

Text: John 9:1-41

Title: “Unexplainable vs. Undeniable”

Introduction: I think that one of our biggest struggles in life is ignoring the truth ... truth about our kids, truth about our careers, truth about our boyfriends/girlfriends/spouses, family members, etc. In order for us to face truth, it usually takes some sort of moment—good or bad—to bring that truth front and center in our lives. Most of us like to keep things that we don’t want to face somewhere off in the peripheral, so we don’t have to deal with it, respond to it, I don’t have to live by it, etc.

Jesus said, *“I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to live in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”* (John 8:12) This is what we are building this worship series, “Squint” on. Sometimes it’s hard for us to hear the Truth that comes from our Scriptures. But, we also know that if we don’t know and live by those truths, ***there will be consequences*** that come with them.

My desire in this series is that each of us will have our lives improved and we will have a newfound sense of FREEDOM in whatever area of our lives we need it. Jesus said that if we will remain faithful to His teachings (even if we are not sure we agree with it or believe it to be truth) ... if we will stand in that light, even though it’s so bright we want to go back inside where the light is at least filtered by windows and walls... Eventually, our eyes will adjust and we will know the Truth and the Truth will set us FREE!

Again today, we are going to look over Jesus’ shoulder as he continues to teach us about Who God REALLY is ... not OUR views of who WE think God should be ... but looking at God for Who He REALLY is.

Let’s Pray!

At this time I invite you to take the insert out of your program. On one side you will see our Scripture for today and on the other you will find a brief outline with fill-in-the-blanks. This will help us follow our learning for today and so I challenge you to take time to fill in the blanks. When you get home, refrigerate this and keep learning from it this week. For those of you who are listening on-line or IPODing, you too can download the outline from our website and fill in the blanks as well. We are glad you are with us.

Today’s story is probably one of the funniest stories in our Bibles (for me anyway). I know that most of us don’t think that Scripture is really all that funny, but I think that this is one of those times in Jesus’ ministry that for days following, the disciples were still laughing and saying, “Did you see the look on their faces when that guy said...?”

If you have your bible with you, please open it up to the Book of John. We are moving forward into Jesus’ ministry as we go to Chapter 9 (John devotes a whole chapter to this story). This is a story that we do not find in the other Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke), but a story that John thought was important to write down. (Gospels = the Good News stories about Jesus’ life and ministry.) I’m glad that John shared this “Jesus Encounter” with us. We are going to go through this chapter almost verse by verse, because I think that it’s important to understand the context and what all is going on with Jesus, his disciples and the Jewish religious leaders... here we go! John Chapter 9:

OH, before we start ... set-up is that in Chapter 7, the Pharisees / religious leaders in Jerusalem decide that they have to get rid of Jesus ... he might start an uprising or riots, thus jeopardizing the power, status and wealth of the Pharisees (see last weeks notes).

I. Jesus Heals (vs. 1-7)

- A. (vs. 1-2) Okay, this is some of the darkness that Jesus came into as he started his ministry.
1. There was a belief out there that if someone got sick or injured or there was a disease; someone sinned! If it was a birth defect, then the parents must have sinned. Belief = Disease, sickness and injury was punishment from God. Of course we never hear that here in 2010, right?!
 2. Okay, put your sunglasses on, because Jesus is about to bring some serious TRUTH. Let what Jesus says here sink in and then let's think about Who God is... ready?
- B. (v. 3) Did Jesus just say that? This man was blind from birth so that God could be glorified?
1. Years of heartache for his parents ... he can't play with the other kids, he can't see all this beautiful stuff of creation; he can't see = everyone in our neighborhood thinks that we've sinned?
 2. God allowed this man to suffer for years (not sure how old he is, but an adult beggar?), for THIS DAY to arrive and for Jesus to walk by?!?
 3. That'll shake up your thoughts about Who God is...
 4. Then, Jesus takes the disciples into a teachable moment ... he explains why he's going to do what he's about to do.
- C. (vs. 4-5) This is another reminder to the disciples that their time together with Jesus is going to be short-lived. 'We have a job to do and we must quickly carry it out!'
1. Jesus is telling them, essentially, "I only have so much time to show you what God is like. I only have so much time to show you how to live this life the way my Father wants you to ... so, PAY ATTENTION!"
 2. Then, Jesus says something pretty profound and may come across to the disciples as a little cocky ... "While I'm here ... I am the light of the world."
 3. Disciples = You are the light of the world? You are a carpenter from Nazareth! Rome is the light of the world. Greek philosophy is the light of the world. You, Jesus, might not be the light of the world..."
 4. Then, Jesus quits talking and gets to work ... listen to HOW he heals the blind man. It's important!
- D. (vs. 6-7) Gross ... spitting and mud and wiped it on his eyes ... sent him away to wash... and he can see!

