



True Worship: Courage, Conviction and Clarity to Worship Christ

Series: *The Wonder of Worship*

John 9:1-38

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As Christians, by definition, we are worshippers of Jesus Christ. That is who and what we are. Peter writes of us: ***“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”*** (1 Peter 2:9, ESV) Paul says of us: ***“For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—”*** (Philippians 3:3, ESV) In the book of Romans after he describes the gospel in detail over the first 11 chapters, he exhorts us saying: ***“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”*** (Romans 12:1, ESV) John records for us the picture of the eternal worship of Jesus in heaven: ***“Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.”*** (Revelation 5:11–14, ESV) We are worshippers of Christ, engaged in the most important endeavor in the world – bringing glory to God.

We need these words; we need this reminder of who we are, of who Christ is in all of His glory and splendor; we need these words that remind us of our great salvation, of our calling and exhort us to worship; we need these reminders of the worship of Christ in heaven. We need this reminder of the supremacy of Christ and the worship of which He is worthy, because worshipping Christ in a fallen world is not easy. It is difficult; it’s costly, it requires real courage, real conviction, real clarity about who Christ is in order to faithfully worship Him.

It has never been fashionable to worship God or to worship His Christ in this fallen world. The worship of God has been under attack since the Garden of Eden. But, in particular, it seems acutely harder today, in these last days. It is what we are to expect, of course. Peter says that **“scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.”** (2 Peter 3:3, ESV) Jesus in speaking of His second coming, declared, **“And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”** (Luke 18:7–8, ESV) It is hard to be a faithful worshipper of Christ in a fallen world.

It takes courage and conviction. The moment you confess the absolute infallibility of God's word, hold to a biblical view of man as a sinner, to God as a Holy and Righteous Judge, to Christ as the only propitiation for sins, the only Redeemer, as soon as you hold to the uniqueness of Christ and seek to live under his Lordship fully and completely, when you make it your goal in every aspect of your life to worship Christ, when you orient your life around gathering with the saints to express love and devotion, to exalt and magnify God in Christ, you will know persecution. To devote your life to the worship of Jesus Christ as Savior King and Lord is nothing short of intellectual suicide in the eyes of many people. It is the death knell to your freedom, the death knell to happiness; it's restrictive, unenlightened, superstitious, and foolish. You cannot be taken seriously if you are Christian. To hold fast to Christ in that sort of climate requires courage and conviction. True Christians will feel the weight and the cost of their devotion to Christ. We hear the stories of our brothers and sisters around the world put to death by Muslim swords. We see in our country the increasing antagonism to Christianity both by the general populace and by the government. Courage and conviction are essential to worship Christ in this world.

To faithfully worship Christ also requires clarity; clarity about who He is. This world is always at work to redefine Christ, to muddle the Biblical testimony to Who He is. You see it especially at this time of the year. All of the Jesus specials come out on TV and most of them are woefully inadequate in presenting the truth about Jesus. There is a concerted effort to undermine the uniqueness and supremacy of Christ specifically to rob Him of the worship of which He is worthy, to reduce His glory and recast Him in a light that is more acceptable to rejecters of biblical revelation, to produce a Jesus that we can all agree upon, a Jesus who does not make exclusive demands to worship, a Jesus who does not radically reorient and transform the lives of His followers, a Jesus who is satisfied by superficial devotion. This is not the Jesus of the Word of God and in a world that devalues and deconstructs the truth

about Jesus, if we would be faithful worshippers, we need clarity about Who He is – we need hearts, minds and souls fortified by the truth.

And that is why we need this text today. We need this picture of Christ seeking and healing a blind man of physical and spiritual blindness. We need this picture of man growing in courage, conviction and clarity about the person of Christ. We need this picture of the supremacy of Christ and this man's worship of the Lord. We need it for our own encouragement, as an exhortation to our own souls.

