

SENT ONES

OCTOBER 30, 2022 | WALKING WITH JESUS | JOHN 9:6-41 | PASTOR SCOTT TURANSKY

[PRAYER] So Father, we come before you now and we ask that you would speak to us through your word. We value your word. We're grateful for it. We know that as we study it, we learn things that apply to our own lives. So thank you for saving us. Thank you for giving us your word to help us with the direction that we need. And thank you for your Holy Spirit that furthers that direction and reveals to us the truths from your word as well. So thank you. In Jesus' name, amen.

You know, one of those things that we receive when we become Christians is we receive a testimony. You get a testimony and that testimony is pretty powerful. It's a testimony that helps you to be able to communicate a message to the world. There's a world waiting out there for a message that's needed, and your testimony is a powerful tool. So young people, I want you to think about that tool for a moment. Maybe if you've grown up in a Christian home, as I did, there's a temptation sometimes to say, "Well, my testimony isn't that dramatic." But it is a powerful tool to be able to say, "You know, I grew up in a Christian home, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and then God helped me to navigate around some of the pitfalls and challenges that might have existed. God is at work in my life." Others of you have dramatic testimonies. You were really bad people. And God saved you. And we like to hear those dramatic testimonies how bad you were, and then how God saved you. But sometimes you can feel that sense of inadequacy and say, "Man, I was really bad." But God uses this testimony in any of our lives.

We're going to talk about that testimony today, because we're going to look at John 9 about the blind man because he has a testimony he's going to share with others. We can learn from his experience some things about our own lives and our own testimony that we can share with other people.

But in order to read that passage, I want to look at another Bible verse. One that comes from a different disciple, not John, but comes from Peter. As Peter is talking about the value of a testimony, he says these words. I want to read these out loud before you, so would you stand with me, please. In fact, I want you to read with me these words from 1 Peter 3:15 about a testimony. Let's read this together. *But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.*

You may be seated.

I love that because, one, we put Christ first. He's holy, separate. He's the most important thing in our lives. Secondly, we want to be prepared to give that defense for what's inside of us, that testimony that we have inside. And we need to do it gently and with respect. I love that it's such a balanced statement.

We're going to see more about the testimony of the blind man. But first, let's look at the miracle that took place in John 9. You can open your Bibles with me. John 9, we're going to pick it up in verse 6 where it says these words. *Jesus, having said these things, spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.*

I wonder where the miracle actually took place? Was his optic nerve healed and his cornea and iris and all the other stuff in the eyeball, was that all healed when He put the mud on his eyes? Or when God said, "Here's what I want you to do. Here's your part, you need to go." And so he took off going. When he started to go, was his eyes healed? Or when he got to the pool and stepped in, were his eyes healed? Or when he got in and he washed the mud off of his eyes, was that when the miracle took place? I don't know. But I do know that when he came out of that water and all the mud was washed off, he looked out for the first time in his life and he could see. I can't even imagine what that would have been like for him to now see things he had never seen before in his whole life.

That's what happens when you become a Christian, you know. That now there's a miracle that takes place in our heart and we can now see things we never saw before. We start looking at life differently. We go, "Whoa, this is so amazing." Because it's like the Lord gives us new eyes. He heals us and we can now see things we've never seen before.

Now John makes this...it's in parentheses, but he makes this interesting statement in the middle about this pool of Siloam. Now, the pool of Siloam was a pool that was 225-feet in length. I mean, it was a big pool. In fact, it was well known to everyone because the pool of Siloam was the place where pilgrims who were coming up for the three feasts to Jerusalem would stop and they would go dip themselves in the pool of Siloam as this cleansing, this ritualistic washing. You know, that I'm coming up clean before the Lord into this special place of Jerusalem for this special feast to remember an aspect of God's character in our history. They would wash themselves in the pool of Siloam.

