

# “I Am the Man”

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King City UC  
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## **Prayer of Illumination**

Loving God, help us to find a quiet centre in you so that as we receive these ancient words and stories, we will understand them as if for the first time, fresh, alive, and filled with meaning and hope for this your world and for our lives.

**Amen.**<sup>1</sup>

## **Scripture Readings**

### **John 9:1–12**

<sup>1</sup> As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. <sup>4</sup> We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” <sup>6</sup> When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, <sup>7</sup> saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. <sup>8</sup> The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” <sup>9</sup> Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” <sup>10</sup> But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” <sup>11</sup> He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” <sup>12</sup> They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

This is the Word of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

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<sup>1</sup> Catherine Tovell, London, ON., taken from *Gathering 2023 Year A*, 36.

## < Children's Time >

Do you know what this is? A sleeping mask? I would say, a blindfold. We will use this blindfold to play the game, Marco Polo. You are it: "Marco!" "Polo!" How do you feel when you wear it? Dark, stuffy, and didn't know what to do or where to go. Only focusing on the sound and voice, right?

Today in the Bible, there is a man who was blind from birth. His clothes are not put on right, and he is bumping into people, walls, and pillars. (ouch!) He cannot survive without others' help. He is always asking for some food and help from other people. His life and future seem not to be very happy. Nobody cares about what he eats and how he survives: Nobody cares. No hugs, no gentle touch, no warm handshaking, but only harsh pushing hands he gets, and angry voices he hears.! He was an unfortunate man.

But one day, when he is sitting on a street, he feels a strange mood. He hears soft and gentle sound of footsteps approaching him. And the sound stops in front

of him. He hears a voice. "My brother, do you want to see? Do you want to open your eyes?" The sound is so gentle and powerful. And yet, he thinks it is too good to be true. So he hesitated to answer. "It's nonsense!" He thinks. He doesn't trust this man, although he feels strange power and energy from him. This blind man is blind both in body and in spirit. He struggles with himself. Can I trust this guy or not? Not for a long time, he decides to believe this strange guy. "Yes, sir, I want to see; I want to open my eyes! But ... who are you?"

The person in front of him didn't reply. Instead, the blind man feels something warm on his eyes. The feeling is so strange. That warmth melts away the obstacles in his eyes and in his spirit. Soon, when the heat goes away, he is able to see something blurry, and the scene gets clearer and clearer. And the blind man sees the man who is standing in front of him. Can you guess who the man is? It is Jesus Christ, the one and only Son of God. After this miracle, this blind man boldly spread the news, saying, "Jesus cured me!" He was a blind man, but when he meets Jesus, he becomes a messenger of Jesus. The

blind man cannot help spreading the news that he was once blind, but now he can see.

My friends, I hope you also be a messenger of Jesus when you meet Jesus in person. Will you? I bless my friends in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Hymn: "Three Things I Promise" MV176 v.1**

**Three things I promise, Holy God,  
in age and youth, in life and death:  
to bless your Name, and cling to Christ,  
and listen for the spirit's breath.**

**<Reflection>**

Human brains produce thousands of hormones, and new hormones are still being discovered. Thanks to modern medical science, we learned that oxytocin, endorphin, and serotonin help our immune system and boost the human body and mental health. You know that; we are familiar with these names. Interesting thing is that it can only be effective when the human brain

produces; medical pills are so limited and have unexpected side effects that they cannot replace the genuine hormones. It sounds interesting that it helps our health and it's free because we cannot buy it, but only our brain can make it. Then how can we get it?

The passage today introduces a man who may get the hormones. He was a blind man from birth. Although he has his parents, he begged for money and food in the marketplace. He lived a miserable life, and it seemed that hopelessness awaited. Here, at least two things are outstanding in the story. First, the blind man met Jesus, and his sight was miraculously cured. Second, the Pharisees tackled what Jesus did because that act of curing happened on a Sabbath. These two happenings are the key points in the passage, so I'd like to focus on how the people in the passage acted and reacted, instead of digging into proving or arguing the medical process of being cured by Jesus' spit.

Jesus preached that "the truth shall set you free" just before curing the blind. The freedom Jesus mentioned is about the freedom from the Jewish religious

law and the freedom towards the genuine teaching and divine truth. In this respect, I think Jesus knew the day he cured the blind man was a Sabbath. So Jesus intentionally showed his miracle in front of the people and wanted to let people know which one was important, between curing a person or keeping the law.