As we get into this text, I want for us to have clearly established in our minds what is the climax of this story. The climax of the story is found in verse 38: ***“He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.” (John 9:38, ESV)*** The climax of this story is the formerly blind man falling on his face and worshipping Jesus, fulfilling the highest calling of man. But along the way there is struggle, there is controversy, there is rejection and there is faith. This entire drama is orchestrated by God to show how the person and the work of Christ leads some to blasphemy and leads some to worship. So let's look at this text and see what we can glean from it. Let's first look at the miracle itself.

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind (1-7) Let's read these first 7 verses again and then I want to point out a few things. ***“As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.” (John 9:1-7, ESV)***

Jesus and the disciples are walking along when they encounter a man blind since birth. The disciples notice this man and it gives them the opportunity to ask a specific question. Why is this man blind, did he sin or did his parents sin? Now that may seem a little callous, but the disciples were under the impression that blindness was a curse, one that was visited on people because of their personal sin. Now, to be fair, all sickness is a result of sin, a result of

the fall – the curse of sin is the source of sickness in humanity – and some sickness is absolutely a result of personal sin, but to the Jewish way of thinking there was always a one-to-one correlation with sickness and sin. It had to be the result of some personal sin in a person’s life or that of their parents. That of course is not true, but how Jesus responds to them takes this conversation to another level.

Jesus says, **“It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.”** What are we to make of this answer? What is Jesus saying? He is saying that God ordained that this man be born blind in order that the works of God may be made manifest in his life. This man’s condition has been sovereignly ordained so that the works of God might be revealed to him and through him. He was born blind so that he might be given sight – not merely physical sight, which is miracle enough – but so that he might be given spiritual sight, as we will see, to behold the radiance of God’s glory in Christ, so that he would be made a worshipper of God, which is the highest and greatest good and so that the work of God would be put on display in his life.

Now that brings us face to face with a reality that may be, at first, difficult to grasp. We naturally put a premium on health and wealth, on happiness and ease. We see the highest good, many times, as being a life of temporal satisfaction and a trouble free life, but not Jesus. Jesus states pretty clearly that the manifestation of the works of God in saving a sinner, in redeeming a lost soul, in creating a worshipper of God, far outweighs years and years of blindness or whatever hardship it may be that God ordains to use for that purpose. The Psalmist says in Psalm 63: **“Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.” (Psalm 63:3, ESV)** God’s saving love, His steadfast love and mercy, far outweighs even physical life itself. Being loved by God, being redeemed by God, being a worshipper of God and being with God forever is better than sight, better than ease, better than health or wealth, better than temporal happiness. It is far, far better; beyond being compared.

The ultimate good is the manifestation of God’s glory through His works of grace and mercy by which He makes men worshippers of the Living God for His glory and for their eternal and supreme good. The ultimate good is not freedom from pain, trials, or tribulation. Jesus, the One who sacrificed most greatly in coming down from heaven, taking on human flesh, and taking upon Himself the sins of the world, suffering the wrath of God toward sinners on the cross of Calvary – no stranger to pain or trial – is the One telling us this. Our supreme good is

knowing and loving God, and if God purposes to use pain and adversity in our lives to bring us to Him and make us worshippers, it is well worth the price.

Jesus then said: ***We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*** We cannot go into all of the implications of what Jesus says here, but what I want us to understand is this: He lets the disciples know that He is not going to pass this man by. He is in the world, in His incarnation, to be the light of the world, to shine the light and the radiance of God's glory in this darkened world, by doing the works of God. This is a moment ordained by God for Jesus to reveal the power of God and His person as God in the flesh to reveal the love of God for sinners. Watch how Jesus does this:

Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing. Jesus heals this man, but why does He do it in this manner? He could have simply spoken a word and the man would have been healed, right? So why the mud pies applied to his eyes? There are no shortage of speculations and suppositions by theologians in this regard, but for our purposes let me say that I believe it has to do with the fact that this healing took place on the Sabbath. Jesus healed the man in this manner because it would create the controversy that would bring about both blasphemy and worship.

