

The Light of the World

John 9

He sat silently for a while and then smiled. “Yeeeahhhh,” he said. “I’m not angry [at what happened]. I’m not. I’m mystified, I’ll tell you that. But I’m not angry...”

‘You gotta learn to love the bomb,’ ” he said. “Boy, did I have a bomb when I was 10. That was quite an explosion. And I learned to love it. So that’s why. Maybe, I don’t know. That might be why you don’t see me as someone angry and working out my demons onstage. It’s that I love the thing that I most wish had not happened.”

-Stephen Colbert, “The Late, Great Stephen Colbert” in GQ

FROM BROKEN TO HEALED (vv. 1-7)

Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? (v. 2)

In our limited human view, suffering seems like punishment

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” Jesus answered. (v. 3)

This came about so that God's works might be displayed
in him. (v. 3)

In God's view, suffering can conceal a vocation

A loss or a place of pain becomes a gateway into a greater benefit that one wouldn't have been able to find without the loss and pain. And that benefit is best describes as a "vocation," a calling and a divinely given commission, to make one's loss and pain a means of service to others.

-Wesley Hill

FROM PASSIVE TO ACTIVE (w. 8-34)

A man sent by Jesus (v. 7)

“Go,” Jesus told him, “wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means “Sent”). So he left, washed, and came back seeing. (v. 7)

The living Father sent me. (John 6:57)

I know God, for I come from him, and he sent me. (John 7:29)

As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.
(John 20:21)

A man with a story about Jesus (vv. 8-34)

13 They brought the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees. 14 The day that Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes was a Sabbath. 15 So again the Pharisees asked him how he received his sight.

“He put mud on my eyes,” he told them. “I washed and I can see.”

24 So a second time they summoned the man who had been blind and told him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner!”

25 He answered, “Whether or not He’s a sinner, I don’t know. One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I can see!”

26 Then they asked him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”

27 “I already told you,” he said, “and you didn’t listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You don’t want to become His disciples too, do you?”

“Come, see a man who told me all I ever did! Can this be the Messiah?” (John 4:29)

Many Samaritans from that town believed in Jesus because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." (John 4:39)

FROM BLINDNESS TO SIGHT (vv. 39-41)

39 Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, in order that those who do not see will see and those who do see will become blind.”

40 Some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and asked Him, “We aren’t blind too, are we?”

41 “If you were blind,” Jesus told them, “you wouldn’t have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see’—your sin remains.

The whole human disaster resides in the fact that, as individuals, families, cities, nations, as a tribe of ingratiating, brilliant, momentarily numerous animals, we are perverse, divided against ourselves, deceiving and defeating ourselves...For a long time we have used dichotomies, good people/bad people, good institutions/bad institutions, capitalist/communist. But the universality of self-deceptive and self-destructive behavior is what must impress us finally.

-Marilynne Robinson, *The Death of Adam*

For God, who said 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

-2 Corinthians 4:6

The same power that was at work when God spoke the universe into existence is the same power that's at work anytime a woman or man becomes a follower of Jesus.

Questions for Response

Has Jesus brought you from spiritual blindness to sight?

How might your suffering conceal a vocation to serve others?

How might God be able to use your story to point others to Jesus?