

SHORT
EXPOSITORY READINGS
ON THE
GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

A SELECTION DESIGNED FOR
Family Reading, Mothers' Meetings,
and District Visitors.

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CHRIST HEALING THE BLIND MAN.

JOHN IX. 1–7.

“And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth.

“And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?”

“Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

“I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

“As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

“When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

“And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”

WE should observe, first, from this incident, *how much sorrow sin has brought into the world.* A sorrowful case is brought before us. We are told of a man “who was blind from his birth.” A more serious affliction can hardly be conceived. Of all the bodily crosses that can be laid on man, without taking away life, none perhaps is greater

than the loss of sight. It cuts us off from some of the greatest enjoyments of life. It shuts us up within a narrow world of our own. It makes us painfully helpless and dependent on others. In fact, until men lose their eyesight, they never fully realize its value.

Now blindness, like every other bodily infirmity, is one of the fruits of sin. If Adam had never fallen, we cannot doubt that people would never have been blind, or deaf, or dumb. The many ills that flesh is heir to, the countless pains and diseases and physical defects to which we are all liable, came in when the curse came upon the earth. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." (Rom. v. 12.)

Let us learn to hate sin with a godly hatred, as the root of more than half our cares and sorrows. Let us fight against it, mortify it, crucify it, and abhor it both in ourselves and others. There cannot be a clearer proof that man is a fallen creature, than the fact that he can love sin and take pleasure in it.

Again, we should observe, *what different means Christ used in working miracles on different occasions*. In healing the blind man He might, if He had thought fit, have merely touched him with His finger, or given command with His tongue. But He did not rest content with doing so. We are told that "He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay." In all these means, of course,

there was no inherent healing virtue. But for wise reasons the Lord was pleased to use them.

We need not doubt that in this, as in every other action of our Lord, there is an instructive lesson. It teaches us, we may well believe, that the Lord of heaven and earth will not be tied down to the use of any one means or instrumentality. In conferring blessings on man, He will work in His own way, and will allow no one to prescribe to Him. Above all, it should teach those who have received anything at Christ's hands, to be careful how they measure other men's experience by their own. Have we been healed by Christ, and made to see and live? Let us thank God for it, and be humbled. But let us beware of saying that no other man has been healed, except he has been brought to spiritual life in precisely the same manner. The great question is, "Are the eyes of our understanding opened? Do we see? Have we spiritual life?" Enough for us if the cure is effected and health restored. If it is, we must leave it to the great Physician to choose the instrument, the means, and the manner,—the clay, the touch, or the command.

We should observe, lastly, *the almighty power that Christ holds in His hands*. We see Him doing that which in itself was impossible. Without medicines He cures an incurable case. He actually gives eyesight to one that was born blind.

Such a miracle as this is meant to teach an old truth, which we can never know too well. It shows us that Jesus

the Saviour of sinners “has all power in heaven and earth.” Such mighty works could never have been done by one that was merely man. In the cure of this blind man we see nothing less than the finger of God.

Such a miracle, above all, is meant to make us hopeful about our own souls and the souls of others. Why should we despair of salvation while we have such a Saviour? Where is the spiritual disease that He cannot take away? He can open the eyes of the most sinful and ignorant, and make them see things they never saw before. He can send light into the darkest heart, and cause blindness and prejudice to pass away.

Surely if we are not saved, the fault will be all our own. There lives at God’s right hand One who can heal us if we apply to Him. Let us take heed lest those solemn words are found true of us, “Light is come into the world: but men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” “Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life.” (John iii. 19; v. 40.)