The making of mud and the healing of a man were explicitly outlawed by the Pharisaical interpretation of the Sabbath. What was the Sabbath for? The Pharisees had reduced the Sabbath to a variety of man-made, nitpicking, little rules regarding what was and what was not work. It was a day to be idle. But was that the heart of the Sabbath? No, not at all. Yes, man was not to work but there was a reason for that – it was for the very purpose of worshipping God, for glorifying God, for resting in the grace and mercy and goodness of God, for blessing Him for His provision, for communing with and magnifying God for His works. The purpose of the Sabbath was to celebrate God. What better day than the Sabbath for Jesus Christ, sent from God, to find this blind man and heal Him, to express God's love and grace, and to demonstrate that the ***"Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath"*** (Matthew 12:8, ESV), than on the day set aside for worship?

Jesus anoints this blind man's eyes with mud, sends him to the pool of Siloam, which means Sent -- a not-so-subtle reference to the truth that Jesus is the One sent from God for the redemption of sinners -- and the man washes and he is healed of his blindness. He has to be amazed. Jesus did not tell him that He was going to heal him of his blindness. He had promised no miracle but that is just what he received. Don't miss that. This healing is not a response to this man's begging or pleading; it is gift of grace. It is a powerful, unmistakable work of God. And the controversy that ensues as a result of this miraculous work of God, exposes hearts. It exposes unbelief and faith. The opposition to Christ grows greater and greater and the faith of this man healed of his blindness goes deeper and deeper. The work of God in this man is not finished with his sight being restored -- the work is much deeper. He grows in clarity about Christ. He grows in courage and in conviction. This is just what Jesus is after: the clear vision of who He is, a courageous and convinced confession of faith, and worship in an atmosphere of blasphemy. We observe all of this in the conversations that follow. First we see:

The Formerly Blind Man and His Neighbors (8-12) Pick it up in verse 8: ***“The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ Some said, ‘It is he.’ Others said, ‘No, but he is like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’”*** (John 9:8-9, ESV) This miracle causes no little excitement. Watch how the grace of God upsets the applecart. Some are convinced that it cannot be him, preferring to believe that it must be a case of mistaken identity rather than admit that something miraculous has happened to him. They just cannot believe that this could possibly have happened. It just cannot be. Others are sure that it must be the same guy that they had known to be blind, but they are shocked to see him with sight. All along this former blind beggar asserts his true identity. All this confusion leads to the obvious question.

“So they said to him, ‘Then how were your eyes opened?’” (John 9:10, ESV) His answer is to the point and simple. He doesn't embellish, he just tells the facts. ***“He answered, ‘The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed and received my sight.’”*** (John 9:11, ESV) At this point, his knowledge of Christ is limited but that does not keep him from testifying to Christ. He simply calls him ***“the man called Jesus.”*** That is as much light as he has at the moment, but he is faithful to it. ***“They said to him, ‘Where is he?’ He said, ‘I do not know.’”*** (John 9:12, ESV) He tells the truth. He has no idea where Jesus is. At this point he has never even laid eyes on Him. Not knowing what else to do with him, they take the formerly blind man to the Pharisees.

The Formerly Blind Man and the Pharisees, Part 1 (13-17) Here, in this exchange, the opposition, the effort to keep this man from faith, to extinguish what is growing his heart begins in earnest. Watch this. ***“They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them.”*** (John 9:13–16, ESV) Just as had happened with his neighbors, there is a division that takes place among the Pharisees. The Pharisees asked how it was that the man received his sight. And he told them and this time he mentions the mud. That is all that some of them needed to hear. It was the Sabbath; making mud, they thought, was a violation of the Sabbath, therefore, according to their view of things, because Jesus did not meet their predetermined expectations and did not fit with their estimation of what someone sent from God should look like, a number of the Pharisees rejected Jesus out-of-hand. ***“This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”*** Really what they should have said was that “He does not follow our rules and someone from God would never act that way.” Their conclusion is based on the faulty premise that they know the truth; their wisdom is the measure of things. They never consider the fact that maybe their interpretation of the Sabbath is incorrect or their assessment of Jesus is invalid. That’s nothing new. There are plenty of people who reject Christ for just that reason. He does not meet their fallen expectations.

