

## John 9

### Introduction to Sermon

#### I. The theme of light and darkness

- A. Story of traveling in dark underground tunnels in New Zealand
- B. Light is a good image for truth, guidance, freedom, and life. Darkness is a good image for ignorance, blindness, stuckness, slavery, no real life

#### II. Tension of light and darkness

- A. On one hand, Jesus says: "I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness." (John 12:46) "The father did not send the son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world (John 3:17)
- B. On the other hand, Jesus says: "For judgment I have come into the world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." ( John 9:39)

The coming of light brings with it an inevitable judgment/separation

### The Passage

#### I. John 8

- A. Jesus says "I am the light of the world" during the feast of tabernacles at a ceremony called the "illumination of the temple"
- B. The provocative nature of his claim leads to a fierce debate that ends with people wanting to stone Jesus

#### II. The story in John 9

- A. v. 1-7: The miracle of Jesus giving physical sight to a blind man
- B. v. 8-12: The confusion of the crowds
- C. v. 9-17: The interrogation of the man by the Pharisees
- D. v. 18-23: The interrogation of the man's parents by the Pharisees
- E. v. 24-34: The second interrogation of the man by the Pharisees
- F. v. 35-38: The miracle of Jesus giving spiritual sight to the former blind man
- G. v. 39-41: The story explained theologically

#### III. The significance of the story

- A. Jesus' purpose in the story was to bring sight and to save (Jn 3:17)
- B. But people condemn themselves by their response to his saving work (Jn 3:18)
  - 1. The Neighbors: the miracle is so improbable, they can't believe it
  - 2. The Parents: they are afraid of the social implications
  - 3. The Pharisees: Jesus shatters their sacred cows (Sabbath) and their understanding of what it means to be set apart from sinners. He threatens their authority.
- C. Light creates a "crisis" that forces people to make a decision (Jn 3:19-21) and some would rather stay in the darkness
  - 1. The wonderful thing about light is that it reveals (good in dark caves)

2. The terrifying thing about light is that it reveals (not good in dance clubs)
- D. Jesus shines light on 2 fundamental realities
1. Who God is (2 Cor 4:6)
  2. Who we are (Rm 3:23)
- E. In John 9 it's the religious elite who are most threatened by the light!
1. The sins of darkness are not just the sins of the evil pagan world (fraud, adultery, murder, lying, stealing, etc) but also the sins of religiosity (pride, self-justification, need for control, claiming to see)
  2. You can be so close to the light and yet so completely in the darkness
- F. The most important quality to receiving the light is humility
1. The blind man knew he was blind (humility) so he could receive the light
  2. The Pharisees thought they could see (pride) so they couldn't receive the light

### Conclusion

- I. Will we consistently put ourselves in the path of the light of Christ?
- II. Will we actively step out of the darkness and into the light?

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. With which character(s) in John 9 do you relate most and why (Jesus, the disciples, the blind man, the crowds, the man's parents, or the Pharisees)?
3. Discuss the statement made on Sunday in light of the Pharisees response: "The scary thing about this story is that it shows how you can be so close to the light and yet so completely in the darkness."
4. How are you being called to step out of the darkness and into the light at this stage of your journey?