

**Believing is Seeing – Part II**  
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**John 9:35-41**  
**May 19, 2013**

Please turn with me in your Bibles to John 9. We're looking at Verses 35-41. The title of the message is the same as it was last week, 'Seeing is Believing'. This is part two, as we try to exposit these last seven verses of the ninth chapter. We said that this miracle that happened on the day just a few months before the crucifixion of Jesus, this miracle was planned before the foundation of the world to be a living parable. We see that, and we've seen that, and we see it the text today as we read in a moment you'll see that again, how Jesus turns from the miracle to explain why the miracle happened. It was to show us that, as this man who was born blind comes to see, when he encounters the Light of the World. So all men who were born spiritually blind, all men are born spiritually blind, and the only ones who will ever see are those who come to the Light of the World. If we believe in Him then we will see. Believing is seeing.

We began looking at this last time and outlined it under three major points, that the blind man is kind of an example to us, an example to the original audience, and us in turn. How is it that we can see? We said that first of all, we need to count the cost. We saw last time that the blind man was put out of the synagogue for his testimony about Christ. He was ostracized, he was rejected. That is often a part of what it means to follow Jesus. Being willing to do that certainly every time. Not always do you have to do it in the same way. The main point that we were talking about last time, we see His glory, and we are going to focus there again. We began to look at the title 'The Son of Man'. Let's read John 9:35-41.

*John 35-41 ~ Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" 36 He answered, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" 37 Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you." 38 And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him. 39 And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." 40 Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?" 41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.*

Let's pray together.

*Our Father, we come acknowledging that apart from Your grace, we cannot see. We would never have been able to see. There are some today that need to see for the first time. We come to You knowing that You, Lord Jesus, are the one who can open our eyes. Open the eyes of those who cannot see to see You for the first time, and open the eyes of those of us who can see You to see You more clearly. Show us Your glory, Lord. We pray in Your Name, Amen.*

The key question in the chapter, in the passage is the question Jesus asks: “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” That’s the first question He asked him. He comes to the man, the man has never seen Him before. Remember He healed Him, but the man didn’t see until after he went away to the Pool of Siloam and washed his eyes off. He comes back seeing. He’s never seen Jesus, Jesus finds him, and the first thing Jesus says to him is, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” That’s the question for everyone. Do *you* believe in the Son of Man? His response is exemplary. He doesn’t try to act like he knows who the Son of Man is, he acknowledges here he is still spiritually in the dark. He says, ... ***“Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”*** “You tell me who He is.” ***Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.”***

We noted last time that it is really striking when you think about it that He uses that title so much, and also that John records this event. Because we know, as we’ve looked at the Gospel of John, as we’ve seen how it unfolds, it was the last Gospel written. Matthew, Mark, and Luke were all written around 65 A.D. Matthew and Mark, many people think were written in the late 40’s. Jesus was resurrected around 33 A.D., so the first two Gospels were probably written in the late 40’s, Luke written in the early 60’s. John was probably written in the 80’s, possibly as late as 90 A.D., written by a man who was with Jesus who is now a very old man. He is the last surviving apostle. All the others martyred. John, they had attempted to kill him, tradition says, but were unable to. The Lord had other purposes and He kept him alive, and he writes this Gospel, that the more I study it the more amazed I am at the elegance and the beauty of his style even. We see that, we see that God uses men, He uses men and their life experience. He’s superintending every part of that. It’s not a dictation method that God gave, it wasn’t like they sat down at the desk and they just started writing without thinking. That’s not how the Bible was written. The Bible was written by men using their minds, submitted to God, doing the best they could, but what was happening is the Spirit was superintending their thoughts. The Spirit was guiding their lives so that what they were thinking, and what their burden was, and often times the circumstances they were addressing like when Paul is writing the Corinthians, or the Galatians, the problems they have. God has orchestrated all of that so that we

would have a perfect, and complete, and sufficient Word from Him. It's much bigger God than a god of dictation. That is more like the Mormon god. "Maroni told me this in a cave." No, the God of the Bible uses men in their real life circumstances. They are looking at real life issues, they are trying the best they can to communicate what has been given to them by Christ Himself, and as they do it the Spirit superintends it. Every word they wrote was God-breathed. When you think about that then you can look at this style of Peter, and the style of Paul, and the style of John, and you can marvel at how God uses such different men. One God, all these different instruments, one message. Beautiful, and elegant, and perfect.

