ONE THING I DO KNOW

John 9:13-41

Key Verse 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!”*

Life is a journey – the journey to know who Jesus is and what he came to fulfill. We can see this being the case for according to John, “life is in Jesus, and that life is the light of man.” [Read also John 20:31; Rev. 22:13-14.]

Today we would like to think about the significance of that 'one' thing the Lord might have already revealed to each of us about Jesus himself, for if one does have that one thing for sure, as one cherishes and works on that ray of revelation, that revelation will lead him to reaching the next levels of revelations on Jesus, until he reaches the mature state, which I would like to call "the omega point". For the sake of discussion, I would like to call the point of you receiving that 'one' revelation on Jesus as the Alpha point. So our journey to knowing Jesus as fully as we ought begins with the Alpha point. Until we reach the Omega point, we need to go through the points in between.

In the previous passage, the Lord helped the man born blind to make a kick-start on his journey. He already got the Alpha point. In a way he was just born again. He is still immature, for his knowledge of Jesus was yet to be complete. We can call what happened to the man in the previous passage as the Chapter I of his life testimony. The story recorded in today's passage, can be called the Chapter II of his life testimony. And in this passage we can see that he grows (in terms of the knowledge of Jesus) in leaps and bounds. And we know he reached the point where he personally met Jesus, and worshiped him. The final state he reached here, I would like to call, the 'beginning' of the Omega point. The reason I added the word 'beginning' is because Jesus is God Incarnate, and by definition he is infinite in wisdom, love, and power, so in the passage the man born blind finally reached the Omega point where the fellowship with the author of eternity begins.

Question: how then did he reach the beginning point of the Omega point? Three things can be said.

**First, the man held onto one thing he did know (13-34)**

As we have already read from the Bible passage this man went through a number of grueling sessions. Neighbors, those who used to know him, particularly the Pharisees, gave him hard times. They treated him like a soccer ball. Imagine that you are now a soccer ball. Someone picked you into the soccer field. Then soccer players came and started kicking you around. In the soccer field there are two opposing teams. And one team kicks the ball, and the players of the opposing team kicks you back, so you are being kicked around. More or less the same thing happened, for at that time the Pharisees filled the court bench. They enforced the law. And even among themselves they could not agree on one thing on Jesus.

When you read the passage for today, put yourself in the positions of the Pharisees, and try to find the answers to the questions they had, most likely you will start having migraine headache. You might be very confused. You might feel like a man having to drive trough mountain roads in dense fog with zero visibility.

But think about the man born blind. Although this man was being kicked around back and forth, being hit with one question after another, going through people examining and cross examining each other, still not being able to reach a consensus, all the while, I think this man was laughing at themselves. All the while I think he was 'clear-minded'. We cannot tell precisely what was being processed in his mind. But we are certain that he was 'clear-headed'; he kept his cool. And when the opportunity presented, he gave a nice clear cut counter punch to those who tried to nail him down.

How could he do that? What enabled him to keep his cool? We find the answer to this question in what he said, that is, he held onto what Jesus had done for him:

1) "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed and I now see" (15);

2) "He is a prophet" (17);

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

4) "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" (27);

5) "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes (30);

6) We know God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will (31);

7) Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind (32); and

8) If this man were not from God, he could do nothing (33)."

When we examine what he said, we can see that there is a progression; his responses demonstrate a remarkable progress in his understanding of who Jesus is. Particularly think about what he said in vs. 30-33. I think he hit a 'homerun' here. And his statement deserves a further look. Let us break down what he said:

1) "Now that is remarkable! [This is like saying, "I can see that you guys are so stupid. How can you be so stupid? And it is truly remarkable that though you are so educated, you don't know where this man might be from. So let me guide you through the confusion.]

2) You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. [This is very important point - it points out what they didn't know, and what he did know ABOUT JESUS. No matter how much you know about the Bible or anything else, it is very possible that you do NOT know a thing about Jesus, for sure. It is in this respect that this man stands way above the Pharisees in terms of the knowledge of Jesus. And the difference is like heaven and earth. Consider: this one thing you know for sure about Jesus represents the 'gateway' or 'key' if you will, to the kingdom of heaven. So compare the one who has the key to the door and the one who does not. The difference is infinite. No wonder that the religious leaders sitting in the judgment seat remained so blind.]

3) We know God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. [This is the constant premise; it is the plain truth, which even a small child can concede. A minute ago he talked about what they did not know and what he did know. Now he talks about what all (we) know. And consider what he said. He said a truth first in a negative way then in a positive way, so that the whole truth would be true on both sides, just like a coin, so what he said represents the embodiment of the whole truth. Consider what he said in a positive way: God listens to the godly man who does his will. Think about the expression 'who does his will'. The word 'does' is crucial. Jesus is God's truth in action. And in order to see God working, do something what you know as true. For the most part, most of the Pharisees did not do what they knew. They just accumulated head knowledge. They did not put into practice what they knew. They were like a grotesque animal whose head is as gigantic as that of an elephant, but legs are as feeble as those of mosquito.]

4) Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. [This is also true. But there is a very important message to consider, and the underlying message is that Jesus could be none other than the "Messiah". Yes, he is a prophet, but he is 'more than' a prophet; he is more than any prophets, great or small. There used to be great prophets, such as Elijah or Elisha or Moses. But, Jesus did more. He did what they were unable to do, that is, opening the eyes of a man born blind!]

5) If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." [This is the conclusion. His students (the Pharisees) were not sure where Jesus is from. But now they got the answer.]