Others are not so sure. They see this sign and know it is no small thing. They cannot wrap their minds all the way around it. ***“So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.””*** (John 9:17, ESV) While the wrangling between the Pharisees is taking place, something unseen is occurring in the heart of this man. As he is hearing the Pharisees arguing over the identity of Jesus, over what kind of man He is, His understanding, His conviction about Christ is growing and so does his testimony, so does his witness. He says, ***“He is a prophet.”*** He is no ordinary man, but One sent from God, a representative of God who does the will of God. Jesus is a prophet. As hard as the Pharisees are working to disprove Jesus, the work of God’s grace is continuing to bear fruit in the heart of this man. Wanting to discredit what this man says, wanting to find any other explanation for what is staring them in the face, not wanting to believe the obvious truth, they call in his parents.

The Pharisees and the Parents of the Man Born Blind (18-23) Pick it up in verse 18: ***“The 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 and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.””*** (John 9:18–23, ESV) Now it would be really easy to pile on the parents here. It strains credulity to think that they actually knew no details at all about their son’s healing. Of course they did. Do they roll him under the bus? It seems that way. But remember a couple of things. First, they had not personally experienced the grace of God in Christ and second, these men before whom they are standing and who are interrogating them have massive power over their lives. They had the ability to destroy your life – to kick you out of the synagogue, to make you a social pariah, to keep you from buying and selling. In fact, the parents seem to know much more than they are letting on. It would seem from the commentary of John about their state of mind that their son, in his conversations with his parents, had gone beyond believing that Jesus was a prophet to believing that He is the Christ. They are afraid of getting themselves and him kicked out of synagogue.

Their son had been the recipient of one of the signs associated with the Messiah. Isaiah wrote of the Messiah in Isaiah 42: ***“Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law. Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it: “I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.”*** (Isaiah 42:1–7, ESV) Apparently, he had said more to his parents than what they were willing to reveal to the Pharisees. Rather than pummel the parents for their fear, perhaps it is better for us to rejoice in the courage, conviction and clarity of this formerly blind man that he displays in his next conversation with the Pharisees.

The Formerly Blind Man and the Pharisees, Part 2 (24-34) “So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.”” (John 9:24, ESV) How blind these men are and how determined they are to stay that way. Bring glory to God; worship God, by blaspheming his Son, by calling Him common, by rejecting the evidence of His Messiahship. Join us in our rejection of Christ – and the underlying message is – or else. They call on this man who has been the recipient of grace, in whom the works of God are taking place, to deny Jesus. Blasphemy is not too strong a word for this full-blown rejection of Christ. But I want you to know that blasphemy is not confined to such statements as this one by the Pharisees. It is blasphemy to speak with authority and with finality about Jesus in any way that is not consistent with God’s testimony about Him. To speak of Him as a mere man, as simply an example, as a virtuous man, as a teacher or as a liar and fraud, and to do it with finality, are all forms of blasphemy. Our world is filled with blasphemers – religious and irreligious alike, seeking to steal faith and worship from Christ. The formerly blind man will not have it.

“He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”” (John 9:25, ESV) Don’t misread this or misunderstand what the man is saying. He is not saying that the possibility that Jesus is a sinner is still open to discussion. He is saying instead, “I have absolutely no evidence, absolutely no reason to believe at all that He is a sinner. But I have proof of the fact that I was blind but now I see. Those are the facts and there are some very real implications of those facts that you have to deal with. I was blind but now I see.” His testimony is sure and it is bold. He will not back off what he knows to be true about Jesus, no matter the cost. And he is seeing more all the time. He is seeing more and more. The Pharisees go back to their former line of questioning.