## 2) Jesus is the Son of Man:

As you look at John's Gospel, I think the fact that the Lord let him live to be in his 80's or 90's is part of what makes this Gospel so wondrous. He has reflected on the glory of the Messiah all his life and he is, inspired by the Holy Spirit, he is remembering exactly what happened but he's only telling us what the Spirit is leading him to tell us, that will give us the picture that Jesus is the Son of God. That's his main point. He says that in John 20:31. At the end of the book he says, "Let me tell you why I wrote. There were many things Jesus did in the presence of His disciples, many other signs I could have told you about. Of course, if I had told you about everything, we couldn't hold all the books. But there were many other things that He did, but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and that believing you may have life in His name." So that is his point. He wants us to see that Jesus is the Son of God. That's an important title, but here he stops and focuses in on this event to teach us that Jesus is the Light of the World, but also that He is the Son of Man.

I think this was what confused some people so that there were textual variances later. The original is inspired, and perfect, and then the manuscripts that have been copied, the differences are so miniscule, less than a tenth of a percent, but one of the textual variances that the King James Bible, if you have that, it says 'Son of God'. "Do you believe in the Son of God?" Looking at all the textual evidence, that's a mistake, that was a textual mistake. No mistake, God's Word said, 'Son of Man'. But why did they do that? I think they were helping John out. Well John here is trying to prove He's the Son of God. Maybe they even accidentally did it as they are copying. You know when you are a scribe and you are sitting there and you are copying all day long, I mean have you ever tried to copy the whole Book of John yourself? You are just copying it, and you're copying, and you're copying. You read a word, and don't you even do this typing sometimes? You'll think you

said something already, and you think, “Oh, I see that.” You know where it’s going and you don’t even keep looking, you just finish out the sentence. I think that’s what happened.

Anyway, the point is, He is the Son of Man. Jesus says, “I’m the Son of Man. Do you believe in the Son of Man?” And John gives us this word on the voice of Jesus 11 times in his Gospel. We’ve noted last time that this is Jesus’ self-designation, favorite way to refer to Himself is the Son of Man. He does it over 80 times in the Gospels on His own lips. It is the Son of Man.

#### A) He is a True Man:

I want to just hit quickly a couple of the points we made last week. We’ll kind of skate by them, but to put it in context we’re going to start there. I have eight points of what the Son of Man means, and we talked about the first last time. The Son of Man, I think the reason Jesus uses it so much is He wants us to understand that He is true man. There would be the tendency for someone who did such miracles to be viewed by people, as many heretics later viewed him, as an appearance of God that was not real flesh. The Docetic Gnostics believed that, and taught that, that Jesus didn’t really become man because God would not become flesh. Flesh is too nasty. This is Greek thought. The material world is evil. That is not biblical thought. That’s why John in his epistle, 1 John 4, is dealing with that issue when he tells us, “Test every spirit, for not every spirit is from God.” How do you know the spirits that are from God? Every spirit which testifies that Jesus Christ came in the flesh is from God. Those that don’t are not. He’s true man. In fact, it’s interesting in the chapter, we noted last time, that the blind man is not named. Remember? We talked about that last week? He’s called ‘the man’. The man born blind. The man. It’s interesting, Jesus is also called ‘the man’ seven times in the chapter. The blind man is called ‘the man’ seven times and Jesus is called ‘the man’ seven times. I mean you have it in His words in Verse 11.

***John 9:11 ~ “The man who is called Jesus made clay,...***

Verse 16.

***John 9:16 ~ ...the Pharisees were saying, “This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.”***

Verse 24, the Pharisees speaking about Jesus to the blind man say:

*John 9:24 ~ ... "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner."*

There is great emphasis on the fact that He is a man. Jesus is a man, and He welcomed that emphasis, yes. He is true man. The word '*man*' is emphasized. Son of Man, this is what we talked about last time. Son of Man, even kind of lowers it down below that. The phrase 'the Son of Man'. It is used in Psalm 8:4 and Psalm 144:3-4. Both places, the idea there is that God is so great, why does He take thought of man? How could He possibly care about even less than man, the Son of Man? How could you even notice man or the Son of Man? You are so great." So 'Son of Man' is an even lower term. It means that He is entered in fully to our humanity. We saw that last time.

