

The Insight of Eyesight

In today's gospel text John's long, intricately woven story is all about vision. On a simple, physical level there's the miracle of the restored vision to the blind-since-birth beggar. But John's story isn't just about sight regained. It's also about sight lost, blindness descending on those Pharisees, on those whose presuppositions and presumptions couldn't let them see the presence of the Son of God in their midst.

The beggar Jesus heals is described by John's text as having been blind from birth. He had never had an opportunity to see. His blindness had kept him from some wage-earning activities, but it was simply that man's normal experience of life. Having never seen he couldn't really understand what he was missing. When Jesus gives him vision, for the first time his eyesight clears up immediately. But his insight into what had happened to him took longer for him to process. Although the healed man could now see, he couldn't yet quite comprehend what had been revealed to him. Only after the healed man is forced first by his neighbors, then on two different occasions by the Pharisees, to scrutinize what has happened to him, does he really begin to take in the magnitude of his experience.

With surprising swiftness, however, this simple beggar, whose life had been spent in darkness, is able to clearly see the miracle before him. Not the miracle of his new eyesight, but the miracle of Jesus as the Son of Man, the Messiah, now present on earth and bringing God's presence directly to all the world.

At first this newly-sighted man can only name Jesus' name. Later he becomes sure that the one who effected his healing was a prophet. Finally, the Pharisee's repeated questioning prods the healed man into recognizing that Jesus must be from God for without God's presence he could do nothing. With his new vision now fully focused Jesus himself returns to the healed man and reveals that in Jesus the man has seen the Son of Man. Demonstrating 20-20 faithfulness and 20-20 vision, the healed man instantly exclaims "Lord, I believe" and he worshiped Jesus. The vision blessing opened the eyes of the blind man. But it was the man's response to that blessing which opened his heart to God's presence. Once he experienced eyesight this man's world was so completely changed that he allowed his mind and heart to be equally opened to new sights and new insights. He allowed his new eyesight to grow into new insight, new outlooks, new vision. His own blessing turned into a blessing for others, as he confessed the name of Jesus and witnessed to the healing power of Jesus the Christ. He was transformed!

How many of us have had our eyes opened to a new reality & then used that fresh vision to change our old habits, our old expectations, our old convictions. We hold our new grandchild & know our perspective on everything will now be through this child's

eyes of the blind man were gates meant to open for the King of Glory:

An almost forgotten verse of Amazing Grace, *"The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
the sun forbear to shine; But God, who called me here below, shall be forever mine."*

Have you opened your eyes for the insight of truth? Have you opened the gates of your heart for the King of Glory to come in? God's sworn promise is first that God wants to bless you. But God's sworn promise has a second clause: God blesses you . . . so that you can be a blessing to others. You are blest to bless. That's the insight of eyesight.