But John doesn't say that. John says – *which means Sent*. And I'm thinking, of all the things you could choose to say about this pool of Siloam, why does he say it means sent? The reason he does I think we find out as we read the rest of the chapter, John 9, because when we read the rest of the chapter, we see that this man is not just going to be fixed, he's going to be sent. And his healing is going to catapult him into a world where he's going to have a mission to share this message with other people. I think that's why John draws attention to the word *sent*. And we're going to see now in the rest of the passage the importance of being sent.

I think all of us need to realize that we are sent ones. Aren't we? We're sent. The word *sent* here is the word *apostolos*, which we get our word 'apostle' from. We are all missionaries, we are all apostles in the sense that we are being sent out into the world. That's the idea. In fact, when a

person embraces this idea of being sent, it helps to understand that salvation isn't just for me so that I'll feel better and I'll get over my challenges and I'll be able to see. It's not just about me, it is a message that's for others to hear through me because I'm sent.

When a family embraces this idea, they become what we call a missional family. A missional family is one that doesn't just think about itself. Sometimes some parents or families think that we're just trying to have one big happy family so we can all feel good together and enjoy our holidays. No. It's much bigger than that. When a family embraces this idea that God has given our family a mission, we become a missional family. We are sent. Think about it. What mission has God given your family? Young people, what mission has God given you in this world? You become a missional person. You think missionally about life. It's not just about me; it's about what God has done inside of me so that I could share that message with the world. That's what it means to be missional.

Now we're going to look in the rest of the chapter at five conversations that are going to take place. In these five conversations I'm going to just draw up five different principles, one from each conversation to make it easy for us. So we can understand what it means to be missional, what it means to be able to have this mindset that catapults us into the world on purpose. We have a vision for where we're going. We have a purpose, we have meaning. We're missional in our lives. So let's look at the five conversations.

The first conversation now that he's healed, okay. He's healed. The first conversation he has with the neighbors because they're the ones who see that he's healed. Let's read that conversation. *The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man. I can see that you're talking about me now. You used to talk about me, I couldn't see. But I can tell that you're talking about me now. I'm the guy."* Okay, that's what he's saying. "I'm the one." Ah yes. "I'm standing right here. You're talking about me, I can tell." *So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."*

Oh, I love this. I love this particular dialogue. One, because here's the man's testimony. Now, if you don't know what a testimony is, let me explain to you what your testimony is. Here's how I was before, here's what Jesus did to me, and here's who I am now. That's basically your testimony. You can write it out and you can elaborate on it in each of those places. I would encourage you to write it out so you're ready to share it. But that's basically it. Here's how I was before, here's what Jesus did, and here's how I am now. That's a testimony. If you're a Christian and Jesus has touched you, you have a testimony.

But I like the last statement. Because the guys asked a question, he says, "*I don't know.*" This is so important. I think in each of the five conversations, we could list a fear associated with each of those conversations that prevent us from sharing our testimony, prevents us from being missional in our world. I think the fear here is I won't have all the answers. This guy just says, "I don't know. I don't know the answer to that question. But I do know what God did for me." And you can't argue with that. That's such a powerful statement. Here's what God's done in my life. I

don't have all the answers. I don't need all the answers. But I know who does have the answers. Jesus has them. And you can bring all those questions to Jesus. He's not afraid of the difficult questions of life, and He will answer those questions for you.

So if we're drawing principles out of each of these conversations, this conversation number one, then I would suggest that in this conversation the principle we see about how to be missional is start with your testimony. You don't have to go to school for this. You don't have to be a professor of some kind. You just start with your testimony. Because you know where you were before, what Jesus did for you, and where you're going now. That's your testimony? Let's start there. That's conversation number one.

Let's go to the second conversation. Because the second conversation is where the neighbors say, "Hey, okay, wait, but something's going on here. We're going to bring you to the Pharisees." So now it's a conversation between the man born blind, the Pharisees, and the neighbors. Let's look at that.