1. Here's where it gets interesting. A man born blind can now see...
2. Can you even imagine the excitement that man must have had? He had never seen anything before that moment when he washed the mud off at Siloam. Never!
3. Do you think he's excited? He's headed ... not back to where Jesus was ... he's headed HOME! He's going back to his family and friends to show them! Wouldn't you?!

II. Neighbors and Friends (vs. 8-12)

- A. (vs. 8-9) His neighbors and others who knew him (his friends) start arguing if this is their blind beggar friend, or if he is a look-alike... seriously!
 1. They have never seen him with his eyesight and that does not happen, so it couldn't be him.
 2. But, it looks just like him! Argument ensues...
 3. Blind Man = "It's Me!"
 4. "I've got an idea ... let's have a party ... let's get a band and some streamers and balloons and party ... Why? Because I can see!"
- B. (v. 10) They want an explanation. They can't understand HOW he can now see when he's been blind from birth! Can we just party please?!
- C. (v. 11) Here's what happened (Jesus, spit, mud, pool, sight)... that's all I know... let's party!
 1. When things happen that we don't understand, it doesn't matter if we are friends; we want an explanation!
 2. He gave them the explanation... They asked another question:
- D. (v. 12) DUH! Listen to verse 11! "I don't know ... did you listen to my story?
 1. I was blind when I was with Jesus, went to the pool, and then I could see!
 2. How? Where? Why? I have questions and if they don't get answered, I'm not going to believe you...

III. Quick! To the Pharisees! (vs. 13-17)

- A. (vs. 13-14) Some friends! Everyone knew the rules ... no healing or working on the Sabbath!
 1. Making mud was working ... you cannot work on the Sabbath!
 2. Guess what? Jesus knew that!
- B. (v. 15) The Pharisees question the former blind man. He tells them the story again. "Aren't you happy for me?!? Is this where the party starts?"
- C. (v. 16) We know God better than anyone ... God would never allow a healing on the Sabbath. We know this because we have God in a box. Wanna see Him?

1. Pharisees = already had decided that Jesus was a threat and were not going to listen to him. Now, they had proof that Jesus was not of God because he didn't follow the 'rules'.
 2. Sometimes we think that what has happened must not be of God, because if I was God I wouldn't have done it that way! Right?!?
 3. Poor guy ... "Where's the cake and ice cream?"
- D. (v. 17) Ironic = The Pharisees, the foremost authorities in the land about God, asking a beggar to help them figure out if this Jesus is from God or not...
1. I love his answer, "Maybe he is a ... Prophet?"
 2. That's the Godliest person that this man has heard about in his lifetime. He's likely heard some Scriptures...
 3. The Pharisees did not want to believe him, so they call...

