

Finding Purpose and Hope in a World Broken by Sin

The Gospel of John: That You May Believe | John 9:1-12

Southern Hills Baptist Church

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Introduction: We live in a world that is broken. This is indisputable. Diseases touch us or those that we love. Natural disasters bring devastation and loss of life. Some countries are so dangerous that people are fleeing at great personal cost. Death tears apart families at unexpected times. Living in a world as broken as ours means that we will encounter suffering. How are we to process all of this? Where is God in this? How should we live in the midst of this brokenness? Where can we find hope?

Context:

- **A Difficult Life** – The blind man in our passage had never experienced sight. He was a beggar, meaning his parents didn't have the ability to support him. He led a very difficult life to put it mildly.
 - **Observation** – One of the beauties of the Bible is that it doesn't shy away from difficult situations. It deals with real life, never avoiding, trying to distract, or change the conversation. Praise God for His wonderful Word that speaks to life where we are!
- **Walking Towards the Hurting** – Notice what prompted this interaction. Jesus saw the blind man and walked towards him. You could look at this man for just a second and instantly know he had great needs, but this didn't deter Jesus, it only attracted Him all the more.
 - **Observation** – When you see someone hurting, someone who needs a shoulder to cry on, someone who needs a friend in a period of loneliness, someone who needs a listening ear, be like Jesus, walk towards them, be willing to sacrifice your own time, schedule, energy to help someone else. Go and show the love that you have been shown in Jesus!

Living Under the Curse: Looking for Purpose (vs. 1-3)

As Jesus talks to His Disciples about the blind man's situation He gives us great insight as to how we should respond to the curse of sin our world lives under.

- **Cause or Purpose** – Upon seeing the blind beggar the Disciples want to know who caused his suffering. Jesus doesn't answer their question. Instead, He answers a better question as He shifts gears from cause to purpose. He wants them thinking through God's purpose in pain.
- **Display God's Working** – Jesus shares that one of God's purposes in suffering is to display His working. This is a hope-filled answer, as Jesus

teaches us that there is a point/purpose to our pain, God is working in the midst of it.

- **Displayed in the Miraculous** – Sometimes God displays His works through the miraculous, making the blind see, the lame walk, or removing your trial altogether.
- **Displayed in a Satisfied Heart** – Sometimes God displays His works through providing the grace needed to endure so that others can see He satisfies the heart of His children with joy in the face of great suffering (2 Cor 12:9-10).
- **Looking for Purpose** – When suffering comes your way follow the example of Jesus and look for the purpose of God in your life. *How might God display His works in and through me? How might I bring God glory through this? How can I show the world around me that it is ultimately Jesus that satisfies me and not what was taken from me or what I am now missing?*

Reversing the Curse: A Glorious Preview (vs. 3-12)

The curse of sin that brings so much suffering will one day be reversed by our great Savior, giving us hope in the here and now. Jesus gives us a preview of this hope in the healing of the blind man.

- **The Curse of Sin** – Jesus didn't address the cause of the beggar's blindness, but the Scriptures do and it is helpful in seeing the greater significance of Jesus' miracle. What causes suffering? The curse of sin.
 - **Subjected to Futility** – Gen 3:17-19 and Rom 8:18-25 teach us about how God cursed creation after sin entered the world. He "subjected it to futility," meaning it stopped functioning as originally created. It no longer easily produced for a thriving life, but had suffering (thorns and thistles) and death.
 - **Reflecting Our Spiritual Reality** – Some might question if this curse was too extreme a response from God over sin. When sin entered the world we died spiritually. Our spiritual reality is easy to deny or dismiss, so God, in love, caused our physical world to reflect our spiritual reality in a way we couldn't ignore so that we would know our desperate need for a Savior.
- **The Glorious Preview** – In making the blind man to see, Jesus is giving us a preview of how He will one day, fully and finally, reverse the curse of sin. One day, at the appointed time Jesus will fully reverse the curse of sin, ceasing all the pain and suffering we see and endure.
 - **People of Hope** – As believers we know that pain and suffering will one day be done away with forever at the hands of our Curse-Killing Savior, Jesus! Suffering doesn't define us!