

## “Jesus & The Blind Man”—Fully Alive (3 of 4)

Over the past few weeks we've been talking about obstacles to our faith. We all have questions that are hard to answer, let alone understand. And sometimes those questions grow to the point of becoming obstacles to faith in God.

All of us have obstacles to our faith. But when we get up close and personal with God, those obstacles shrink in size and importance.

In other words, very few people embrace Christianity after they have *worked through* their obstacles.

People object to God *until* they come up against their need *for* God. (ILLUS: Crisis & Tragedy)

When people come face to face with God, their objections and questions look pretty small!

One thing I challenge people to do is to bring our questions and objections “*into*” the search for faith. Don't let those questions stop your search for faith.

***Our everyday life tells us that there are things we don't understand, and yet we accept as truth.*** I don't really understand ELECTRICITY, but I use it everyday. I don't really understand LOVE, but I give and receive it every day. I don't really understand how my LAPTOP works, but because it's an Apple, I have confidence that it just works! (ILLUS: BLUETOOTH HEADSET)

There are even things in our lives that look impossible, but are true, none the less. Even though the “facts” point one direction, our experience tells us that ***somehow that which we think is impossible becomes possible.***

We get to a point where we no longer need an *explanation* because we see that it works. And our experience tells us that even though we don't know how something works, we can still accept that it works without demanding a detailed explanation of exactly what is going on!

We just learn to work around your obstacles, not through them:

(ILLUS: AIRPLANES. A 747 weighs up to 870,000 pounds at takeoff. Yet it rolls down the runway and, as though by magic, lifts itself into the air and can fly up to 7,000 miles without stopping. It is truly **incredible** when you think about it, but it's not **undeniable** I've flown in one!)

(ILLUS: FASTBALL. According to all of the known laws of physics and physiology, it's impossible for a batter to hit a ball traveling 90 or even 100 mph. There is not enough time for the body to react to the pitch, yet we see batters hit fastballs all of the time.)

There are many things in our lives that we might be “*Impossible*” in our eyes, but once we see them become “*Undeniable.*” Our mind can tell us one thing, but our experience tells us another.

Today we're going to look at a story in the Gospels that seems impossible at first glance, but as we journey through the story we're going to see that the “*Impossible*” becomes “*undeniable.*”

The story is found in John 9 and can be found on (p. **818** in your chair Bible)

“*As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. ‘Rabbi,’ his disciples asked him, ‘why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sins or his parents’ sins?’*” (This was faulty cause and effect thinking. This sounds so “modern!” If we do A, then we get B. Or if we see D, it's because of E. We like to figure out the world and put it in neat little boxes.)

“*‘It was not because of his sins or his parents’ sins,’ Jesus answered. ‘This happened so the power of God could be seen in him. (This man spent his whole life blind because God wanted to make a point. That does make any of you uncomfortable?) We must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work. But while I am here in the world, I am the light of the world.’*” (This was one of the “I AM” statements of Jesus. Jesus never hid the fact that he was God. The closest you'll ever get to knowing and understanding God is to know and understand Jesus—*investigate the claims of Christ for yourself!*)

“*Then he spit on the ground, (bad manners!) made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. (Gross!) He told him, ‘Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam’ (Siloam means ‘sent’). So the man went and washed and came back seeing!*” (He is healed)

*“His neighbors and others who knew him as a blind beggar asked each other, ‘Isn’t this the man who used to sit and beg?’ Some said he was, and others said, ‘No, he just looks like him!’ (Why would that say that? Because it doesn’t make any sense! How can a blind man see?) But the beggar kept saying, ‘Yes, I am the same one!’”*

*“They asked, ‘Who healed you? What happened?’” (That’s a fair question)*

*“He told them, ‘The man they call Jesus made mud and spread it over my eyes and told me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash yourself.’ So I went and washed, and now I can see!’”*

(Not good enough. Come on, tell me the truth!)

*“Where is he now?” they asked. ‘I don’t know,’ he replied.” (He didn’t **see** where Jesus went!)*

*“Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees, because it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had made the mud and healed him. (Problem! Jesus was always breaking people’s rules! He never violated God’s rules—after all they were his rules! But he seemed to go out of his way to show the self-righteous people that their list of rules did not make them right with God. As we saw last week with the story of Abraham, only “Faith” can make you right with God.) The Pharisees asked the man all about it. So he told them, ‘He put the mud over my eyes, and when I washed it away, I could see!’” (What kind of a crazy healer is he? Why can’t he play by our rules?)*

*“Some of the Pharisees said, ‘This man Jesus is not from God, for he is working on the Sabbath.’ (What? What about the facts right in front of them? They were putting God in their **box** and so they flat out rejected what they were seeing right before their eyes! Have you ever done that? I have. Before I put my faith in Jesus and became a Christian I saw God working all of the time. But I didn’t want to believe—and so I chalked it up to coincidence. **ILLUS: BURN** I had made a “Box” and I was so foolish to think that God lived there. And anytime God showed up outside of that box, I just denied it and made up reasons why it wasn’t God. Do you have a “God Box?”) Others said, ‘But how could an ordinary sinner do such miraculous signs?’ So there was a deep division of opinion among them.” (You may not be able to explain it, but it’s undeniable!*