IV. **Bring In His Parents (vs. 18-23)**

- A. (v. 18) As excited as this man is ("Can we hire a band please?"), they still can't believe ... we want the truth! What this man is saying cannot be the truth because we cannot EXPLAIN it!
- B. (vs. 19-20) The parents know that this man is their son, but they have to be cautious.
1. Do you know what I bet they want to say? "We don't care how or who or where or why. Our son can see!! He can get a job!"
 2. "Our son that we've loved through not seeing; can see! I'll bake a cake and you hire the band!" But, they have to be cautious. Listen...
- C. (vs. 21-23) Understand what "expelled from the synagogue" meant...
1. I meant, excommunicated from the community. You are out! You cannot go to the synagogue.
 2. You cannot speak to the priests nor have the priests speak on your behalf to God. You cannot bring sacrifices and have your sins forgiven.
 3. You would be declared "Gentile" and probably have to move out of your house and neighborhood...

V. **Who's Blind Now? (vs. 24-34)**

- A. (v. 24) Jesus is not from God ... we know because we have God here in a box. God certainly would not do anything we have not seen before without first consulting us!
1. Now, they want to give God the glory even if the healing happened on the Sabbath?
 2. They want God to get the glory (because they know everything there is to know about God!), but not Jesus. Hmm.
- B. (v. 25) That's not my job! I don't know if he's a sinner. I can't explain it. But here is the undisputable evidence of Jesus' work!
- C. (v. 26) Please explain it so that we can understand!
- D. (v. 27) Now you've stepped on the lion's tail! "I just wanted a cake!"

- E. (vs. 28-29) We know the God that talked to Moses, but still cannot recognize this Jesus?! Now, they are cursing him. Why? The only reason they have for cursing him = because he can see but he can't explain it. They probably treated him better when he was blind!
- F. (vs. 30-33) Who's Blind Now?!? Even the former blind-beggar knows that it has to be God! Only God could do such a miraculous thing!
- G. (v. 34) You Are OUT! What you said does not fit in our God box and we don't want to change, so you are out!

VI. Believe and Worship (vs. 35-41)

- A. (v. 35a) Jesus was there to pick up the pieces of the one who believed and defended Him. He did not leave this former beggar hanging. Jesus knew what being "excommunicated" meant and was there for him.
- B. (vs. 35b-36) No more questions. Don't need an explanation ... You healed me and I have undeniable evidence that You are of God ... where do I sign up?!?
- C. (vs. 37-38) This man can see and he can see that Jesus is worthy of his worship!
 1. He didn't need an explanation, he had proof ... Undeniable evidence that Jesus is Who He says He is!
 2. This may not have happened if this man had not been born blind!!!!!!

Conclusion: You know; I have people ask me all the time to 'explain' God. Fact is... I can't. I can explain what I know of God. I can explain what I've experienced of God ... kind of. I can't give you facts and figures so that you can figure it out in your head before you let Jesus into your heart. I can't explain Jesus. I can't explain the happenings of this world. I can't explain why Jesus would say this man was blind from birth so that God could be revealed today. I can't.

Please know that I have doubts too. There are times that I wish God acted more like I'd like God to act. There are times when I wish that I understood more ... that I had answers to the who, what, when, where, why and how! Please know that you are not alone ... BUT, focusing on those two or three things that we can't explain is not worth throwing our faith out for.

I can't explain God. But I serve a God that is greater than what I can fit in my little bitty box ... or your box ... or our boxes combined!

But, I do know what's undeniable: Do you know what's undeniable?

1. We're here! Undeniable is that you and I are alive today and the only thing that we humans can come up with to explain it besides "Creationism" is that something came from nothing. That's the explanation! But, undeniable = we are here and alive! Take God out of the picture and all we have is, once there was nothing and now there is something and it evolved into intelligent human beings...
2. Undeniable = there is creation. This earth and all that is in it shout with their beauty that this must not be an accident, but a Divine plan... There must be a God is my starting point.

