jesus’ deity. Some, like Nicodemus, became believers. This division continues today. Many people agree that Jesus was a 'good man' in

history, but they remain divided over whether He actually performed miracles. Miracles highlight Jesus' claim to be God, making belief or rejection a pivotal choice.

2. Religious threats carry enormous power.

When the Pharisees talked to the healed man's parents, they were afraid to speak openly and risk being expelled from the synagogue (v20-22). In that day, being put out of the synagogue would negatively affect their social status, their reputations, and might even affect their livelihood! Such religious pressure remains powerful today and can deeply impact lives.

Application

1. You don't have to understand the "mechanics" of your salvation to be saved.

The healing of the blind man symbolizes salvation: we're born spiritually blind but gain spiritual sight when we believe in Jesus (1 Peter 2:9). We don't need to understand all the "theological mechanics" to be saved. The blind man didn't fully understand how he was healed but simply trusted and obeyed. Likewise, we don't need to grasp all the theological details to believe. Salvation comes through faith in Jesus. It's like flipping a light switch: it works even if we don't understand how.

2. Let's not measure spirituality by man-made standards.

The Pharisees accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath by healing, but Jesus refused to be bound by their distorted man-made rules. Modern-day Pharisees still exist in the church. These individuals judge others' spirituality by their own personal standards rather than God's truth. They may critique which Bible translation someone uses, their clothing style, musical preferences, or how they pray. Such standards are flawed and shallow measures of spiritual maturity. Let's measure spirituality by God's standards, not by man-made standards!