“They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”” (John 9:26, ESV) They are hoping to trip him up, to catch him in his testimony and it is here that his courage and conviction turn to righteous indignation in the presence of these determined scoffers. **“He 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?”” (John 9:27, ESV)** Those are sharp words, but they intimate the truth – that Jesus is worthy to be followed, worthy to have disciples. The Pharisees are furious.

“And they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.””

(John 9:28–29, ESV) They revile him. How? By referring to him as a disciple of Jesus. To call someone a disciple of Jesus was, to their way of thinking, a grave insult. Some still think that it is today. Calling themselves disciples of Moses, which was a joke – Jesus had already said of these men, **“For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.”** (John 5:46, ESV) – they nevertheless revealed their own ignorance. We do not know where he comes from...

The formerly blind man jumps on their admission: **“The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.””** (John 9:30–33, ESV) You can see the work of grace being wrought in this man’s soul, the conviction, the courage, and the clarity growing by the minute. He schools the Pharisees. “You cannot say where he comes from? It’s obvious. God doesn’t listen to sinners, we can all agree on that. But if he is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to Him.” No one ever fit that description like Jesus. He always did what pleased the Father, lived a life of unbroken worship, fully accomplished His will and would fulfill it by dying on the cross and rising from the dead for the redemption of sinners. And no one, no one ever, has done the works of God that He has done. No one has ever healed a blind man, but He has – that’s something only the Messiah does, and in more ways than one. If this man were not from God – and here the implication goes beyond that of prophet, the implication is that Jesus is the Messiah – He could do nothing. The Pharisees couldn’t handle this.

“They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out.” (John 9:34, ESV) All they could resort to were ad hominem attacks, attacks on his character. Their imagined superiority is sickening and they cast him out. That is a way of saying that they excommunicated him. He had no part in the synagogue any longer, no part in the community. He was anathema. It would seem that he lost everything, but we know better. This next conversation is the climax to the story.

Jesus and the Man Who Once Was Blind but Now Sees (35-38) This is so awesome. It shows us that when God begins a good work, He continues and completes it. **“Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?””** (John 9:35, ESV) Jesus comes looking for the man, searching him out, and asks him the

question of questions. **“Do you believe in the Son of Man? Do you believe in the Messiah, the Christ?”** This is no question from out of the blue. He has come to believe in the Messiah, but he needs to know who He is. He knows the man who healed him was the Messiah, but he wants to see Him. He had never seen Him. His faith needs an object.

“He answered, ‘And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?’” (John 9:36, ESV) Understand what he is saying. The idea is, “Show Him to me. Show me the man who healed me. Show me the one sent from God who does the works of God, what only the Messiah of God can do.” **“Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.’” (John 9:37, ESV)** Jesus reveals Himself to these formerly blinded eyes, to a man who had come to believe but who did not yet know the identity of the man who had healed him. He recognizes Jesus’ voice; he sees His face and the response is instantaneous. **“He said, ‘Lord, I believe,’ and he worshiped him.” (John 9:38, ESV)** This is that last that we see or hear from this man, but it is the climax, the point of the story. Christ has come doing the works of God. This man’s blindness was ordained for just that reason, as the grounds from which he would be given physical and spiritual sight. His courage, conviction, and clarity regarding Christ would grow and he would become what Christ had come seeking Him for – to make Him as worshipper of God. And it was all of it – worth it. What had he lost to remain faithful to his testimony about Jesus, what had he given up to worship Him that was not worth losing? Reputation, the approval of the Pharisees, the support of His parents, his place in the synagogue? He has lost nothing and he has gained everything.