#### B) Jesus is the One and Only Man:

Now a second thing that we began to look at last time which really is a key going forward. We looked at the words '*man*' and '*Son of*'. That phrase '*The Son of Man*'. The first word in that phrase, '*the*', is important. The phrase '*Son of Man*' is used a lot in the Old Testament. I mentioned Psalm 8:4 and Psalm 144:3-4. It is used 93 times in the Book of Ezekiel. Remember reading Ezekiel? If you've been reading through the one-year Bible, or you read through Ezekiel recently, you'll find yourself saying that phrase over, and over, and over because every time He addresses Ezekiel He says 'Son of Man'. "Son of Man, can these bones live? Thou knowest, Lord." "Son of Man, prophesy to these bones." Why is that that he uses that? I think it's going to come up here in a moment. We'll come back to that but the idea is 'a son of man', the Old Testament, or 'Son of Man', but Jesus never says, "I'm a son of man," He says, "I am *the* Son of Man," the definite article. Not one among many, not an indefinite son of man, but *the* Son of Man, the unique Son of Man, the one and only Man. That's what He is really saying, He is in a sense, the one and only Man. He's in a class all by Himself.

It's interesting that that phrase does both of these things. It brings us near to Him, Him near to us, He is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He's our kinsman Redeemer, but He is also set apart and holy. He is *the* Son of Man, the one and only. And that really frames the next six points, that phrase '*the one and only*' is something you want to remember. The unique, the one and only, and each time we go through the next six points, you're going to see it's there. He is the one and only meeting place between God and man. This is the last point we covered last week. We are almost through reviewing.

### C) Jesus is the Only Meeting Place Between God and Man:

We looked at John 1:51 where Jesus first uses that phrase in John's Gospel. Remember Nathanael finds Him and Jesus tells Nathanael what He was doing when Philip called Him, and Nathanael realizes, "You can't have known that. You weren't anywhere near," and he calls Him, "You are the Son of God." Now the Son of God in Jewish though in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century didn't mean what we now mean with it, the divine Person. The Son of God in Old Testament concept was the Messiah, the One who represents God, and so when they said, "He's the Son of God," they weren't saying right away. Now they came to understand, Nathanael came to understand one day that he had spoken better than he had understood when he called Him, 'The Son of God'. Do you know what I'm saying? He was thinking in terms of the Old Testament and their understanding, the Jewish understanding of the Old Testament was the Son of God is like the Son of David, it's another phrase for Him. God has got His special Man, the Messiah. Though we come to find out, and John is making the point throughout this book, Jesus isn't the Son of God merely in that way, He is the eternal Son of the living God. But Nathanael says, "You're the Son of God," and then Jesus says right back to him, "I'm the Son of Man." It wasn't quite like that, remember? He says, "You saw this and you believe? I'm telling you you're going to see greater things than this because you are going to see the heavens open and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." That is, "You're going to see the meeting place, I am the meeting place between man and God." He was referring back to Bethel, the story of Jacob we talked about briefly.

I would just encourage you to read Genesis 28:10-19. What you see is when Jacob wakes up after that dream where he sees angels ascending and descending, and the Lord speaking from Heaven and reiterating His promise that He had made to Abraham, and to Isaac, and now to Jacob, "I'm going to be with you. I'm going to bless you. I'm going to fulfill my covenant to you." Jacob wakes up and here he is, man he's been blind and in the dark. He's just beginning to see and he says, "I didn't realize when I lay down here, this is nothing less than the house of God. This rock right here is the house of God. I stumbled on it." He's thinking that locally that place is really the house of God. He says, in fact, "It's nothing less than the gate of Heaven." Now he spoke better than he understood because the ladder that reached from Heaven to earth upon which the angels of God are ascending and descending, is nothing less than the gate of Heaven and the house of God. Jesus is saying, John 1:51, "I am that ladder. I am that house. There is no other access to Heaven but by Me. I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me." So He is the one and only meeting place between God and

man. There is only one mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus. Now that is the third point. Now number four.

