



TALKS FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS TRANSCRIPT

John 9:24-34: The Pharisees Reject the Testimony of the Healed Blind Man

"So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner."

25 He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."

26 Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

27 He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?"

28 Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. 29 We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from."

30 The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! 31 Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. 32 Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. 33 If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."

34 They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out."

Background Notes

The Pharisees were members of a religious sect within Judaism at the time of Christ. Most of the Pharisees were self-righteous hypocrites and they refused to accept the fact that Jesus was the Messiah. In John 9, the Pharisees did everything they could to discredit the Lord and belittle the blind man who had been healed. *"So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner"(v24).* "Give God the glory" was a figurative expression for "tell the truth." They were convinced that the man who had been healed was lying and hiding the truth. And as far as they were concerned, Jesus was a sinner because He had broken their man-made standards for the Sabbath when He made the mud and placed it on the man's eyes.

In verse 25 the blind man said, *"Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."* In other words (paraphrasing here) – I don't know whether or not he is a sinner according to your manmade standards concerning the Sabbath -- and frankly I don't care! This one thing I do know, though - once I was blind, and now I see!

So the Pharisees asked him again, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"(v26). It seems they were looking for a way to explain away this miracle with some naturalistic explanation. Skeptics try to do the same thing today. "Jesus didn't really walk on water; the disciples thought He walked on water, but He was actually walking on a sand bar." (Or something like that!) In verse 27, there's no doubt that blind man was using sarcastic irony when he answered the self-righteous Pharisees:

"He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?"

Well, the Pharisees couldn't stand it! *"Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples"(v28). They claimed to be Moses' disciples -- not disciples of some unknown carpenter from Nazareth. They were disciples of **Moses!** Once again the man used sarcasm (v30): "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!" In other words, he was saying, "You claim to know so much -- you certainly ought to know someone who is so great that He can heal a person who was born blind! After all, it's unheard of - no one has opened the eyes of a man born blind since the foundation of the world!" The Pharisees just couldn't handle this man's logic and common sense, because it showed that they were wrong, so they said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out." They expelled him from their synagogue; they cast him out.*

Doctrinal / Teaching Points

1. No amount of evidence will convince the hardened skeptic.

These Pharisees were hardened skeptics; their minds were made up about Jesus. As far as they were concerned, Jesus was not the Messiah, and no amount of evidence would convince them.

Let's suppose that we were living in the first century. If we were to ask the Pharisees, "What will the coming Messiah do to prove that He is the Messiah?" Before this miracle took place, they might have said something like this: "Well, we know from the prophecies of Isaiah that the coming Messiah will open the eyes of the blind." That prediction is certainly loud and clear in the prophecies of Isaiah. So they might have said, "To convince us, anyone claiming to be the Messiah would have to be able to heal a blind person, and this blind person would have to be a person that was born blind -- congenital blindness -- none of this temporary blindness stuff. And furthermore, we want this person to be a mature adult that everyone knows has been blind for years." Well, I think that you see the point, right? That's exactly what happened! Jesus healed a blind man -- but they wouldn't believe, because **no amount of evidence** will convince the hardened skeptic.

Now let's bring this scenario up to the present day. Ask the hardened skeptic today what kind of evidence would convince them that an all-powerful creator exists. They might say something like this: "To convince us that there is an all-powerful creator, we want to see something come out of nothing, because we know that you can't get something out of nothing. In fact, we would like to see a full-blown universe come out of nothing."

Well, skeptics -- you've got it! How much more evidence do you need? But do the hardened skeptics believe? No, they don't believe. They would rather believe that the universe came out nothing by itself -- by the big bang theory -- whatever! No amount of evidence will convince the hardened skeptic.

2. The religious establishment rejects the testimony of born again believers.

The healing of the blind man is an illustration of becoming a Christian. He was once blind, physically blind, but was given sight. So we were spiritually blind, but after

becoming Christians we have spiritual sight. And just as the religious establishment of that day rejected this man's testimony, so the religious establishment today rejects the testimony of a born again believer. Now notice I said, "the religious establishment." It's not just the secular world that rejects the testimony of the born again believer – the religious establishment rejects it as well.

In a church where I was speaking, a young man named Mark gave his testimony. He said that God saved him in a miraculous way and transformed his life. Praise the Lord! Here's the point: if Mark were to give that same testimony in many main-line denominational churches today, or in many of our seminaries, his testimony would be rejected. They simply wouldn't buy it. They would say, "Mark, it's very nice to hear of this change in your life, but no 'miracle' took place. You have to understand -- there is nothing to this idea of being born again. You had a psychological need, but the change in your life was your own doing. It's great that you turned over a new leaf, that you are going straight now, but this was really all your doing -- your choice, you see. Don't try to explain this as a miracle, or that you have had some kind of born-again experience!" The religious establishment rejects the testimony of born again believers.

Practical Application

Don't be surprised if the religious world hates you.

Look at verse 28: "*Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples."* They hated him! They not only rejected his testimony, they actually **hated** the man who was healed. In verse 34 they told him, "*You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out.*" When they said the man was completely born in sins, they weren't talking about the sinful nature that every person has. No, they repudiated this man by saying that he had been born in an even worse situation -- "completely steeped in sin"! They hated him with a fanatical hatred, and they expelled him from the synagogue.

Don't be surprised if the religious world hates you. 1 John 3:13 says, "*Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.*" Now you might think that that 1 John 3:13 refers to the secular world, but look at John 15:18, "*If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.*" What world hated the Lord Jesus? Not just the secular world -- **specifically** the **religious** world hated the Lord! They crucified him! Don't be surprised if the religious world hates you.

When I lived in the Chicago area, a group of evangelicals in one of the suburban communities tried to get permission to hold an evangelistic rally in a local park. The community board not only refused to grant permission, they showed some animosity towards the evangelicals! Now here is the point: as far as I know, everyone on that community board is a professing Christian! They profess to be Christians, they attend church, they are part of the religious establishment, the religious world -- but they didn't want to have the gospel presented publicly. They didn't want to hear that man is a sinner and on his way to hell. They didn't want to hear that Christ is the only way of salvation. They believed that there is no hell, that man is basically good and can make it on his own by "living a good life."

Don't be surprised if the religious world hates you. They hate the message you bring, and that hatred may sometimes be directed towards you. Don't be surprised if the religious world hates you!