3. Undeniable = 2,000 years ago a Jewish carpenter from Nazareth (who should have come and gone like everyone else from that era) began teaching strange things (many did that) and began to do miracles and people started writing the stories down because they had to share it with their descendents! This man died on a Roman cross (know that from Roman history) and our stories tell us that Jesus rose from the dead! Who could possibly believe that a man could rise from the dead? But, those people believed it so much that they started sharing with everyone about Jesus and many of them gave up their lives ... not because Jesus' teachings or miracles, but because they believed that a dead man rose from the dead!
4. Undeniable = Those stories spread throughout all the world through history and today (don't miss this), today 1/3 of the world's population believes that a Jewish carpenter rose from the dead and the reason they believe it is that at some point in their life they put their trust in Jesus' death on a cross as their key to salvation and eternal life and they were changed from the inside out!
5. You can go to any continent on this earth and you will hear the same stories ... in their own language people will tell you that something was missing and they needed forgiveness and when they put their trust in Jesus and the cross that took their sins away, something happened on the inside of them that revolutionized the way they live this life and that that "Truth" set them free like they never expected. I have peace, joy, my fears are going away. Pick a continent! Undeniable!
6. Undeniable? We know more about Jesus, who Rome tried to destroy and the Jewish religious system tried to destroy and many other cultures have tried/still try to destroy, than any other ancient figure who ever lived. We shouldn't even know that carpenter's name, but people gave their lives so that we would never forget that He gave his life for you and me and that he rose from the dead.
7. Do you know what else is undeniable? I hear the stories here. There are people sitting right near you who have told me, essentially, "Once I was blind, now I see..." My life has changed from the inside out. I have new life because I met Jesus Christ and chose to surrender and give my life to him and do life His way!
8. Many of you have got to the point in life where life was not what you expected or it was getting out of control or there was a tragedy and in desperation you turned to Jesus and Jesus came through for you... undeniable! Don't ask them to explain it, because that's very hard to do, but there is a new joy and hope and strength through Jesus Christ!
9. Undeniable = God exists and sent His Son to die on a cross and offer us forgiveness and millions have taken Jesus up on that offer and have not been disappointed! It's happened all over the world throughout the last 2,000 years and it's undeniable! And we still celebrate it today!!
10. Do you know what else is undeniable? There is a thirst in every person in this world that cannot be quenched by the stuff (relationships, money, clothes, status, success, popularity, etc.) of this world. We try and we try and we try to find a way to quench this thirst and we can't. Then we look over at our

- Labrador retriever and that dog is happy as can be with absolutely no purpose in life and we wonder ... why is it not okay with me?
11. The dog can be happy eating and sleeping, but there is something in us that desires more than that out of life. Every single human being feels like something is missing until, and we hear this again and again, until I gave my life over to God's Only Son Jesus Christ and I gave up living by MY PLAN... THEN, I felt like life was complete.
 12. When we finally understand that we don't have to understand everything to believe in something ... over time, some of the questions we have start to get answered ... not before you give your life to Jesus Christ, but after! That's why it's called the Christian FAITH!
 13. You do not have to understand everything, to believe in something. There will always be mystery with God. We cannot contain The Almighty Creator God in a box. God will always be at least one step ahead of you.
 14. The wise woman, man, student, child, etc. is the one who shifts their focus from The Unexplainable to The Undeniable...
 15. Here is my suggestion for today ... If you are a Christian and you have doubts, welcome to the faith! Please stay focused on the undeniable until the unexplainable gets clearer. If you have been coming and this is your hang-up. If you feel like you could trust in Jesus if you could just get all your questions answered ... it will never happen. You are not smart enough, you do not have enough insight; you are not infinite enough to be in the same league with God. Please hear the undeniable and realize that faith comes before all the questions are answered.
 16. Please be like the blind beggar who said, "I don't need answers to my questions, the evidence that you are God is undeniable!" Stop circling the runway and land this thing! It might not be pretty, but Jesus will take care of it once you make your decision...

If we can learn to shift our focus from what is unexplainable to what is undeniable, our faith will be unexplainable and undeniable too!

Let's Pray!

Next Week = We are going to follow Jesus as He meets up with a woman who is attempting to quench her thirst by drinking cup after cup of sand...