*“Then the Pharisees again questioned the man who had been blind and demanded, ‘What’s your opinion about this man who healed you?’ (They’re playing that old game: “Are you smarter than a Pharisee?”) The man replied, ‘I think he must be a prophet.’”*

*“The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. (Why don’t they believe this man has been blind? **Because they’re opposition to Jesus put up a wall so they couldn’t see the truth right in front of them!** What about you? Have you made a wall between you and God? Could you be wrong?) They asked them, ‘Is this your son? Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?’”*

*“His parents replied, ‘We know this is our son and that he was born blind, (That is undeniable) but we don’t know how he can see or who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself.’ (Passing the buck!) His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue. (They had already decided that Jesus was NOT God, so if the facts didn’t fit within their view—they rejected the facts because they had already decided to reject Jesus. There goes that “Box” again!) That’s why they said, ‘He is old enough. Ask him.’”*

*“So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind and told him, ‘God should get the glory for this, because we know this man Jesus is a sinner.’” (They had already made up their mind and they weren’t going to let a few facts in get in their way!)*

*“‘I don’t know whether he is a sinner,’ the man replied. ‘But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!’” (If you’re a follower of Jesus, that’s your story. As Christians we need to stop trying to convince people how great our arguments are and just introduce people to who Jesus is and what he has done in our lives. What story does your life tell about the truth of Jesus?)*

*“‘But what did he do?’ they asked. ‘How did he heal you?’”*

*“‘Look!’ the man exclaimed. ‘I told you once. Didn’t you listen? Why do you want to hear it again? (Is he getting mad or smart?) Do you want to become his disciples, too?’” (Smart!)*

*“Then they cursed him (These are the religious leaders?) and said, ‘You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses! We know God spoke to Moses, but we don’t even know where this man comes from.’” (Come on, how did they “Know” that God spoke to Moses? Didn’t they have to take that by faith? And now they’re trying to deny that God still works in the world!)*

“‘Why, that’s very strange!’ the man replied. ‘He healed my eyes, and yet you don’t know where he comes from? (Hello!) We know that God doesn’t listen to sinners, but he is ready to hear those who worship him and do his will. Ever since the world began, no one has been able to open the eyes of someone born blind. If this man were not from God, he couldn’t have done it.’”

“‘You were born a total sinner!’ they answered. ‘Are you trying to teach us?’ And they threw him out of the synagogue.”

“When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man and asked, ‘Do you believe in the Son of Man?’” (Jesus’ favorite title for himself. It comes from the Book of Daniel and it means that Jesus is claiming to be the long-awaited Messiah.

At this point in the story, I wonder if the man recognized Jesus? Did he remember the voice?)

“The man answered, ‘Who is he, sir? I want to believe in him.’” (That’s faith! I believe!)

“‘You have seen him,’ Jesus said, ‘and he is speaking to you!’”

“‘Yes, Lord, I believe!’ the man said. And he worshiped Jesus.” (That’s the natural response of someone who has come face to face with God. What else can I do but bow down?)

“Then Jesus told him, ‘I entered this world to render judgment—to give sight to the blind and to show those who think they see that they are blind.’”

“Some Pharisees who were standing nearby heard him and asked, ‘Are you saying we’re blind?’”

“‘If you were blind, you wouldn’t be guilty,’ Jesus replied. ‘But you remain guilty because you claim you can see.’” John 9:1-41 (NLT) (The Bible says that “the fool says in his heart, ‘there is no God.’” God says that anyone who sees the truth and then rejects it is a fool.)

Do you really have to understand EVERYTHING in order to believe?

Life is filled with things that could *confuse* us and *paralyze* us if we had to understand everything in order to act upon it! Let’s look again at the two objections that we’re trying to answer:

**Objection #1: *If I come to Christ, what if I lose more than I gain?***

**Objection #2: *Shouldn’t all of my questions be answered before I come to Christ?***

A relationship with God comes by faith. What God wants from you is to trust him. Why don’t you take a step of faith towards Jesus today? Believe that he is God and that God offers you life through Christ alone.

*So, if you’re been holding God off at a distance because of what seems UNEXPLAINABLE or IMPOSSIBLE, why don’t you begin to take a look at the UNDENIABLE.*

*Here’s what’s UNDENIABLE: (SHARE THE GOSPEL)*

*BUT WHAT ABOUT ALL OF MY QUESTIONS! God wants you to know him more than you want to know all of the answers to your questions.*

**CLOSING PRAYER:** *“Heavenly Father, I want to know you, more than I want to know the answers to my questions. I still need answers to my questions, but even if I knew the answers I still wouldn’t know You. I want to know you.”*