It says – *They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.* This is a very important statement to understand what's going to happen. Because sometimes when you're talking to some people about the Lord and about your testimony, some people have in their minds some religious history that's preventing them from catching the full glimpse of the reality of Jesus Christ and being a disciple. Maybe you know that in your own life. Maybe you grew up in some religious history of some kind and that religious history that you have has these principles that even make you feel uncomfortable today. This is what's happening in this story. Sometimes there are religious principles that we grew up with that are not true that need to be left in order for us to be disciples of Christ. So we're freed from some of that stuff from the past.

Well, that's what's going to happen regarding the Sabbath day. It's as if Jesus, I think, says, "Oh, it's the Sabbath. Time to do a miracle. I mean, what day of the week is it?" Because seven times He's going to do miracles on the Sabbath day. He creates controversy. Because I think what happens is the controversy has its way of getting right into the hearts of people to help them see where the issues are that they have. And that's what's going to happen here. So John puts this statement in there. *It was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.*

So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them (he gets to give his testimony again), "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. Notice that his testimony generated conversation between other people. That's what happens sometimes. You say, "I'm a Christian." Other people are saying, "Did you hear what he said? Do you see he goes to church somewhere? He goes to church more than just Easter and Christmas? He goes every week. He even goes in the middle of the week. I wonder what's going on." So people are talking about this. That's what's happening here.

Notice that last statement – *And there was a division among them.* We must realize that Jesus came to create division. And let me clarify what I mean by that. Certainly, Jesus coming allows

us to experience unity, and we really enjoy the unity we have in in the body of Christ. But when Jesus came, He brought truth into the world. And some will reject that truth and some will accept it, and that's the division that takes place. There are some who will reject the truth. There's division that's takes place because of the truth. It's a very important idea that we understand here in this passage.

This conversation continues. *So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."* I'm going, well that's interesting. The guy who's giving the testimony, he even gives the wrong answer. He's not just a prophet. This is the Messiah. But he doesn't know that. There's a lot of things you and I don't know. But we do know that we were blind, Jesus did something, and now we see. And that's the story we can tell. I just find it fascinating, the guy gives the wrong answer and John records that. I would think John would have said, "Just leave that part out." But he puts it in there. It's interesting to see that that's what takes place in the midst of this. So that's powerful.

But let's draw our principle here in part number two that says don't be afraid of controversy. If you're going to be a missional person, you have to realize there are going to be challenges in our lives that are generated because we're Christians. Controversy will take place because people will find out that you're a believer. We don't want to be afraid of that controversy. Jesus wasn't afraid of it. Just know that. If you're going to be missional, you have to know that controversy is going to take place. That takes place. That's conversation number two, the conversation between the Pharisees and the blind man.

Now we're going to go to conversation number three and find the principle there. This is going to be the conversation with the parents. Now, let me tell you that you can always learn something from anyone. If you have a teacher you don't like at school, you can learn how not to teach. You should take notes on how not to teach. You can learn some valuable things from anyone. We're going to learn how not to be missional from the parents. I don't want to be hard on the parents. But I think they illustrate the challenge here that when we're trying to be missional, you got to be careful. So let's look at this conversation that involve the parents.

It says – *The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until...* That word *until* is really important because it gives the impression that some believed when they found out this information. Which is often the case. We're going to get out there, we're going to create controversy, and what's interesting about controversy is that it separates people, divides them, but it also raises questions in people's minds, saying, "I wonder if I should think about this." Some people.

What's really interesting is, you know, I said that sometimes when you share your testimony, other people start to talk. Sometimes when you share your testimony with the person, it's not them that the Lord is going to reach. Because they might be antagonistic. It's those other people that are listening that are saying, "Wow, he really believes something here. Well, that's interesting." And they are the ones who come along and the Lord is trying to reach them.

So here we have the *until*. *Until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"*

His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age." That all seems reasonable to me.