D) Jesus is the One and Only Man Who Speaks for God:

He's not only the one and only meeting place between man and God, He is also the one and only Man who speaks for God. It is interesting the emphasis that is placed here because all of the prophets truly spoke for God, but there is a sense in which Jesus comes and God is making the point that there is a sense in which He now speaks for God, the triune God, in a way that nobody, it's like nobody else ever spoke. That is hyperbole but there is a sense of that in the way the New Testament sees the coming of Jesus Christ. That is what the author of Hebrews is saying when he says that the prophet, that God spoke to the prophets in many and diverse ways. But in these last days, He has spoken to us in His Son who is the radiance of His glory, the exact representation of His nature. You see this in John's Gospel, that Jesus is the one and only Man who speaks for God. And John's first title he gives to Jesus when he says, "***In the beginning was the Word...***" Jesus is God's Word.

What does a word do? You know you meet somebody, you're in a group and there is a group of people and someone has not spoken at all, and you're kind of wondering as you're talking, "I wonder what that guy thinks." "I wonder what she is thinking." They look so serious. You are just kind of puzzled, and you're just kind of going along with the conversation and you're wondering, "How are they feeling about this?" You don't know until what? Until they speak a word. Now you might see some non-verbal communication. That's true, but you won't even know for sure though, until you hear them say it. You can misinterpret non-verbal communication. I mean, I might act a certain way, I might do this because I had an acid reflux issue totally unrelated to what you said. "Ty, how do you feel about that?" "I feel a little acid right now, but what you said I agree with." Well Jesus is that revelation of God. God, the mind of God in a sense, was veiled and hidden. We didn't know what He thought. We didn't know what His will was. The prophets He sent and they spoke truly, but their level of revelation, though it was true, it was so much less than when He opened His mouth and Christ came, and that's what John is talking about in this prologue. "***In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***" All the way down to Verse 18, he wraps up the prologue of his Gospel saying:

***John 1:18 ~ No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.***

Nobody has ever seen God, never have they understood who He is, but in a way, the only begotten God who has come from the bosom of the Father, he has exegeted Him. That word ‘*explained*’ literally in the Greek, transliterated ‘*exegeted, led out the meaning*’. So He is the one and only man who speaks for God. That is what is going on in this Gospel as well. John 3:13, turn with me there for a moment. The conversation with Nicodemus. Nicodemus is having trouble understanding and in Verse 10:

***John 3:10-11 ~ ... Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? 11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know...***

Now think about this:

***John 3:11 ~ ...we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony.***

I think He’s speaking about Him and the Holy Spirit. “We speak of what we know, and we speak of what we have seen. You don’t accept our testimony.”

***John 3:12-13 ~ If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.***

What He’s saying is, “Listen, nobody has been able to come down and tell you what God really thinks until Me.” That’s what He’s saying. ***No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.*** The only one who speaks for God. I mentioned Ezekiel, Son of Man. I think the reason that God used that 93 times in the Book of Ezekiel was so that we would have that image implanted, and the people of God as they were watching the unfolding of God’s revelation, preparing for Christ, they would have the reading of the Book of Ezekiel where God is defining how He’s going to bring a new covenant. Jeremiah and Ezekiel are watershed moments in the Old Testament. God is going to give a new heart. That’s really an essential part of both of those books, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:24 and following. He says through Ezekiel, “I’m going to sprinkle clean water on you and you’ll be clean. I’m going to take out your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. This is how I’m going to bring you to Myself.” Then He says to Ezekiel, like I mentioned a little while ago, right after He says that in Chapter 36, in Chapter 37 He said, He took him out to the Valley of Dry Bones and He said, “Can these bones live?” “Son of Man, can these bones live?” And he said,

“Thou knowest, Lord.” Again, a good answer. He’s got to be thinking, “I don’t think so,” but that is a bad answer. “You’ve asked it Lord, You know.” And He says, “You go prophesy to those bones. Son of man, prophesy to those bones. Preach to them. Reveal My truth to them.” So Ezekiel, the son of man, goes out and he speaks and the bones start rattling, and they come together, and they form skeletons. That would be a scary sermon right there. He’s preaching and the bones form into skeletons and He says, “Keep preaching,” basically, “son of man.” Then flesh comes over them, muscle, and tendons, and skin.

