

PREPARING AT HOME

March 16-22, 2020

Focus reading: John 9:1–41 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=449744627>)

Other lectionary readings: 1 Samuel 16:1–13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8–14

Theme: I Am Because We Are

Jesus' disciples reflect the worldview of their culture when they ask whose sin is responsible for a man's blindness. Jesus corrects that worldview by saying that the man's blindness is not the result of sin and goes a step farther when he says that the blind people in this case are the ones who accuse the blind man of sin. In a miracle filled with controversy, Jesus heals the man born blind. It was the sabbath, and Jesus' actions would have been seen as breaking sabbath laws. Tensions between Jews who confessed Jesus as the Messiah and those who did not were high, with Jesus' followers being ousted from the synagogues. In this divided community, the Pharisees try to trap the healed man and his parents into saying something that will be used against them. The healed man knows only what he has experienced, that Jesus healed him. He bears witness to that miracle and worships the one who is responsible. Then Jesus turns the tables on the Pharisees by saying that he came so that the ones who are blind would have sight and the ones who see would become blind. Those who credit themselves with seeing and knowing God's will so clearly are exposed as being blind.

BLIND FROM BIRTH

Can you imagine what it would be like to be blind from birth? Read a story about a girl who was born blind <https://www.rchsd.org/health-articles/i-was-born-blind-julias-story/>. How did Julia's life change after she could see, even partially? How do you think life changed for the man in the Bible story? How does Julia show how brave she is? What did the man in the Bible story do that showed his bravery? In this Bible story, we have Jesus disciples, the religious teachers, the blind man, the blind man's parents, and Jesus. Who is the best example of what it means to be a follower of Jesus? Why might that be surprising to many people?

JESUS SEEKS THE OUTCAST

After he was healed, the man went to the Pharisees so that he could be welcomed into the community. Instead they ended up sending him away. When Jesus heard that they had cast him out, he went to find the man. Who do you know who might feel alone? How can you go to them and help?

PRAYER

Loving God,
we give thanks for the gift of sight.
May we use that gift to see the beauty you have created
and to notice those who are hurting and need a friend.
Amen.