

Coming to Jesus, Leaving Jesus

John 9.8-41

The pathway to believing in Jesus is rarely a miraculous out-of-the-blue experience of coming to faith; it is usually the culmination of a series of events or encounters. The process of *leaving Jesus* also involves a series of events or encounters. Both pathways are highlighted in John 9.

Coming to Jesus

- “The man who is called Jesus...” (11)
- “He is a prophet.” (17)
- “If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.” (33)
- “Lord, I believe.” (38)

Leaving Jesus

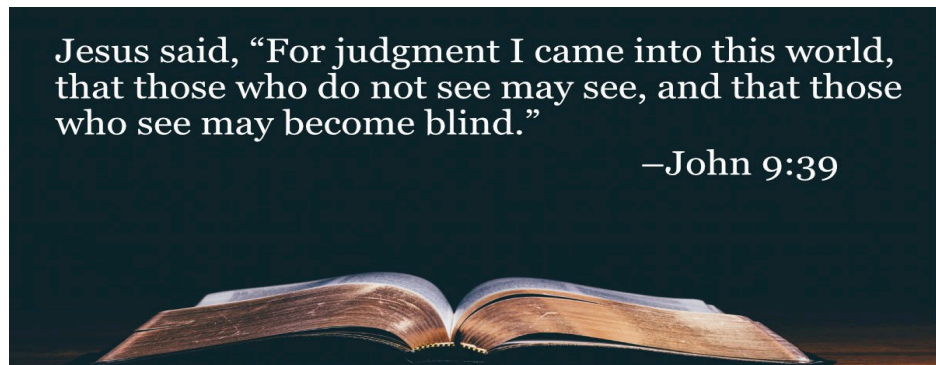
- ...there was a division among them. (16)
- “...this man is a sinner.” (24)
- “...we do not know where He is from.” (29)
- ...so they put him out. (34)

The Moral of the Story (39-41)

*Those who recognize they are spiritually blind will see;
those who think they can see remain in their spiritual blindness.*

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.”

—John 9:39



1. While Jesus’ healing of the man born blind (John 9.1-7) displayed His deity, it is obvious that John included this miracle in his Gospel because of the reaction to it. To refresh your memory, what does John *himself* say was his reason for recording the signs (miracles) he did? (See John 20.30-31.) It is important to remember this purpose as you read the accounts of every encounter, miracle, and discourse John includes in his Gospel. Why do you think John chose to focus so closely on the response to this miracle?
2. Read John 9.8-38, imagining the narrative as if you are the man who was born blind, and has just been able to see for the first time. What are you thinking as onlookers, then Pharisees, interrogate you about how you were healed and by whom, and then ask you to impugn the character of Jesus? Imagine meeting Jesus for the first time! What are your feelings as you talk with Him, and you learn who He is?
3. Now let’s ‘flip the script’! Read John 9.8-38 from the perspective of the Jewish religious leaders. What progression do you see in their assessment of who Jesus is? What evidence do they have to ignore to come to their conclusion? In the end, how closed are they to even *hearing* anything that disagrees with their view? How do they treat those who are open to following Jesus?
4. The heart attitude of pride is at the core of this narrative, as Jesus declares in Jn. 9.39-41. What is the spiritual condition of ‘those who do not see’? How do they ‘see’? What is the spiritual condition of ‘those who see’? How do they ‘become blind’? What can those who are ‘blind’ see? What are those who think they can see blind to?
5. Turning your back on God, rejecting Jesus, and embracing your own way, is a downward spiral – no matter what worldly philosophy you may follow. It begins with uncertainty, even honest questioning, but once you reject God and His love, the process of leaving God moves quickly. It may be an unbeliever who refuses to consider the claims of Christ, or a believer who abandons their faith in Christ. Do you know someone on this downward spiral? Pray for them!