Now you have inanimate human bodies intact, though, and He says, “Now keep prophesying over them until breath comes into them,” and he keeps preaching. The son of man keeps preaching. That’s basically the message. “Keep preaching, son of man.” Then breath comes into them, and you have a whole army of the people of God. God created an army through the preaching of a son of man who went to dead men, not recently dead, but so dead there were just bones laying on the ground. Not someone who needed to boost up to get to Heaven, but who needed a new life, and a son of man did that. I think the Lord was prepping us for His Son of Man to come who would speak to dead men, who would speak to blind men, and they would come to life. They would begin to see the power of the Word of the Son of Man, and the Lord chose to send His Word through a son of man. That’s instructive in itself.

I mentioned earlier He could have done it like the Mormons believe, in some kind of miraculous, angelic visit, and a guy coming with gold tablets, or whatever they believe, from some other planet. It sounds kind of sensational. It sounds kind of neat. He could have spoken out of Heaven directly. Instead of the thunder, we could hear God speak to us and give us His commands. He could have done that. Would that be too hard for God? No! But the Lord has from the beginning chosen to speak to us through men. Isn’t that just something to ponder? Why? “Wouldn’t it be so much more impressive if You just spoke off the mountain, Lord? If the mountain just talked?” It would. It would be more impressive.

I think the reason God has spoken through men is because our greatest problem that we have in our deadness and in our blindness is spiritual pride, and when God speaks, He speaks through one of flesh and blood just like you and me. That’s how He spoke. Every prophet was just an ordinary man, and then Jesus comes along and He’s not just an ordinary man, but He’s true Man, and the reason the Pharisees couldn’t accept what He was saying is because they looked at Him and they said, “He’s just a man. Not only that, but He looks like a Galilean. He’s got a Galilean accent. He’s from where? From Nazareth? You’ve got to be kidding. There’s no

Messiah coming from Nazareth. Nobody that lowly could be the Messiah.” They kept thinking about that, and they quit looking at Him. If they’d kept looking at Him, they would have seen that He is the Son of Man. He’s the one and only Man who speaks for God. That was number four.

E) He’s the One and Only, the Most Lowly Man:

He uses the title Son of Man, and let me step back for a moment. The reason He uses this title, I think the main reason is, and theologians suggest this in commentaries I’ve read and things, and I think it’s right, but one of the reasons Jesus uses this title so many times is it was the least used of all the Messianic titles, and therefore it was the least abused. They talked about the Son of David. They had a lot of books on that. It was like the Christian bookstore of the day – books on the Son of David, books on the Son of God, books on the Messiah. I’m obviously making light here, but the idea was they spent so much time talking about these things and they had all kinds of error around them. *Son of Man* was more pristine. It was less tainted. It was a title Jesus, then, could fill with minimal confusion. We said He is true Man, He’s the One and Only Man, He’s the One and only meeting place between God and man, He’s the One and only Man who speaks for God, and He’s the most lowly Man.

The reason the title Son of Man is used is in large part because this is the one that speaks of His humiliation. Jesus came in the first place not initially to reign. He came to die. He came to be made lowly. He descended, and He went all the way down. This is one of the reasons Jesus uses this title. Think about Matthew 20 when He’s talking to the disciples about who’s greatest, and He says, “Listen, you guys don’t need to be like the Gentiles. Don’t try to lord it over each other. That’s how they do things. It’s not to be so among you, but whoever will be greatest among you, let him be servant of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” So the title Son of Man was about His humility, and really about the humiliation that He came to embrace so that He could save. He’s the most lowly Man, the One and only, the most lowly. In John 3:13, we read a moment ago:

***John 3:13 ~ No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.***

Then in Verse 14, he says:

***John 3:14 ~ As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;***

When we were going through John 3, we talked about how this was really a surprising image for Jesus to pick up, too. Jesus had a way of doing this in His teaching. If you stop and reflect on it, if you know the story from Numbers, when the people were grumbling against God, the Lord sent a plague of serpents upon them, poisonous serpents who began biting them, and people were dying like crazy. The people cry out to Moses to pray for them, and Moses prays for them, and the Lord tells him, “Make a bronze serpent, put it on a pole, set it up, and everybody that looks at the serpent will be saved.”

