

Our judgment is always influenced by what we know at the time.

For example, a man once brought a native of Ecuador named Mincaye to the United States. One day, Mincaye went in to take a shower. The most awful noise began to come from the bathroom. The man finally went in and there was Mincaye rolling as best he could under the faucet in the tub. Mincaye didn't know to put the plug in the tub or better yet, pull up the knob to take a shower. He was washing based on what he knew.

Or consider this story about a teenager in the hall of his high school who suddenly hauled off and slugged another kid. Knocked him flat; knocked him out cold. A teacher rushed up and the principal who actually saw it rushed up and grabbed the kid and said, "You're out of here! You're going to be expelled!" And what did the kid say? He said, "Look in that dude's pocket." And they look in the pocket, and there was a gun, and his hand was still on the gun. And the kid said, "Yeah, I sugged him, but he was going to shoot somebody." The principal reversed his decision about expelling that student.

We base just about everything on what we know at the moment. The disciples were doing this in the beginning of this passage. They were asking whose fault it is the man was blind. Exodus 20:5 says the sins of the father will be punished to the 3rd and 4th generation. So, the disciples want to know if it was the man's fault or the parents.

You see, the disciples already know what the Old Testament says. Based on what they know is there, it's probably the parent's fault.

But which one does Jesus say it is? It's neither. The man has been blind from birth for this moment so that Jesus can heal him and God can be glorified. Sometimes bad things happen and it's not our fault and it's not a punishment. What's more, God can twist it with His grace into something amazing.

The disciples were learning. They only knew what they'd been taught. It's not the disciples' fault that they asked whose fault it was. Jesus doesn't rebuke them. They're doing their best with what they knew at the time. The man who used to be blind is doing the best he can do based on what he knew then as well.

When he's given vision, even before he knew who Jesus was, he was out witnessing for Him and defending Him. He doesn't know who Jesus is, yet he's giving testimony about him before the Pharisees even though this guy was a poor, blind beggar.

Then when Jesus reveals Himself to the formerly blind man, things change again. For the man who was once blind, things are different now. He no longer sees things how he used to see them. He can no longer act as if he's still blind.

And if God has moved in your life to give you his gifts, neither can you. Now, God doesn't expect perfection from you or me today. What He does expect is for our relationship with Him to be changing all the time. Call it growing, or deepening, or whatever you want, but it's never just "there."

Here's the thing, when you know better and don't do better, that's where the problem lies. That was a major problem with the Pharisees. **That's what Jesus calls having sight, but being blind.**

Jesus implies we're better off to be blind and know it than to think we have sight and really be blind. He'll give sight to those who know they need it, but those who don't think they need it are in trouble.

This is the major dynamic at the heart of Jesus teaching, mission, and ministry. Those who admit their blindness; those who know they need grace; those who know they need God to give to them; they are given vision for life. Those who think they see very well on their own, and have no need for God to give to them, are blind to their own blindness.

This is why Jesus and the Pharisees are always butting heads. They see no need for Jesus to give to them, and they're offended at the suggestion.

And it's the unconscious slide into Phariseeism that you and I have to be on guard against. The way Phariseeism usually manifests itself today is our attitudes towards other people; namely, when we look at other individuals or groups of people and think, at some deep down level, at least I'm not like them. I may have my quirks, but I'm not like that. But don't you get it? If you know you're spiritually blind, and you need God to give you His grace if this is ever going to work, then you have to see that everybody is in that same category. Receiving the grace of Jesus destroys those feelings of superiority. He didn't drink the cup of God's wrath and suffer and die on a cross in order to make good people better. He did it to give sight to the blind; to shine light into darkness; to rescue sinners from hell. Yes, it takes genuine humility to say "I'm spiritually blind," "I'm in the dark." But you've got to know that if you're not saying these things from your heart, Jesus has nothing for you except words of warning.

When the man who was formerly blind was given sight, he was testifying to someone he barely knew. The man thought a lot of Jesus, but he really didn't know who he was dealing with. As Jesus revealed more of Himself to the man, another change took place. The formerly blind man began to worship Him. This is the turning point. This is the point we all need to get to. At this point the man who was formerly blind sees with his heart, not just his eyes. Before he really knew Jesus, he did the best he could on his own, standing before the religious leaders and testifying about what Jesus did. Once he really knew Jesus, once he saw Jesus with his heart, he began to worship Jesus for whom He was, not just what He could do. Have you reached that point? Have you come to Jesus not because of what He can do, but simply for who He is?

He's the Son of God. He is God. We can't see this with our eyes. You can only see this with your heart.

Based on what you know right now, what do you think of Him?