Charles Spurgeon says: **“I should like to ask you who are the people of God when you are happiest. I think you will agree with what I am going to say; and if you do not, it will still be just as true to me. My happiest moments are when I am worshipping God, really adoring the Lord Jesus Christ, and having fellowship with the ever-blessed Spirit. In that worship, I forget the cares of the church, and everything else; and, to me, it is the nearest approach to what it will be in heaven, where, day without night, they offer perpetual adoration unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Hence, what a memorable moment it was for this man when he worshipped Christ! Now, if Christ was not God, that man was all idolater... If Christ is not God, we are not Christians; we are deceived dupes, we are idolaters, as bad as the heathen whom we now pity. It is making a man into a God if Christ be not God. But, blessed be his holy name, he is God; and we feel that it is the supreme delight of our being to worship him. We cannot veil our face with our wings, for we have none; but we do veil them with his own robe of righteousness whenever we approach him. We cannot cover our feet with our wings, as the angels do; but we do take his blood and**

his righteousness both as a covering for our feet, and as wings with which we fly up to him; and though as yet we have no crowns to cast at his dear feet, yet, if we have any honor, any good repute, any grace, anything that is comely, anything that is honest, we lay it all at his feet, and cry, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Amen. Nothing compares with the joy of seeing Jesus for Who He is and worshipping Him. Nothing.

Now, what are we to take from all of this?

It requires courage, conviction and clarity about Christ to worship Him. Look, the truth is that we have much in common with this formerly blind man in this text. He is a picture of each of every saved soul. Blind from birth and beyond the help of man; a beggar having nothing, he is a picture of our spiritual condition by nature. Sought out by Christ and healed without a single appeal from him, we have a beautiful illustration of the work of sovereign grace reaching out to us in our unregenerate state. He is given physical sight, but more importantly spiritual sight. He alone in this story can say: ***One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.*** And so can we. We can see even more. We have seen ourselves as lost sinners, seen our desperate condition, seen the Divinely-appointed refuge from the wrath to come, seen the power and grace of God in Christ to save us. We know what it is to have our broken lives made new; we know what it is to be the recipients of God's grace, objects of His love since before the foundation of the world. We know what it is to be rescued and bought with Christ's blood, know what it is for Jesus to bear our sin and pain, know what it is to have passed from death to life, know that sin's debt has been forever satisfied for us by the outpouring of Christ's blood; His body broken for us. We know that our salvation is secure and that we will see Him face to face when He returns. We know that Christ is worthy of worship and worthy to be praised with the whole of our lives. We know that.

Unregenerate humanity, apart from a work of God's grace in their hearts, will always respond with disbelief, with mockery, with ridicule, with antagonism to the work of God in Christ –especially to the cross and resurrection. Paul explains why: ***“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in***

the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:3–6, ESV) There is always the temptation to wilt or to waver in the midst of ridicule, or unbelief, rejection, threats or mockery. Our world does not applaud the faithful Christian who orients the whole of His life around worshipping and honoring Christ.

But beloved that is exactly what we must do. This is the soul of our lives. It is not always easy. I know the temptation to try to avoid uncomfortable conversations, to avoid awkwardness, to tone down our devotion, to hide our testimony, to obscure our worship in order to avoid unpleasant response from people, to avoid being labeled as narrow or intolerant, or a zealot, to avoid mockery or a loss of respect from friends, or family, co-workers or acquaintances. I know the temptation to be fussy and indistinct about Christ, to be fuzzy on the gospel to avoid confrontation. Listen, I get that. But then I read this text and I realize something.

We have been saved, made worshippers of the Living God through the grace that is in Christ, so that the works of God may be displayed in us – the work of God that saves sinners and makes rebels worshippers of God. We need to be clear about Who Jesus is, the devotion and worship that He deserves and to do so without fear or compromise. Our worship is a witness to the glory of God, our testimonies a means of bringing the truth of Christ’s saving power to light in this darkened world. We are to be giving evidence of the works of God in our own life through courageous and convinced worship of a Savior about whom we are certain and clear. When we fall into the temptation to muffle our praise, to tone down our worship, to hide our testimony of Christ, to suppress an open and faithful declaration of our worship and devotion to God, we are removing the very reason that we have been made **a people for his own possession, (so) that we may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.** Living a life of worship for the sake of Christ’s glory, for the sake of our own souls, and for the sake of a lost world that desperately needs a Savior, the manifestation of the works of God in Jesus – it requires courage, conviction and clarity about Christ. And that beloved, is the very thing for which we have been saved.

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