

*As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. 4We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. 5As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, 7saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.*

*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?" 9Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." 10But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11He 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." 12They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."*

*13They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." 16Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. 17So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet." 18The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight 19and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" 20His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; 21but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." 22His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. 23Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." 24So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." 25He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." 26They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" 27He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" 28Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. 29We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." 30The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. 31We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. 32Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." 34They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.*

*35Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." 37Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." 38He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.*

*39Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." 40Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" 41Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains*

How to be a Christian in five easy steps:

Step one: Pray for insight.

Step Two: Confess your sins.

Step Three: Accept Jesus into your heart.

Step Four: Attend Church.

Step five: Tell of the joy that you now have.

If only it were so easy.

She comes to talk to me. She wants to know of Jesus. I tell her of Jesus, words which to give her sight. But she goes home disappointed. She hoped for what the man born blind received, the man we heard about in the gospel reading. For at the end of his story comes the confession to Jesus, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Jesus. I think every person who walks through those doors and many who never get that far want just that, to worship Jesus. Not just with words or outward actions but with the whole heart and soul and mind and strength.

To worship. Can Jesus make our hearts sing the way that dreams of fast cars and elegant homes and World Series Championships do?

The man born blind in our gospel reading did not come to Jesus for sight. Jesus chose him for sight, mixed some dirt and saliva, put the mud on his eyes, and sent him to the pool which means sent, Siloam. If our eyes are not blind we will see that this was his baptism, being washed in the one who has been sent, Jesus.

Now he sees. But like your baptism, that is only the beginning of the story. He has met Jesus, but he really does not know him yet.

Maybe you have been like him, had the sense that God has really blessed you. You are thankful, but is there something more that God is seeking of you?

In the gospel reading the man does not return to Jesus, but to his daily life. Immediately there are questions. "How were your eyes opened?" And he told what Jesus had done. But when asked where Jesus was, he did not know.

But then Jesus enemies got into the act, the Pharisees. The healing had been done on the Sabbath, God's day of rest. One thing the Pharisees were sure of, Jesus is not from God for he does not observe the Sabbath. Yet other Pharisees wondered how he could heal as he had. They were divided. They asked the man who had been healed what he thought, he said, "Jesus is a prophet."

As we heard earlier the story goes on and on. The Pharisees become surer that Jesus is a sinner, the man who had been healed surer that Jesus is from God. Until finally the Pharisees threw him out.

When Jesus heard it, Jesus found him. And Jesus told him that Jesus was the Son of Man. And he worshipped Jesus.

His spiritual sight was not all at once, but grew in the midst of conflict and opposition. And ended in worship.

I hide my faith because I do not want to offend. And I do not grow.

The woman wants a full faith, a finished faith, a complete faith right away. She goes home disappointed.

But for a man born blind, and healed, the worship of Jesus comes at the end of his story, after conflict and struggle. We tell ourselves, we are not far enough along to witness to Jesus. But we will never get any further along unless we start.

Hearing God's word each week, reading the scriptures, talking with other believers about the scriptures, talking with non-believers about Jesus, these are all steps on the path to worship him. And that is the goal to worship Jesus.

I read about a man of our day who was born blind. He had surgery after he was in his forties. They took the bandage off, his eyes functioned just as well as yours or mine, but he could not see. His brain did not know what to do with what his eyes were sending it. For a while he struggled to make sense of what his eyes were seeing. But then he gave up. Seeing with his eyes was too difficult for him, he went back to his old way of seeing with his hands.

How many of us give up. Living in darkness is easier than journeying to the light.

But take heart. Just when things turned the darkest, when he had been thrown out, the light came to the man in the gospel reading. Jesus found him.

Jesus will find me, and you. In every darkness Jesus will find me and you. And we will believe, and worship. Yes, we will. Amen.