Here is a question: Where did this man get such piercing, crisp insight? Obviously being a man born blind, he wasn't able to read as much as the Pharisees did. I do not think he had a fair opportunity to get educated. I am not sure how much his parents did for his education. We can gather from what they said to the Pharisees on their son that most likely upon being born, they saw that he was defective. So they abandoned. We are not sure what the man was doing when Jesus and his disciples bumped into him. Was he begging? Was he seated underneath a tree? We don’t know. I think when Jesus' disciples drew Jesus' attention to the man, he was somewhere in Jerusalem, perhaps not far from the temple court, for the pool of Siloam is in a walking distance from the temple area. And having gone through the Feast of the Tabernacle, he must have been begging on the street. Maybe he was in his twenties, or thirties. [He is of age for sure, but we don't know how old he might have been.] My point though is that he was an unschooled man. Where did he get such a crisp insight?

I think he got it from what he had gone through with Jesus. Last Sunday we studied the first part of Chapter 9. As recorded there, I think he cherished in his mind the conversations that went on between Jesus' disciples and Jesus. So let us revisit the site by reading John 9:1-7. One thing he did know is summed up right there. It came with the words of Jesus as well. When one is blind, other ways to absorb information than sight such as through audible sound develops better. I think he overheard the conversation and he remembered every bit of it. First off, he was born blind, not because anyone sinned. So he did not feel fatalistic. As pathetic as he might seem, Jesus said he was born that way only for God to reveal his glory. I think of all the revelations, this might have been the most comforting for him. At this moment I would encourage everyone myself in particular think about what Jesus said: "This happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." Then he came across the revelation on the origin of Jesus for Jesus said, "we must do the work of him who sent me." It is not difficult to deduce from what Jesus said that he is indeed from God. If it were not God who is the person who sent Jesus? So the man taught the Pharisees that Jesus is none other than the one from God.

We can imagine easily that all the while, before, during, and after the miracle, the words of Jesus might have been ringing in his mind. As he kept remembering what Jesus had said, the words that gave him sight, he could sort things through, and come up with a clear understanding of who Jesus is. By keeping the words of Jesus deep in his heart, he could find the way to the fuller truths of Jesus.

**Second, as he retained that one thing he knew, and stood on the side of the truth, Jesus further revealed himself, until he had a personal encounter with Jesus so he could worship him. (35-38)**

Let us read vs. 26-29 and then 34. In one of the recent messages we learned of Jesus saying, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples." One of the meanings of the phrase 'hold to' is 'stick to' or 'adhere to' despite counter influence such as persecutions. In the case of the man born blind, the counter influence came in the form of the rulers of the society excommunicating him from the society (22,34). In our own generation hardships and ordeals might come in different forms like peer pressure, temptations to sin, and much more.

The man born blind held onto the words of Jesus. As a reward he got kicked out of the community. His parents gave him up. The religious leaders threw him out of the synagogue. He had no way to stand in this world.

But from a spiritual stand point, what happened to him was a gain, not a loss. Why? Look at vs. 35-38 again. He lost the world, but gained Jesus Christ, the source of all blessings in the true sense of the word blessing. We can better understand the gain he received when we think about the discovery the Apostle Paul made in Philippians 3:8 where it is written, "What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish that I may gain Christ..."

Let us all stand up and read John 9:37. The man 'worshiped' Jesus. He reached the Omega Point. He saw God and his kingdom in Jesus. And in that state, as he worships Jesus, the Son of God, the builder and sustainer of the universe and everything in it, he can spend eternity, going from glory to glory.

The Bible says that Jesus is the exact representation of God's being (Heb 1:3). Anyone who does not see Jesus that way is a blind at least to a certain extent. We can measure whether one is [spiritually] blind or not and if he is blind how much is blind, by his attitude towards Jesus. In the case of the man, his eyes (not just physical but spiritual) were opened, so he 'worshiped' Jesus. [In John’s gospel, the word ‘worship’ (προσκυνέω – proskyneo) is repeated 12 times. But of all, it is only in this verse that this word was used towards Jesus. And it is this man alone who did worship Jesus. Later, in other gospels such as Matthew, we see that Jesus’ disciples started worshiping Jesus but not until after Jesus rose again.] In our days people worship a number of things or people. But, as used in John’s gospel, worship is directed to God and God alone. So the man born blind found Jesus the Son of God.

In the case of Jacob in the Bible, although he was born in a believing family, during the most of his career as a believer, his eyes remained blind. So he did not know who God really is. But later, towards the end of his life the Lord opened his spiritual eyes. Jacob lived to be 147. And Genesis 47:31 indicates that towards the end of his life, he reached the Omega Point, that he was ready to enter the presence of God for good. So he finished his life worshiping God while leaning on his staff.

**Third, by the same token, when one does not have that 'one thing', or even after having received that 'one thing' does not 'cherish' that one thing, one will be in danger of becoming blind and thereafter remain lost in sin. (39-41)**

Let us read vs. 39-41. In v. 39, "those who see" refer to those who think they see when in fact they do not see. This is to point out the blindness of some Pharisees who failed to see what the man born blind came to see.

At the end of the passage Jesus talks about the Pharisees remaining guilty of sin. Jesus did not say this just to condemn them. He said this to speak of the truth on them. From this discussion we can deduce the truth that when one does not know who Jesus is and what he came to fulfill, that person remains condemned. As a result, indeed, he or she will continue to sin. So if we see anyone keep sinning, instead of condemning him, we must pray that that person would come to know our Lord Jesus, so as he comes to know his person and the work he came to fulfill, that person will naturally overcome the sinning world.

One word: One thing I do know