Now, that in itself is interesting. Why a serpent to save you from the serpents? That’s like fighting fire with fire. Well, it’s because that was going to be an image that Jesus was going to pick up in His earthly ministry, and in a decisive moment, use. “I must be lifted up in the same way the serpent was lifted up. The Son of Man must be lifted up in the same way the serpent was lifted up.” The serpent is a picture of evil. I mean, think about it. From the Garden of Eden, our oldest enemy is Satan, the serpent of old. Why would Jesus use an image that associates Himself with that? What we saw when we looked at this way back in John 3 was that it was showing us that Jesus was saying, “What’s going to happen to Me is when I’m lifted up from the ground, I must be treated as if I had been infected with all the venom of the serpent,” and all the imagery of evil and sin is brought together in that, because what happened when Jesus was lifted up from the ground? He who knew no sin became sin for us. God poured out all of the guilt, all of the pollution, all of the condemnation for every single sin of every single person who would ever believe. All of that guilt, all of that pollution, all of that condemnation was poured on Christ, and then He’s cursed in the same way the serpent was cursed. Paul makes this clear in Galatians 3:13. He was hung on a tree because:

***Galatians 3:13 ~ ... “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”...***

He became a curse for us, that He might redeem us. So the Son of Man, that title is associated with this descent. And oh the beauty of what Paul does in Philippians 2, when he helps us behold the wondrous descent of the Son of Man. He doesn’t use that title, but he says in Verse 5 of Chapter 2 of Philippians:

***Philippians 2:5 ~ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,***

And look at the descent that he describes:

***Philippians 2:6 ~ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant (a slave), and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.***

Jesus came to humble Himself. He left behind not His essential deity. No, He remained God, but He left behind the prerogatives of God. He chose not to use His own power for His own sake. He lived in dependence as a man. He left behind the majesty and the worship. He came into a world where people despised Him. Nobody ever valued Him appropriately. That had never happened before. I love that hymn we have. I forgot the hymn, but anyway, the hymn where it says He smiles and 10,000 angels basically light up. He just glances their way. That's the glory of the Son of Man. That's the inherent glory of who He is, and yet He comes all the way down not just to be a Man. That was horrible enough, but He becomes a slave. He lives a life of slavery under the Law, under the curse of the Law. He gets baptized. John the Baptist says, "What are You doing? I can't baptize You. You must baptize me." Jesus said, "It's necessary to fulfill all righteousness. You don't understand yet. I've come to identify fully with the sins of all of My people."

That's how far the descent was. That's why He's a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. Think about this. I've mentioned this many times, and it's something to ponder and reflect on, and it is absolutely true. No one has ever suffered the way Jesus Christ suffered. No one has. Not even close. His physical agony on the cross was incredible, yes, but His emotional agony was relentless. It was unrelenting for 33 years. Think about how offended, and how offensive, and how repulsed you can be by real display of evil, how angry and how discomfited you get when you see someone who abuses people and has no remorse. How offensive that is, those who flaunt their ungodliness, how awful it is.

Now, think about this. You and I were conceived in sin, brought forth in iniquity. If we find it that repugnant, how much more did the eternal Son of God find our best days so utterly offensive? And He lived a life of sorrow in the presence of that kind of wickedness, emotional anguish every day, overwhelming, and He did that for 33 years so that He could provide a perfect righteousness and then offer Himself as a perfect sacrifice. That's how far down He was willing to go. He's the One and only, the most lowly Man. That's why He says, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He's not only the One and only most lowly, but He's:

F) He's the One and Only Most Exalted Man:

There we are in John 3:

***John 3:14 ~ As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;***

Twice you have the phrase *lifted up*. It's an important phrase in John's Gospel on the lips of Jesus. In John 12, it's used again, and it's also used interchangeably with this idea of glorify. Look at John 12:23. In the last week before Jesus' death, He says:

***John 12:23 ~ ...“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.***

Then He goes on to explain that glorification means dying, and the crowd of people, actually, this is the one time in the Gospels where they use the phrase, but they use it in perplexity. They don't really believe He's the Son of Man. They're puzzled by it. “You've said You're the Son of Man and You're going to die?” Verse 34:

***John 12:34 ~ The crowd then answered Him, “We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? ...***

They understand He's talking about the cross. “He's going to die or He's going to be taken away. How can the Son of Man die? How can this happen?” And then they ask the question again:

***...Who is this Son of Man?”***

This idea of glorification of the Son of Man is picked up also in John 13:31. The night before Jesus is crucified, He's talking to His disciples and He says after Judas had gone out:

***John 13:31 ~ “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; 32 if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately.***

This is the paradox of the Son of Man. He comes down to become the lowliest, the most abased man that ever lived. He comes down not only to just remain there, though, but He comes down to be that on the cross so that He can then be exalted. Remember we were reading from Philippians 2 a minute ago?