But John wants us to know something behind the motives. We can't always understand the motives. So John says this in parentheses: *"Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself."* (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) Therefore his parents said, *"He is of age; ask him."* There is a fear that these people have. The fear that they'll be put out of the synagogue. The word 'out of the synagogue' is the Greek word, *aposunagogos*. *Apo* means out of. That he's going to be put out of the synagogue. They're afraid of that.

Which brings me to another principle. If you're listing the principles, this is the third conversation. Get over the fear of rejection. I don't know how else to say that. We just have to get over it. The fear of rejection is often what limits our ability to be missional. And sometimes we just need to deal with it. Get over the fear of rejection. You are going to be rejected sometime. You may be rejected by your family, you may be rejected at work, you may be rejected by the world, certainly. When you take a stand and you say, "This is what God did in my life and I'm following the Lord," you will experience rejection. We have to get rid of rid of that fear or it's going to limit us like it did the parents in this case. They had this fear of being put out of the synagogue. That's conversation number three.

Well, the next conversation is going to be back with the Pharisees and the blind man. They're trying to get to the bottom of this. Let's look at the fourth conversation. *So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."* See, that's their goal. The Pharisees want this man to become evidence for the fact that Jesus is a sinner. Because if Jesus was a sinner, then we don't have to pay attention to him. We're going to discredit Jesus by saying He's a sinner.

But the man says – *He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."* Do you see the power of a testimony? This testimony is so strong. I can't argue with you about the theology of this. I have no idea whether this guy's a sinner or not. That's what he's saying. But I know this. I have a testimony. God has changed my life. Once I was blind, now I see.

They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. This guy is getting kind of bold now. Or he's getting irritated. I don't know which one. But he's saying, "Look, I already told you this. Do you guys want to become His disciples?" I find his boldness intriguing in this situation. Because he's speaking to these religious leaders who know it all. They really do. They know it all. They've studied the scriptures. They know all about the law. They know what righteousness is all about. They've figured out life. These are the religious leaders that are talking to him in this passage.

The conversation goes on as they said, *“We are disciples of Moses.”* They say – *“We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”* The man answered, *“Why, this is an amazing thing!”* If you picture it, here’s a blind man, a beggar. Okay. This is a guy that used to stand on the road, *“Mercy for the blind,”* you know, and now he's turning around talking to the Pharisees. He’s saying – *“Oh, this is an amazing thing. You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”* They answered him, *“You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?”* And they cast him out.

Wow. You know, when some people are confronted with the truth, you just got to know, there's some people who are hardened by their own religious upbringing or anti-religious upbringing that they have. It just doesn't get into their hearts. That the truth can't penetrate for some reason. And it's because really of spiritual blindness that takes place in their lives. So they come to this place where they're just being mean and they cast him out. Wow. Rejection.

Well, that's the fourth conversation. And I think the principle we can draw from that is this: You don't need all the answers to be confident. This guy is sure confident, isn't he? *“All I know is once I was blind, but now I see.”* You don't have to have all the answers to be confident. You just need to know what is God doing in your life. That's powerful.

Well, let's go to the fifth conversation. Because in the fifth conversation, we have, I think, the most touching of the conversations. This is when Jesus talks to the man. The fifth conversation. Let's see what it says here.

Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him. So Jesus went and found this blind man. And he said, *“Do you believe in the Son of Man?”* He answered, *“And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?”* Jesus said to him, *“You have seen him.”* That’s really important if you’re talking to a blind man. Those were interesting words that kid of stand out, don’t they? *“You have seen him.* Because he didn’t see Him before. He sees Him now for the first time. *“You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.”* I mean, I get goosebumps when I hear that. Here's the blind man and Jesus is saying, *“Do you know who the Son of Man is? Do you believe in Him?”* And the guy says, *“I don't even know who that is.”* And Jesus is saying, *“It's me.”* I'm going ooh.