While Jesus cured the blind, the Pharisees accused Jesus of violating the law; that is, Jesus did the act of curing; in other words, Jesus worked on the Sabbath. We can sense how the knowledge bearers are carrying stones in their compassionless hearts. They are so inhumane and have no compassion: For them, keeping the law is much more important than saving a person.

Now open your eyes and look at the blind man in the passage. This person is my main point. This man was born blind; the blindness was not because of his parent's sins. The Bible describes human misunderstanding of illness and disease. Religious people may quickly think that their child's discomfort comes from their sins or even the child's unknown original sin. No, it is not. And Jesus corrects it, saying, "Neither this man nor his parents

sinned." Instead, Jesus explains that "he was born blind": No one's fault. And God is working within the suffering.

Jesus came to this blind man and did the act of curing on him. The man didn't understand why a man approached him and what he was doing to him. However, the man felt something unusual and wierd was happening to him. When asked to wash his eyes in the pool of Siloam, he ridiculously obeyed. You heard a few sentences, and yet it bears many things: Jesus performed a miracle on a blind man, and the man stayed calm, didn't resist and obeyed what Jesus asked. He could've resisted; "Get off of me. Do not touch me! Are you despising me because I am poorly blind? Hands off and leave me alone!" These words are so familiar. They sounded so fair to us. You know what? This cliché "Do not disturb me" or "Leave me alone" is so North American. It doesn't necessarily mean icy individualism, but often, that cliché blocks our compassionate hearts and the act of compassion. The Bible doesn't explain why, but the blind man didn't shout the expression. Instead, he humbly obeyed what Jesus asked. And he was cured. He was able to see clearly.

While reflecting on this scene, I supposed, what if the blind man resisted or disobeyed? And what if I were him? Would I listen to Jesus? How about you? If you were the blind, would you humbly obey? If we do not obey the words, that is because we are not only bodily blind but spiritually. We do not obey because we lack knowledge and are spiritually weak, not trusting Jesus fully. Furthermore, being stubborn, we will not open our eyes due to fear. This is like, a mature fetus, who is now facing the moment to come out of the mother's womb and resisting and refusing to come out, clenching their fists. "Wahh~~!!" "Hey, it's time to come out!" "No~~~!" "It's time to open your eyes!" "No!!! I'm not going to! I'm not going to open my eyes! Leave me alone! Wahhhh!!!"

The man must've hesitated but didn't resist. He listened to and obeyed humbly. If he had resisted, he would have lived with blindness for life. But listen! When he obeyed Jesus, he experienced a miracle.

The people who obey are the people who experience the divine miracle. The people who open their hands are the people who open their eyes. By opening their eyes,

we experience the power of Jesus. Without this experience, how can we say we have faith? How can we say we are Christians?

Once he experienced the power and the miracle, the blind man could not help declaring and spreading words. The authoritative Pharisees were arguing whether this man was the man who had been blind or not. Finally, the blind man spoke up: "I am the man!"

"I am the man!": Such a cool and brave declaration. "I am the man!" How much energy did he need to say that among the powerful people? The people with knowledge and law were violently powerful and tried to find weak points to accuse Jesus. Even he himself could've get disadvantages from the court. However, he couldn't help saying, "I am the man!" This is as if we love someone, and we cannot help saying, "I love you!" The blind man met an amazing person, the bearer of the miraculous power, Jesus. And he couldn't keep it in: "I am the man! I am the man! He cured me. I am the man!" That moment must've been the hormones spiking, or at least adrenaline spiking moment for the man.

We cannot resist the power of love. In the course of love and sacrifice, we meet Jesus; we taste happiness, comfort, and satisfaction. The deeper level of thrill, sacrifice, love, happiness, and satisfaction brings recovery, healing, power, and most likely the hormone of miracle. Would you live a long and happy Christian life? Be thrilled often by the Word, sing hymns often and try to taste the music and lyric deeply, get the goose bumps in your prayers often, serve others often, love others often, and give your time, efforts, and resources to others often. Then the power and the miracle of Jesus will be with you. Let us pray silently.