***Philippians 2:6 ~ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***

I mentioned earlier that the Son of Man is The Man. That's what this is talking about. He's The Man because He was willing to do what no other man could do. He came down, all the way down, and then God took that Man and lifted Him all the way up, and because of that, He is a worthy, and mighty, and able Savior. He is the most exalted. That's what the Psalmist was beginning to get a glimpse of in Psalm 45, when he says: ***My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. You are fairer than the sons of men;*** "The Lord has anointed Your lips with oil so that Your speech is so beautiful. We look at You and we can't stop thinking how wonderful You are. Ride on in victory, O Mighty King!"

That is the Psalmist bowing before the eternal God who has become true Man, the Son of Man, and when we read that earlier, we saw he says, "Your throne, O God." Even the Psalmist is getting a little overwhelmed by what he's seeing. He's looking at a real earthly king, and he sees this vision somehow coming together with it, and he's speaking, and he realizes he's talking about the coming Messiah, and the Messiah is going to be God, and the Messiah is going to be a Man. How wonderful. He is the most exalted. The Son of Man, He uses that title because He's true Man, because He's the One and only Man, the One and only meeting place, the One and only Man who speaks for God, the One and only most lowly, the One and only most exalted, and then seventhly:

### G) He is the One and Only Man Worthy to Judge:

Because He has experienced everything, He is the one Man who is worthy to judge all flesh. Nobody can have any problem with the fact that Jesus Christ, when He judges and condemns them, they cannot in their hearts entertain anything but that it's right. They're going to be hating it at that moment, but He came all the way down, He lived a life of a Man, and He is able to judge us. You see this in the Chapter back to John 9. He says, "Who am I? I am the Son of Man," and then:

***John 9:39 ~ ...“For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind.”***

It's interesting in John 3:17, Jesus, in talking to Nicodemus, says, "I didn't come into the world to judge the world but to save to the world." Is that a contradiction? Well, no, it's not. If you read the context of John 3:17, immediately after that He says, "I did not come to condemn the world or to judge the world, but to save the world," He then says, "But I've come into the world, and men hate Light. They love darkness rather than Light, for their deeds are evil, therefore, I'm separating. I didn't come to do that. I came to save, but My very coming as Light into the world causes there to be this judgment that happens, and when the judgment happens, I am worthy to judge."

In fact, in John 5, in the wake of His healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda in John 5:27, He says:

***John 5:27 ~ and He gave Him (the Son of Man) authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.***

Why does He give Jesus the authority to judge? Because He is The Son of Man. He's The Man, and truly when He unveils His glory, there is this separation. The humble come to Him, those who realize they're blind come to Him, and the others turn away.

### H) He is the One and Only Man Who is Worthy to be Worshiped:

What did the man do? He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped Him. He literally prostrated himself on the ground. He fell on his face before Him. He realizes, "You're not just a man. You are the Man," but I think he's picking up on the imagery of Daniel 7. I'd encourage you to read that, the whole chapter, but particularly Verses 13-16. Daniel sees a vision and the Son of Man coming on the

clouds of glory. He comes directly up to the Ancient of Days, to the throne of God itself. This Man is able to walk up to the throne of God and He's given glory. Who does God give glory to? Isaiah 44 says, "He will not share His glory with another. He is the Lord, and there is no other." He only shares His glory with God, and so the Son of Man is also God, and this Man recognizes that and bows before Him.

