

36. The compassion of Jesus

June 11, 2011

While I prepared this message during last couple of days, I was looking for an opening illustration that would fit this teaching. I spent quite a bit of time to search high and low in the internet – for the right illustration. Nothing popped up to my eyes. Oh yes, there were plenty of tearjerkers, but no go. I shed some tears while I was going through them.

Like just about everyone of you, I take for granted my eye sight. As I am getting older and my eye sight is getting worse, I remember what it was like when I had good eye sight. I don't know which one is worse, a person who lost one's eye sight during one's lifetime or a person who was born blind.

Our brother CJ Daniel here is an exceptional guy. His positive attitude is very contagious and upbeat most of the time. Yes, occasionally he has some downtime, too. When I used to pick him up for our Midweek Services, he came out of his home and moved around my truck so gracefully, I had to wonder if he was pretending to be a blind person just to pull my leg.

One of my prayers for our congregation is that the Lord Jesus heals his eyesight that he can see his family and God's creations, and rejoice in the Lord. But as is, CJ does not have a problem rejoicing in the Lord as we can see and hear.

Throughout the four Gospels in the NT, we see Jesus extended His compassion to the needy and sick people of that time. The majority of them came to Him to be healed once they learned that He was the Miracle Worker from Galilee. But for some, Jesus went to them. They didn't even know that He was there, nor who He was.

This morning we are going to meet a man who was born blind. We don't know his name or his background other than being born blind. But he is about to have a quite illumination.

A. GENERATIONAL CURSE?

John 9:1-3 Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3 Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.

When the disciples passed the blind beggar, their curiosity about why this man was suffering outweighed the prospect of reaching out to help him. Why is it that when we hear about someone who is suffering, we are too often more interested in the details of what, why, when, and where than we are about how we can help?

Their pop-quiz for Jesus revealed that they were dreadfully out of step with their Master's heart. In fact, lurking beneath their question was an already-made judgmental spirit – a desire to know whom to blame – as if that would make anyone feel better.

The ancient Jewish rabbis had a theology that they called 'Prenatal Sin.' They insisted that in the fetal stage, even all the way back to the embryonic stage, baby could sin in the womb. I don't know if they thought when a baby kicks in the womb, that

was considered as rebellion and attitude problem. The disciples of Jesus were taught that way also before they met Jesus.

The idea of 'Prenatal Sin' has not changed a whole lot. But it has a new name now – 'Generational Curses'. This theology is adopted by many charismatic Bible teachers, especially those who are on Christian TV programs. For those who are not familiar with 'Generational Curses', let me explain it to you.

The Bible mentions "Generational Curses" in several places, such as Exodus 20:5; 34:7; Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 5:9. It sounds unfair for God to punish children for the sins of their fathers. However, there are two major flaws in this theology.

1) The scriptural references of Generational Curses is out of context.

You know by now how much I insist that we need to keep the Bible verses we read must be kept in context. Remember what I taught you before? Any text out of context is a pretext which is an absolutely wrong way to make a premise of a theology.

When you read the Scriptures that I mentioned before, in context, you will know that the Lord was speaking to the Israel people as a nation regarding their idolatry, not individual sins. The Israelites disobeyed the Lord and worshiped the gods of the nations which they previously conquered and other foreign nations. What happened to them? They ended up in exile to Babylon for seventy years – the third and fourth generations.

2) Generational Curses theology contradicts other Scriptures.

We should not interpret and apply what Scripture says against other verses. Because the Bible never contradicts itself since it is inspired by the Holy Spirit and has inerrancy.

God knows that the effects of sin are passed down from one generation to the next. When a father has a sinful lifestyle, his children are likely to have the same sinful lifestyle as well. A good example is an alcoholic family – the father or mother is an alcoholic and their children learn from their parents to be one.

That is why it is not unjust for God to punish sin to the next generations – because they are committing the same sins their ancestors did. But they are being punished for their own sins, not the sins of their ancestors.

The Bible specifically tells us that God does not hold children accountable for the sins of their parents.

Deuteronomy 24:16 Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall the children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.

The theology of Generational Curses is flat out UNBIBLICAL. When we become Christians, we are new creations. Old things have passed away; all things have become new. Romans 8:1 teaches us that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. The cure for generational curses is salvation through Jesus Christ and life-time obedience to Him.

This man's blindness was not a result of personal sin. His blindness was the result of sin in general. For that matter, natural disasters, disease, and suffering are the result of sin in general. God told our first parents, Adam and Eve, that if they eat of the

forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden they would surely die, both spiritually and physically.

Despite God's warnings, they ate of it. Since that moment, death has spread through the human race like wildfire. But God has offered a solution to death through His Son Jesus Christ. God loves us so much that He reached out to us by sending His own son, Jesus Christ, to this earth to die for our sins. That is Jesus Christ's compassion at its finest.

