

Who was Jesus? – Answers from the Gospel of John

Jesus – The Healer (John 9:1-41)

8-2-09

An Opening Aside - I am deeply indebted to John 9, especially verse 25. When I don't have all the answers and doubt starts to creep in I lean on it.

John 9:25 (NIV)

²⁵ He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

1 Peter 1:8-9 (NIV)

⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,

⁹ for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Romans 1:20 (NIV)

²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Intro - The ability to heal was one of the distinguishing marks of the Messiah to come.

Sickness, injury, disease, disability, and death were not part of God's original design for this world but entered the picture when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 1:31 (NIV)

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good...

Genesis 2:8-17 (NIV)

⁸ Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

⁹ And the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in

the garden;

¹⁷ *but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*

From that time forward, the Biblical record is replete with examples of sin and its destructive results. Thankfully, it is also replete with promises of a future restoration; a time when all the destructive results of sin will be reversed, including: sickness, injury, disease, disability, and death. A return, so to speak, to the Garden of Eden, accept even better.

Ezekiel 34:15-16 (NIV)

¹⁵ I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign Lord.

¹⁶ I will *search* for the lost and bring back the strays. I will *bind up* the injured and strengthen the weak,...

Hosea 6:1-2 (NIV)

¹ "Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will *heal* us; he has injured us but he will *bind up* our wounds.

² After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will *restore* us, that we may *live* in his presence.

This future time of restoration and healing was begun (or inaugurated) with Jesus first coming 2,000 years ago, and it will be completed (or consummated) with His second coming, which many people believe could happen very soon.

Mark 1:14-15 (NIV)

¹⁴ After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.

¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Luke 4:16-21 (NIV)

¹⁶ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.

¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

¹⁸ *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,*

¹⁹ *to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Isaiah 61:1-2)*

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,

²¹ and he began by saying to them, *"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."*

Revelation 21:1-4 (NIV)

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

⁴ *He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

One of the BIGGEST ways Jesus supported His claim to be the Messiah was through His healing ministry.

Luke 7:20-23 (NIV)

²⁰ When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?'"

²¹ At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind.

²² So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

²³ Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

Unlike Luke "the beloved physician" (Col. 4:14) and the other Gospel writers who include multiple healing accounts, John chooses just four specific healings to showcase in his Gospel, each of which he describes in detail. All four healings are quite miraculous in nature and all are meant to help readers to see that Jesus is indeed the Messiah.

- 1) John 4 : The healing of the official's son from afar
- 2) John 5 : The healing of the invalid of 38 years
- 3) John 9 : The healing of the man born blind

4) John 11 : The raising of Lazarus from the dead after four days in the tomb

Transition – So with that as introduction, we will now focus on Jesus' third healing in John, the healing of the man born blind, while drawing from the other healing miracles as well.

3 Main Points...

- 1) Jesus teaches us that sickness (or any other hardship for that matter) is not necessarily the direct result of personal sin.
- 2) Jesus teaches us that God's desire is to glorify Himself through our sickness whether He heals us or not.
- 3) Jesus teaches us that God is even more glorified when He heals us spiritually than when he heals us physically.

Jesus teaches us that sickness (or any other hardship for that matter) is not necessarily the direct result of personal sin.

Most Jews in Jesus day believed that sickness, hardship, and misfortune were the direct result of personal sin. We see this clearly in Jesus' disciples...

John 9:1-2 (ESV)

¹ As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.

² And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

This way of believing was not entirely without Biblical warrant.

- We see it throughout the book of Job
- Old Covenant blessings and curses
- King Asa ruled Judah from 910 to 869 BC. Asa had been a great king in Judah and as a result had had no war for 35 years of his reign. In the 36th year of his reign, however, he was threatened by Baasha the king of Israel. Instead of going to the Lord for help, as he had in the past, he paid Ben-Hadad, the King of Aram, to break his treaty with Israel and join Judah instead. Though his tactic worked, God was not pleased...

2 Chronicles 16:7-13 (NIV)

⁷ At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him:

"Because you relied on the king of Aram and not on the Lord your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your hand.

⁸ Were not the Cushites and Libyans a mighty army with great numbers of chariots and horsemen? Yet when you relied on the Lord, he delivered them into your hand.

⁹ For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war."

¹⁰ Asa was angry with the seer because of this; he was so enraged that he put him in prison. At the same time Asa brutally oppressed some of the people...

¹² I the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was severe, *even in his illness he did not seek help from the Lord, but only from the physicians.*

¹³ *Then in the forty-first year of his reign Asa died and rested with his fathers.*

Even Jesus himself, seems to teach us in John 5, that sickness can be the direct result of personal sin.

John 5:14 (NIV)

¹⁴ Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you."

However, in John 9:3 Jesus brings balance to the disciples' thinking and ours by showing clearly that in the case of the man born blind, his sickness is NOT the direct result of his personal sin.

John 9:3 (ESV)

³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. (Lazarus ch.11)

Implication – When something bad happens to us or to someone else, we should not automatically assume that it is a direct result of personal sin, though it is something we should consider.

James 5:13-16 (NIV)

¹³ Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.

¹⁴ Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.

¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. *If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.*

¹⁶ *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.* The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

Jesus teaches us that God's desire is to glorify Himself through our sickness whether He chooses to heal us or not.

God can obviously bring glory to Himself by healing us.

John 9:3 (NIV)

³ "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. (AND IT WAS!!!)

John 11:1-4 (NIV)

¹ Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

² This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.

³ So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

⁴ When he heard this, Jesus said, "*This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it.*" (AND HE WAS!!!)

But God can also glorify Himself by choosing not to heal us.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (NIV)

⁷ To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

⁹ But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Implication – When trouble comes our way, we like Paul, should pray and ask Jesus to take it away. But if Jesus' answer is no or wait, we need to trust Him and seek to glorify Him in our weakness.

Ex. Jess healing with Alysia and my MS situation

Jesus teaches us that God is even more glorified when He heals us spiritually than when he heals us physically.

First of all note that the man born blind was not only healed physically, but spiritually as well.

- We see evidences of salvation from the beginning...
 - Obeys Jesus and washes in the pool
 - Returns seeing (which implies he had “faith” to be healed)
 - Immediately begins to humbly and honestly tell the story of what Jesus has done for him even though he doesn’t entirely understand it Himself
 - Defends Jesus to the Pharisees time and again even when they begin to ridicule him and eventually throw him out of the synagogue (imagine a college freshman coming to the Lord at a secular college and coming before board of unbelieving and antagonistic professors with the power to expel him)
 - **John 9:35-38 (NIV)**
 - ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"
 - ³⁶ "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."
 - ³⁷ Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."
 - ³⁸ Then the man said, "*Lord, I believe, and he worshiped him.*"

Two reasons spiritual healing brings more glory to God than physical healing...

- 1) It is so FAR more valuable
 - a. What if the man born blind had been healed physically but not spiritually?
 - b. What if he had been healed spiritually but not physically?
- 2) It is so MUCH more costly
 - a. A few minutes and some spit vs. death on the cross

Implication – Desire spiritual healing and health above all else and pray that if it must be, God would use sickness and hardship to draw yourself and others onto and closer to Himself.

Ex. D and the “blessing of cancer” (accepted Christ on His deathbed)