It reminds me of the story in John 4. You remember that story where Jesus was with the woman at the well, and they're having this theological conversation about whether you can worship in the mountain or you can worship in Jerusalem, and our people argue about that. Jesus is already starting to tell her some of the things she's already done in her life. So there's kind of intrigue going on here. And then the woman says this to Jesus: *“We know that the Messiah is going to come someday. And He's going to reveal all these things to us”.* And Jesus says to her, *“The one who is speaking to you is he.”* Ooh. I go, wow. Can you imagine? This is this revelation. This is this coming to grips with the experience of knowing Jesus personally.

If you don't know Jesus personally here today, I don't know if you'll get goosebumps or not, but I know it will change the way you think. I know that it'll open eyes for you so that you who once

were blind will now see. All of life looks different when you come to Christ. It's big. It's really big.

Notice the response that the man makes. It says – *He said, “Lord, I believe.”* So if you're not saved, yet, you don't have a testimony until today when you say, “Lord, I believe.” *And he worshiped him.*

Jesus now is going to talk about the division that takes place. He says this: *Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”* But see, now Jesus isn't talking about physical blindness. Jesus is talking about spiritual blindness.

Let me define spiritual blindness for you because you'll see it around in life. It's when someone hears the message, but they can't see what it means. They're spiritually blind. They hear the message of the gospel, or the truth of the Lord, or the truths that are in the Bible, but they can't see them. It doesn't make sense to them. They can't get it because they're spiritually blind.

That's what Jesus is saying. And the Pharisees are listening to Jesus talk to this man, obviously, as we get to the next verse, and they're realizing, “I wonder, is Jesus talking about us, that we're blind?” So they get it. They get this idea of spiritual blindness? And they think maybe Jesus is confronting them. And so they say – *Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?”* *Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.* But He's saying to them, if you say you see, you know everything, you've got life all figured out, you don't need anything else, then you'll be spiritually blind.

Jesus is revealing the real issue. The real issue is inside of the heart. Are you willing to open your heart to see life differently. Because when you are, then you can receive Jesus Christ into your life and experience Him and the power that He offers, and just this transformation of a different way to think.

If you're going to be missional then, we're going to add this fifth principle. And the fifth principle is get your acceptance from Jesus.

Let's just look at all five of those principles. These come from the five conversations we just looked at. Start with your testimony. If you're going to be missional, start with your testimony. Number two, don't be afraid of controversy. It's not you who generate this. It's Jesus who generates this. Get over your fear of rejection. You don't need all the answers to be confident. And get your acceptance from Jesus Christ Himself.

Wow. That's a message that we need. Because we don't just want to be missional individuals, we want to be missional families, we want to be missional young people, we want to be missional as a church. It's not just about us all feeling good because we all come together. I know we do all feel good because we all come together. But it's more than that. It's because we have a message to share with a world in need. And yes, we'll generate some controversy. But we're out there to

share a message of Jesus Christ and we know that some will respond to that message. We want to embrace that and share it with the world.

There was a man in the 1700s, his name was John Newton. John Newton was a slave trader. He was making money on the slave trading business. There was a very violent storm at sea at which he almost lost his life. Some of the other men did die. God used that in his life to change him. He decided I'm going to live totally differently now. I realize that trading slaves is the wrong thing to do. And he went on to fight the whole slave trading business. He wrote a song that we really like. It's his testimony. It's why we like it. Because when we sing the song, then we really like the song and what it means. So we sing that song and we enjoy it. It's the song *Amazing Grace* that we just sang. "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see." It's a testimony song that he had. And that's one of the reasons we love singing that song. We like to sing a lot of the songs that we sing, but there's this testimony that we have.

I just want you to feel inspired today that you have something that's powerful that you can share with other people. Nobody can argue with the fact that you once were blind, Jesus did something, and now you see. We can have the confidence to go out and share that with others.

I'm going to share our surprise with you in just a moment. But before that, would you stand with me? Let's pray and we're going to sing one more song together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we come before you and ask you to open our eyes today in ways that we've never had them open before. We know that salvation opens our eyes, but we know that other times we just need to come in contact with you more. We ask, Lord, that you would grow us, you'd establish us, you'd help us to see in powerful ways. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.