Before we move on, we must pay attention to an important thing Jesus did for this man – Jesus had compassion on him. The blind beggar didn't expect anything from Jesus nor did he say anything to Him. He was minding his own business – begging. Out of blue, Jesus came to him. The beggar was not a mere object of His lesson for His disciples, rather he was a person who needed the compassion of God.

B. WORKING THE WORKS OF HIM

John 9:4-5 I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

The growing hostility from the unbelief of the Jewish religious rulers warned Jesus that His time was short. As all the Gospels show, Jesus was working under the shadow of the coming cross which was less than six months away. While He had the opportunity, He must let His light shine on the darkness around Him by healing both bodies and minds. We get to see that in this chapter 9.

The use of "we" shows that He included His disciples in His ministry. They also would pass through perils and opposition, but they would have the support of God the Father who had sent Him.

There are many born-again Christians who do absolutely nothing for the Kingdom of God. They go to church as their Sunday morning routine and they go home. That is the extension of their idea of serving God. To them, evangelizing to the lost sinners is something for pastors, elders, and deacons; to them, serving other Christians is something for other Christians do for them; to them, giving to the Kingdom of God is giving a few dollars to the church once in a blue moon, not because they don't have money, but because they are greedy and disobedient to the Word of God. They expect others to carry the load and they expect others to pay for the expenses to run the church.

Some would say, "Since I do a little more than what the preacher said, I am OK." Then, I have this question to ask you. Would you be comfortable to give that answer to the Lord Jesus face to face when He asks you what kind of works you've done for Him? Do you not know that you are going to face this very question in heaven?

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

In heaven you'll never witness to unbelievers because there's no unbelievers. In heaven you'll never pray for somebody who is sick because there's no sick people.

In heaven you'll never wipe away one tear of compassion because there's no tears in heaven. The only time we have to do His work and show His compassion is now. Please do not waste your limited time on earth. Serve the Lord and do His works for His glory NOW.

There was one lady who stopped coming to our church. She gave her reason of not coming to our church in her last comment: "I don't like to hear that I need to serve the Lord. I just want to listen to comfortable sermons and do my own things." Oh, I fear for her. How much blessings she is missing out by not serving our Wonderful Lord Jesus!

Listen, people of God, Jesus is coming back soon, not on October 21st, 2011 as Harold Camping made another stupid false prophecy. Make your days on earth count for Him. Do the works of God for Him and stop being selfish. You can stop coming to this church and you won't hear this kind of sermons anymore. But the Holy Spirit within you will not leave you alone. Listen to Him and obey Him.

By now, you should know that I don't teach what is comfortable for you to listen to, but helpful for your spiritual growth. I am not trying to be mean to you or putting a guilt trip on you, rather I am waking up some of you from your lethargy and complacency which are two deadly traps in the Christian walk. God cares about your faith more than your health, and your character more than your comfort.

C. ONCE HE WAS BLIND, BUT NOW HE SEES

John 9:6-7 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. 7 And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

Our Lord's method of healing was unique: He put clay on this man's eyes and told him to go wash. Once Jesus healed two blind men by merely touching their eyes in Matthew 9, and He healed another blind man by spitting on his eyes in Mark 8. Though the healing power was the same, our Lord varied His methods so that people cannot focus on the methods of healing and miss the message in the healing.

From Genesis to John, no prophet, priest, or apostle ever gave sight to blind eyes but only Jesus did this type of healing more than any other miracle. Opening the eyes of the blind was a specific work of the Messiah.

Isaiah 35:4-5 Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you." 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Psalms 146:8 The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; The Lord raises those who are bowed down; The Lord loves the righteous.

Some commentators insisted that since God used dirt to create the first man Adam, He used dirt here as well. They forget that God created the entire universe with a series of commands, not necessarily using anything. Don't try to limit what and how our unlimited God can do.

D. HE IS NOT, HE IS TOO

John 9:8-12 Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" 9 Some said, "This is

he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." 10 Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." 12 Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

The illumination now led to a problem in identification: Was this really the blind beggar, and who caused him to see? Throughout the rest of John 9, a growing conflict takes place around these two questions. The religious rulers did not want to face the fact that Jesus had healed the man, or even that the man had been healed.

Four times in this chapter people asked, "How were you healed?" They were asking the wrong question. They should have asked "Who?", not "How?" We want to understand the mechanics of a miracle instead of simply trusting the Savior, who alone can perform the miracle. Though the questions sounded official, they, in reality, were nothing more than a most evasive maneuver of the religious rulers' part. They didn't want to face the true Messiah who could reveal the truth about them.

E. APPLICATIONS

1) Do you want to be like Jesus? Replace curiosity with compassion.

2) Serve the Lord and do His works for His glory NOW.

3) God cares about your faith more than your health, and your character more than your comfort.

How is your spiritual eye sight? Can you see the truth of God through this portion of Scripture? Or are you unable to see it because you are spiritually blinded? We all know that lyrics from the famous hymn "Amazing Grace":

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind but now I see

If you are spiritually blind because you are not a born-again Christian, Lord Jesus wants to heal your eye sight right now. It is yours to take it, but it must be in His way, not your way.