The question is do you believe in the Son of Man? Do you believe that He is all of these things? That He is true Man? That He is the only meeting place between man and God? The only One who truly speaks for God? He is the only One who is able to take away our sins. He's the only One who's been exalted to the right hand of the throne of God, and He's the only One worthy of worship. If you have counted the cost and you see His glory, then the third point is going to be very brief. The third thing the man did is he didn't just count the cost, he didn't just see His glory, but thirdly:

### 3) He Humbly Worshiped:

He fell down and worshiped. He fell down and worshiped a Man. Not a mere man, but a true Man. God had appointed that we would be saved by falling down and worshiping a Man like us, yet not like us, but so much better than us. There's kind of an element of surprise, actually, I think. If you read the text thoughtfully, you think Jesus is just talking to this man and nobody else is around. I know when I was reading that, as I'm thinking through the passage, Verse 40 kind of hits with a little bit of force. He's talking to the man, and then maybe He looks over at His disciples and He says:

***John 9:39 ~ And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world,...***

This is how I was seeing it as I was looking at it, seeing that in my mind's eye.

***...so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." 40 Those of the Pharisees who were with Him...***

There were Pharisees there. They followed Him up and they heard Him say, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" They heard Him use that title, but they don't believe.

***John 9:40 ~ Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?"***

The reason they don't believe is because they think they see when they're blind. They will not acknowledge their blindness, and therefore, they're worthy of greater judgment. That's what He's saying at the end:

***John 9:41 ~ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.***

Because you say, "We see," your sin remains, and it's greater for you because you have claimed to see. God is opposed to the proud. The essential thing about the blind man that needs to be modeled is absolute, total, complete humility. He's a man who can't see and he knows he can't see, and he needs the Son of Man to make him see. The Pharisees are the opposite, and the most dangerous thing in the world is spiritual pride. Spiritual pride blinds us, and that's why God is opposed to the proud, and that's why God breaks pride when He works in your life. He never works in your life without breaking down pride. Getting saved, He breaks pride. How do you get saved? Jesus said the beginning of salvation is laid out there in the beatitudes. What's the first beatitude? *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* What do you have to do to get to Heaven? You've got to be poor in spirit. The people who are farthest from Heaven are those who think that they know everything or they know more than they know. And then as Christians, once we become Christians, we still have to struggle with this, and we have to humble ourselves, and that's why the Lord keeps on having us be humbled.

One of the most beautiful things God does is that He has a way of not showing you or me our problems through our own private study. He does that some, but He has a way of dealing with our worst problems by sending a man, a son of man to you, and saying, "You know, you've really got a problem with this," and what do you have to do? You have to humble yourself under that. Your heart is saying, "I don't think I've got a problem with that." I mean, you can test the Scriptures. I'm not saying you take everything everybody says, but you stop and really listen. You don't just immediately deflect it and put your dukes up. No. "What do you see? Tell me why you say that." You humble yourself under that, and when you humble yourself under that, the God who came as Man, Jesus Christ, you will find even there at that moment, He is the One speaking through this other guy just like you, and He makes us need each other. He makes us so much more humble.

We can't make it on our own. You can go with the theological library off onto an island, and you can have the best theological library, you can learn the languages, and then you can be ungodly as a Christian, because iron sharpens iron. One man sharpens another. You need Christians around you. You need people who are

speaking into your life. So many of us need to get married just so we can get sanctified. That's one of God's main reasons He puts you together with a wife is because you need to be sanctified. I need to be sanctified, and there's nothing like somebody seeing you every day, and their problems and your problems comingling, that the Lord helps point out, "Do you see the issues in your life?" And what are we to do? Keep humbling ourselves, because if you humble yourself, in due time, the wonderful Son of Man who was exalted at the right hand of the throne of God, the dust of the earth, inhabits the throne of the universe, that glorious Son of Man will lift you up and glorify you with Him. That's what we look forward to. Praise God for such a glorious Savior. Why would you continue to harden your heart and close your eyes against such a beautiful, wonderful God and Savior Jesus Christ?

Let's pray...

*Father, we thank You that You have done everything necessary to save us, and all that we can bring is the acknowledgment that we are nothing but needy. We only bring to the cross the sin which made it necessary, and we're thankful that our great and glorious Savior is humble and meek, and therefore, approachable by those who have been so proud and blasphemous. He allows us to come in with our brokenness, and even in our element of fear and uncertainty, when we come humbly, He heals, He loves, and He saves. Be glorified in our hearts, Lord. We pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.*

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